

# TIDINGS

The newsletter of The Church of the Incarnation, Rt. 522, Mineral, Virginia.

The Twelve Days of Christmas is probably the most misunderstood part of the church year among Christians who are not part of liturgical church traditions.

Contrary to much popular belief, these are not the twelve days before

Christmas, but in most of the Western Church are the twelve days from Christmas until the beginning of Epiphany (January 6th; the 12 days count from December 25th until January 5th).

In some traditions, the first day of Christmas begins on the evening of December 25th with the following day considered the First Day of Christmas (December 26th). In these traditions, the twelve days begin December 26 and include Epiphany on January 6.

In the Western church, Epiphany is usually celebrated as the time the Wise Men or Magi arrived to present gifts to the young Jesus (Matt. 2:1-12).

Traditionally there were three

Magi, probably from the fact of three gifts, even though the biblical narrative never says how many Magi came. In some cultures, especially Hispanic and Latin American culture, January 6th is observed as Three Kings Day, or



simply the Day of the Kings. Even though December 25th is celebrated as Christmas in these cultures, January 6th is often the day for giving gifts. In some places it is traditional to give Christmas gifts for each of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

The popular song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" is usually seen as simply a nonsense song for children with secular origins. However, some have suggested that it is a song of Christian instruction, perhaps dating to the

16th century religious wars in England, with hidden references to the basic teachings of the Christian Faith.

They contend that it was a mnemonic device to teach the catechism to youngsters. The "true love" mentioned in the song is not an earthly suitor, but refers to God Himself. The "me" who receives the presents refers to every baptized person who is part of the Christian Faith. Each of the "days" represents some aspect of the Christian Faith that was important for children to learn.

However, on another level, this should not prevent us from using the song in celebration of Christmas. Many of the symbols of Christianity were not originally religious, including even the present date of Christmas, but were appropriated from contemporary culture by the Christian Faith as vehicles of worship and proclamation.



### Birthdays

1. Rick Harlow
2. Susan Turney
5. Bethy Banocy
11. Crystal Wood
12. Jim DeBusk
14. Linda Pierce
16. William Irving
23. Jessica McCumisky
26. David Kronander
31. Edwin Keller

### Anniversaries

- 10 Mary and Calvin Wood, Jr.

### January 7, 2018

Altar Guild: Jane Keller and Claudia  
DeBusk Greeter: Bea Matthews  
Lectors: Nancy Moser, Rick Harlow

- [Genesis 1:1-5](#)
- [Acts 19:1-7](#)
- [Mark 1:4-11](#)
- [Psalm 29](#)

### January 14

Altar Guild: Jane Keller and Claudia  
DeBusk Greeter: Rick Harlow  
Lectors: Susan Utt, Nancy Thomas

- [1 Samuel 3:1-10\(11-20\)](#)
- [1 Corinthians 6:12-20](#)
- [John 1:43-51](#)
- [Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17](#)

### January 21 **VESTRY**

Altar Guild: Margaret Wood, Samantha  
Perry, Karen Guagliardo  
Greeter: Nancy Thomas  
Lectors: Jane Keller, Liz Mostrag

- [Jonah 3:1-5, 10](#)
- [1 Corinthians 7:29-31](#)
- [Mark 1:14-20](#)
- [Psalm 62:6-14](#)

### January 28 **POT LUCK**

Altar Guild: Margaret Wood, Karen  
Guagliardo, Samantha Perry  
Greeter: Pat Hall  
Lectors: Katherine Atkinson, Edwin  
Keller

- [Deuteronomy 18:15-20](#)
- [1 Corinthians 8:1-13](#)
- [Mark 1:21-28](#)
- [Psalm 111](#)



The Meanings:

On the 1st day of Christmas...

