



The Cathedral Notes

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DATES TO REMEMBER

Dec 19 – Foodbank Collection

Dec 19 – The Service of Lessons and Carols 7pm

Dec 21 – Eucharist + Carols at Sutherland Place 10am

Dec 21 – Vestry Meeting 7pm Zoom

Dec 24 – Christmas Services at 7pm (Family Service) and 10pm (Traditional Sung Eucharist)

Dec 25 – No Services

Dec 26 – No 8:30am Service

The Dean's Notes

A lot of people decry about “how commercial Christmas is”. There is no doubt in my mind that there is two celebrations where Christmas is concerned in North American Society. The first is the secular “I need, I want, and I’m going to get” kind of Christmas celebration where people are bribed to go and spend money on what they think they want or what they need to possess in order to be happy. News shows and newspapers are constantly talking about how much people will spend and how good or poorly the economy will be doing based on how we respond to the demand of our culture and society that we buy everything to keep at least some of us happy and in money.

Then there is the other side of Christmas or as I think of it these days, the Far Side of Christmas. As far back as I can remember, Christmas has not been Christmas without being at Church. Whether it was in my first parish with a 1,000 other people (literally) or I was with the little congregation in Northern BC where I first came to faith almost four decades ago with thirty people maximum and the place was packed, it wasn’t Christmas for us until we had been to the Midnight Mass, we came home and we had some hot chocolate and opened one (little) present before bed. Mom got to determine what present we opened.

Like many others, I like the getting the presents and even going to get presents for my family that they think they are going to like. It is probably because as I get older, I have noticed how much more the far side of Christmas has come to mean to me. I have actually grown fatigued of all the Christmas shows that require someone or something saving the “Fat Man” because he cannot deliver the glitzier side of Christmas. Jolly old St. Nicholas needs the reality of Christmas just like the rest of us – but he is no saint and he is no threat to the way in which we live... unless we don’t get our stuff.

Even the traditional image of Jesus with his parents, the shepherds, the angels and the animals is no threat to us. In fact, I would say to you that the image is so familiar to us almost, that we bring it to the point of contempt. After all babies are a joy; they are a wonder, and they are weak so how could they possibly a threat The King we await is a threat.

He will come again to judge both the living and the dead (physically and spiritually). Jesus' life and the new kingdom are a threat, if for no other reason than there will be no Santa to depend on. There will be a huge shift in the way that the world will live and only those who are deemed worthy will be a part of it. Remember the Parable of the Wedding Banquet. We will not be a part of the new life and the new world unless we are ready in this moment under the ways that God calls us to be.

God in Christ is here. And we are called to stand with him. Christ is Christmas. And if we find him absent who has excluded whom? Is it not us? Is not time to listen again to the voice of the angels as they sing; to the laughter of the Shepherds as they meander to the Manger, to consider the quiet and the clam of the stable? Is it not time to make room of the little life that lays in the manger and know that he is going to grow and strengthen and call you to the barren tree of Easter? Isn't that moment also on the far side of Christmas? And what does that mean for our stuff?

Jason+

Announcements

- The **Annual Congregational Meeting** will take place February 6th, 2022, after the 10:30am Eucharist.
- The Synod Office will have reduced hours Tuesday – Thursday, 9am – 12pm.
- The **Service of Lessons and Carols** will take place December 19th at 7pm. Sign up for a reading! The sign up sheet is available on the bulletin board at the back of the Church
- Are you looking for some fresh air and exercise? Please sign up for some snow shoveling duties over this winter to help keep the church safe and accessible for all.
- We will be having **Confirmation and Baptisms** on April 17th. Please see Dean Jason if you would like to participate in confirmation classes.
- If you would like to give a Christmas gift to the Bishop and Dean please speak with the Wardens Dave and Sherri.
- **Last chance to Give for 2021** is Sunday December 26th at 10:30am
- Please keep General Synod (July) and Provincial Synod (April) in your prayers as they prepare to meet again in 2022.
- E-Giving – Check out Diocese of Athabasca to give to the Cathedral Parish, or PAR forms are available on the bulletin board at the back of the church.