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November/December Issue 2020 : News and Encouragement from Trinity Anglican

# Trinity Evangel



current events >>>

## Operation Creche

At the October Vestry meeting, John Godfrey proposed that the church display a Nativity scene during the Christmas holidays. In record time a Nativity set was picked out, the bulk of the funding was secured, and the set was ordered and received by Veterans' Day. A group of volunteers is working to ensure that the display is ready on time for the *Lighting of the Creche* on December 19<sup>th</sup>. John Godfrey and Burnell Bailey are building a stable with much of the lumber donated by Barry Dunphy. Jessica Lewis found a beautiful star to display above the stable and the Christ Child. This is a wonderful opportunity for all of us to come together to reaffirm our faith and proclaim our Saviour's birth. Postcards and posters are displayed in the Narthex. Dates to remember below!

- *Set up of the Creche on 12/18!*
- *Lighting of the Creche on 12/19 with carols and refreshments!*
- *Greening of the Church on 12/20!*
- *Family Service at 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve!*
- *Midnight Mass at 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve!*



OVERSIZED SHIPPING APPLIES

## The Government shall be Upon His Shoulders

Fr. Matt Mirabile

As I write, we are at the close of the church year, about to begin the season of Advent. Advent is a somewhat penitential season, though most people do not see it that way. We see it as the season leading up to Christmas, and if you are like most people, you may have already put up your Christmas tree. I have cued my Christmas playlist, which includes Handel's Messiah. Every time I hear that music, I am reminded of the performances we have had at Trinity, conducted by our own Carlos Martinez, and the words Handel borrowed from Isaiah Chapter 6, verse 9:

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:*

*And the government shall be upon His shoulder: And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

And it is that theme that is most on my mind these days; "the government shall be upon His shoulder" and "of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end".

As we come to the close of such a tumultuous year, ravaged by Covid-19 and widespread social unrest, a government shouldered by the Prince of Peace should be incredibly welcome. That government stands in stark contrast with the roiling world around us. Advent calls us to turn our thoughts to the coming of the King, while it also calls us to reconcile ourselves to *the Day of the Lord*, which will inaugurate it. That day will bring judgment upon the nations of this world that have rejected God's government. The penitential aspect of Advent should make us mindful of this *Day of the Lord* and purify ourselves for it. This is why traditional Christians fast on Wednesdays and Fridays during Advent.

I am reminded of the parable of the wheat and the tares. Jesus explains the parable in Matthew 13:37-43; the field is the world, the tares are "the sons of the evil one" while "the good seed are the sons

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# Men's Breakfast John Godfrey

The men's breakfast meetings have happily transitioned back from virtual-only meetings to gatherings in the church on the first Saturday of each month. The doors open at 7:30 followed by breakfast at 8:00, a prayer and then an open discussion of a selected book for roughly an hour. Fr. Matt continues to provide a remote participation option via Zoom for those who prefer it for convenience or for safety concerns. All men in the congregation are warmly invited and strongly encouraged to attend. The food is excellent. More importantly, the spontaneity of the open discourse stimulates enriching reflection and thought.

The focus of the November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting was the introduction of *Live Not by Lies (A Manual for Christian Dissidents)* by Rod Dreher, who has authored several books including one - *The Benedict Option* – which was discussed a few years ago. The December meeting will consider Part One of the book, captioned “Understanding Soft Totalitarianism”. The author cites profound

warnings and guidance from individuals who have lived through societies that attempt to persecute and discourage Christianity.

We are starkly warned by this book to not take our religious freedom for granted or to ignore the open and widespread hostility to Christianity that is emerging around us in subtle and not so subtle ways. Each chapter of the book calls upon us to “**see, judge, and act**” or, in other words, to prepare ourselves to lead Christ-based lives as Jesus would have us do even in times when we are likely to suffer unless we acquiesce to those who would silence us. Our challenge will be to identify potential actions that will protect and grow our Christian community in hostile post-Christian times while avoiding any temptation to go “off the rails” into partisan political perspectives and ultimately also soliciting the inspiration of the women of our church.