#### **A Partridge in a Pear Tree**

The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, whose birthday we celebrate on December 25, the first day of Christmas. In the song, Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge that feigns injury to decoy predators from her helpless nestlings, recalling the expression of Christ's sadness over the fate of Jerusalem:

"Jerusalem! Jerusalem! How often would I have sheltered you under my wings, as a hen does her chicks, but you would not have it so . . . ." (Luke 13:34)

On the 2nd day of Christmas...

#### **Two Turtle Doves**

The Old and New Testaments, which together bear witness to God's self-revelation in history and the creation of a people to tell the Story of God to the world.

On the 3rd day of Christmas...

#### **Three French Hens**

The Three Theological Virtues: 1) Faith, 2) Hope, and 3) Love (1 Corinthians 13:13)

On the 4th day of Christmas...

#### **Four Calling Birds**

The Four Gospels: 1) Matthew, 2)

Mark, 3) Luke, and 4) John, which proclaim the Good News of God's reconciliation of the world to Himself in Jesus Christ.

On the 5th day of Christmas... **Five Gold Rings**

The first Five Books of the Old Testament, known as the Torah or the Pentateuch: 1) Genesis, 2) Exodus, 3) Leviticus, 4) Numbers, and 5) Deuteronomy, which gives the history of humanity's sinful failure and God's response of grace in the creation of a people to be a light to the world.

On the 6th day of Christmas...

#### **Six Geese A-laying**

The six days of creation that confesses God as Creator and Sustainer of the world (Genesis 1)

On the 7th day of Christmas...

#### **Seven Swans A-swimming**

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: 1) prophecy, 2) ministry, 3) teaching, 4) exhortation, 5) giving, 6) leading, and 7) compassion (Romans 12:6-8; cf. 1 Corinthians 12:8-11)

On the 8th day of Christmas...

#### **Eight Maids A-milking**

The eight Beatitudes: 1) Blessed are the poor in spirit, 2) those who mourn, 3) the meek, 4) those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, 5) the merciful, 6) the pure in heart, 7) the peacemakers, 8) those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. (Matthew 5:3-10)

On the 9th day of Christmas...

#### **Nine Ladies Dancing**

The nine Fruit of the Holy Spirit: 1) love, 2) joy, 3) peace, 4) patience, 5) kindness, 6) generosity, 7) faithfulness, 8) gentleness, and 9) self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

On the 10th day of Christmas...

#### **Ten Lords A-leaping**

The ten commandments: 1) You

shall have no other gods before me; 2) Do not make an idol; 3) Do not take God's name in vain; 4) Remember the Sabbath Day; 5) Honor your father and mother; 6) Do not murder; 7) Do not commit adultery; 8) Do not steal; 9) Do not bear false witness; 10) Do not covet. (Exodus 20:1-17)

On the 11th day of Christmas...

#### **Eleven Pipers Piping**

The eleven Faithful Apostles: 1) Simon Peter, 2) Andrew, 3) James, 4) John, 5) Philip, 6) Bartholomew, 7) Matthew, 8) Thomas, 9) James bar Alphaeus, 10) Simon the Zealot, 11) Judas bar James. (Luke 6:14-16). The list does not include the twelfth disciple, Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus to the religious leaders and the Romans.

On the 12th day of Christmas...

#### **Twelve Drummers Drumming**

The twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed: 1) I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. 2) I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. 3) He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. 4) He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell [the grave]. 5) On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of power. 6) He will come again to judge the living and the dead. 7) I believe in the Holy Spirit, 8) the Church, 9) the communion of saints, 10) the forgiveness of sins, 11) the resurrection of the body, 12) and life everlasting.



Tom and I delivered the gifts and food donations (including a Food Lion gift card) to the family the church sponsored for Christmas. They were very appreciative and called all of you "angels".

Thank you to all who helped the two adult sisters and their combined five children to have a very special Christmas!

Sandy Brockel



WEDNESDAYS

5:30 Soup dinner

6:00 -7:00 Bible Study

January 10 - Luke chapter 2

January 17 & 28

Lesson #21



P.O. Box 307 Mineral 23117

Sundays 10:30 am

