
2017 Christmas Letter from the Dean

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Questions. Christmas sure does have a lot of questions:

“What do you want for Christmas?” “Mommy, who is Santa Claus?” “Honey, what are we going to get the kids for Christmas this year?” “What am I going to do on Christmas Day this year?” “Will I be lonely again this Christmas?” “Will I get a raise this Christmas?” “Who’s playing football on TV today?” Why do we have Christmas anyway?”

Those are the more spoken questions. But, each of us also has deeper questions. What are your deeper questions? Have you stopped for a moment to consider what your inner questions might be?

Here at the Cathedral of St. Philip, we answer a lot of questions this season. When, what, where, and why questions. And we offer ways that people can remember the holiness of this time of year. We provide ways to serve. We even teach and preach and sing about the love and mystery of God. Those are solid answers, with centuries of wisdom and tradition behind them.

But the Cathedral also exists to help us continue to ask inner questions; and sometimes it is those deeper questions that truly lead us into new life.

In the traditional Christmas story from Luke, maybe the most famous question is the one where Mary asks, “How can this be since I do not know a man?” I know how that question is usually interpreted! But what if we interpret that question even more deeply? What if the angel Gabriel has visited Mary to tell her that God favors her, and that she will conceive and have a great child, and she is asking, oh so deeply, “How can this be, since I don’t know anybody?”

At Christmas, this Cathedral serves to help us know somebody. Being with each other, knowing one another, sharing life and love together, really does help to conceive things! Our community, and shared life, creates new life in the world!

Come to church, then, and help us celebrate Christmas this year. We are really celebrating new life, which is what Christmas always is. Come to church, then, and help us ask each other deep and good questions. Those questions –and answers—help us grow together.

On behalf of this community of new life, I wish you a Merry Christmas, one with honest questions and one with gracious fulfillments. This time of year, I also ask you to remember the Cathedral with a special financial gift. Your Christmas gift helps us to meet needs and to meet questions, throughout the year!

Merry Christmas, and Happy New Life!



The Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip

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