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of the Kingdom” and the harvest is the end of the age. People think this parable tells us there are good and bad people in the world. Well, that's obvious! In fact, Jesus demonstrates how those two societies grow alongside one another towards the end of the age. It is an apocalyptic parable about the *Day of the Lord* when the “tares” will be removed, while the good seed will inherit “the Kingdom prepared for them by my Father”.

During Advent we Christians look forward to this *Day* when the government shall be on His shoulders. It is the hope and promise of a new world where God Himself is the governor. Jesus is president and sovereign! For Christians it is a hope founded on the character of God who always performs what He promises. He has declared “all the Kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of His Christ” (Rev 11:15). And He shall reign for ever and ever! (Can you hear the chorus?)

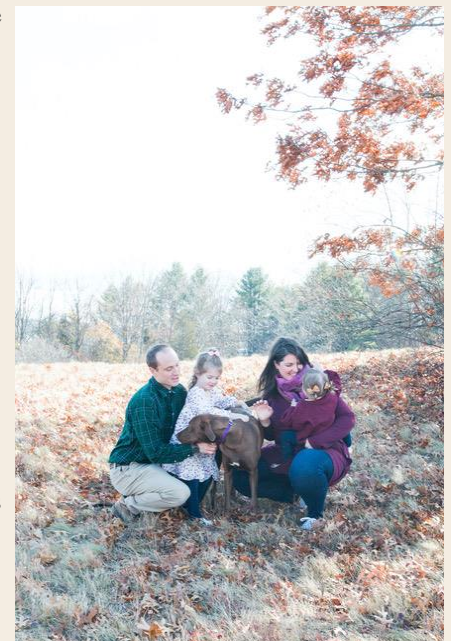
## Member Spotlight

### The Snow Family: George, Alice, Charlotte, Penelope and Fiona

Originally from New Jersey, George and Alice both settled in New Hampshire after their wedding in 2009. The two of them have served Trinity through the Choir, Vestry, St. Anne's Guild, Thrift Shop and Building & Grounds. Trinity was the first church they attended in New Hampshire and they feel blessed to have found their church home as newlyweds.

Charlotte Jayne arrived in April 2016 and Penelope Rhys in September 2018. Charlie loves ballet & tap, books, building, music, drawing and cooking. Penny just loves her big sister, music, books and her snuggly Snuffy. Fiona, a 63 lb., one year-old Chocolate Lab/mix, recently joined the busy household.

A Network Engineer with a Masters in Project Management, George works at the University of New Hampshire. He is a year round surfer, guitar player and a great cook. Previously an interior designer and pastry chef, Alice is now a stay-at-home Mom with a home baking business (*Geekamuffins*). A woman of many talents, Alice is also a pianist, flautist and singer and homeschools her daughters. Gardening and reading with her girls round out her passions. All feel blessed to be at Trinity and to know each of its members!



# Synod 2020

*In spite of the pandemic and the anxiety that surrounded it, Synod 2020 was held at Trinity Anglican Church from October 30 – October 31. As usual, Synod met to discuss the business of the church – everything from membership and budgets to outreach and service, with delegates and clergy attending. Bishop Marsh led the synod as the head of the Diocese of the Northeast. At the Synod he was invited to serve for two more years, which he graciously agreed to do.*

The mostly Virtual Synod included Clericus and an Ordination to the Sacred Order of Deacon. The planning and execution of this event demanded a very particular set of skills and talent. We are blessed to have such able and talented leadership in our church.

Alice Snow planned and organized meeting spaces, food deliveries, a banquet for 25 participants, a luncheon following the Ordination ceremony and found accommodations for those who chose to attend the conference in person. She also planned menus and ordered meals and drinks for the folks who were attending meetings at the church. Alice issued a flurry of invitations to the parish, inviting parishioners to attend certain events. Not least of all, Alice made sure that the budgetary constraints were followed. All of this hard work was ably carried out with zeal and good humor. Alice expressed her thanks for the introduction of curbside delivery that resulted from the pandemic. She was able to pack her two young children into her car, head out to collect meals, and then deliver to the church! No small feat! We all give thanks for Alice.

Many thanks also to the Ladies Guild for the beautifully decorated church. Particular credit goes to Mary Osborne and Brenda Anair for their leadership in this effort.

There were over 50 participants who were able to join the conference via Zoom on a gallery display on the large television in the Parish Hall. In order to accommodate the large number of participants who attended the meetings via Zoom, Fr. Matt had some expert help. Sean Harrington installed new routers and extenders and was there at the beginning of each day to ensure that there were no problems. Fr. Brad Mathias helped co-host the Zoom meeting, which Fr. Matt said “was a life-saver”.

The Clericus meeting took place immediately prior to the Synod. Fr. Matt gave a presentation on assimilating new members into the church parish and Fr. Gary Drinkwater presented on developing a parish vision.

The Verdict was clear! The first ever mostly Virtual Synod was very successful, or as Alice Snow put it, “there was genuine fellowship, business got done and no one got sick.” Hear, hear!

*Why do we do that? >>>*

**Q:** *Why light the Advent Candles?*

**A:** *Advent means “coming”.*

Three purple candles represent the suffering of Christ, connecting His birth with His death and resurrection. They also symbolize our repentance. The rose candle lit on the third week is pink, symbolizing the joy of this first coming. The white candle in the center is the Christ Candle, lit on Christmas Eve, telling us that Jesus is the light of the world.



## Synod Highlights

*Ed Pacht was presented with the Walter Killian Award for his many years of service to the church. Ed is the publisher and editor of the North East Anglican, a highly regarded monthly publication of the Anglican Church.*

## Sacred Order of Deacon

We are blessed to have a new Deacon serving our church. A large group was able to witness the ordination of Mike McKinnon-Dane to the Order of Deacon. The ceremony took place during the Synod on Saturday with Bishop Brian Marsh presiding. A luncheon in honor of the occasion was held after in the Parish Hall. Congratulations to Deacon Mike!

## St. Ann's Ladies Guild

The Ladies Guild will provide the refreshments at the First Annual Lighting of the Creche on December 19<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Alice Snow will put a volunteer list in the Narthex. Please consider baking cookies, cupcakes or brownies. There will also be a table or two for hot chocolate and warm mulled cider.

Volunteers are needed to hand out the beverages and the pre-wrapped baked goods. The Guild members are also requested to help with tidying up the thrift shop to make room for storage. Volunteers are also needed to take down fall decorations and store them to prepare for Christmas.

# Book Corner

*Rage Against God* by Peter Hitchens



At 15, Peter Hitchens burned his Bible on school grounds in Cambridge. “I was engaged at the time in a full, perfect and complete rebellion against everything I had been brought up to believe,” he writes. With a great deal of wit and honesty, Hitchens chronicles his long journey from atheism and trust in secular institutions back to faith. It was not an easy journey. He writes that “(the) dismissal of faith by the intelligent and educated” as well as the “faith in science” became tools to shame Christians.

After completing his university education, Peter Hitchens became a journalist, author and broadcaster reporting from some of the most dangerous and depressing places on earth: the former Soviet Union, Iran and the Congo among others. Peter had devoted his life to a pursuit of pleasure. His particular interest in music and architecture drew him back to his faith.

He writes of his meeting with Rogier van Weyden’s 15<sup>th</sup> Century polyptych *The Last Judgment*. “.....I stood in front of Rogier van der Weyden’s great altarpiece and trembled for the things of which my conscience was afraid. (...) I went away chastened, and the effect has not worn off in nearly three decades.” After this experience, he “rediscovered Christmas and swearing great oaths.” The difficulties seemed only to begin after his return to Christ. Hitchens discovered that the church he had grown up in had become terribly hollowed out. He recalled services that Queen Elizabeth I and William Shakespeare would have recognized. These services were no longer part of a church that was trying to be “relevant.”

This book is a response to his experience but also was a way to debate faith with his (in)famous brother Christopher Hitchens, the renowned anti-theist.

Hitchens warns of the fury against religion that is ongoing in the United States and Britain. “Only one reliable force stands in the way of the power of the strong over the weak. Only one reliable force forms the foundation of the concept of the rule of law. Only one reliable force restrains the hand of the man of power. And, in an age of power-worship, the Christian religion has become the principal obstacle to the desire of earthly utopians for absolute power.”

Hitchens is a powerful voice for Christ and all Christians. He will inspire and amuse and teach. I highly recommend this book.

*Diane M. Bailey*



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