

The Red Door

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

February 2022

PILGRIM PRIEST'S PONDERINGS

The Smoothing of Fire

“A woman bends over the hearth in her home. It is late evening, and she is about to retire for the night. But first she must accomplish an important task, the smoothing of the fire. She carefully banks the red-hot coals of the fire, arranging them in a circle and then dividing them into three parts. As she does this she gives thanks for the presence of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

“Early tomorrow morning she will rekindle flame from the coals. She will use peat to build a roaring fire from which she will extract more red-hot coals. These she will place in a metal container and carry through the foggy sunrise to her daughter's new home. Her daughter will be married tomorrow, and the coals, the smoothed fire, are her mother's precious wedding gift to her.

“This fire has been in the family for a long time, literally hundreds of years. Generation after generation of women has smoothed the fire, each mother passing it on to her daughter on her wedding day. In a damp climate [the Western isles of Scotland] where tending a fire is constant work, these are precious family heirlooms. *[Adapted from Holy Ground by Deborah K. Cronin, Upper Room Books, 1999, pg. 73].*

This description of the smoothing of fire is one of my favorite metaphors for the Church. There are those – both women and men – who are called by God to tend the Fire of Faith, by the direction of the Holy Spirit preparing the coals for either bright burning or resting for a season, but never letting the fire go out.

To those inexperienced in smoothing, the gently glowing coals may look as if the fire is about to go out, and that the fire is done burning in that place. However, for those who have the responsibility of tending the fire, the essential question is: are these coals hot enough to reignite the fire for the new day.

This is the question facing those who lead the Church in 2022. The coals are individual Christians, the fireplace individual congregations, and the heat is the joy and the love of Christ. Outside observers may look and declare the congregation almost dead and pronounce that it is time to close and focus on other fireplaces. The truly discerning leaders, however, will see in many places not a dying fire, but a smoothed fire, ready to be reignited.

Thanks be to God for our Bishop Provisional, Wayne Smith, who can see that St. Mary's Hillsboro fire is not dying, merely smoothed, ready to be reignited for a new day. His words to the members of the congregation on January 19 spoke of his discernment of smoothing, and that the fire will burn brightly once again at St. Mary's. I share that discernment and am thankful to Jesus Christ that I have been part of the smoothing of your fire for the last nineteen months. My prayer is that your current lay leadership and your future clergy leadership will soon bring the fire of St. Mary's back to a bright flame that will warm the community of Hillsboro, Highland County and indeed the whole world with the warmth, the love, the joy of Jesus Christ!!

Your fellow Ambassador for Jesus Christ,
David+

VESTRY

Vestry Report

John Joy, Sr Warden
 Charles Everhart, Jr Warden
 Richard Davis
 Judy Franklin
 open
 Andrea Harner

Newsletter editor—John Glaze
Submissions to THE RED DOOR are welcomed. © items cannot be published without consent of the owner.



27 FEB

Page 3 photo of Catharine Collins, circa 1910, source: Archive at Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, Fort Collins, Colorado Slides Collection Image S01402, Slide Book V pg 22
Page 2 photo of Catharine Collins and Mildred Morgan Evans from collection of Highland County Historical Society.

I am very pleased to report we enjoyed a productive and meaningful mid-week visit last Wednesday (January 19) from the Diocesan Bishop Provisional Wayne Smith. Rev. Smith spent over two hours with us, looking at our buildings and interior spaces. He spent a good deal of time listening to those present share their past experiences with St. Mary's Episcopal Church, as well as letting us know about some of the challenges facing our Church, which are very similar to challenges facing other denominations as well. Shrinking attendance and a lack of trained clergy were among the topics covered. Based on feedback from some of those present, the meeting was productive and demonstrated what appears to be a real attempt by the Diocese to listen better to their parishes, especially those in rural areas.

If you have not completed a pledge card, please, please, do so! At last count we only had 10 returned; we sure could use some additional pledge cards filled out so we can better prepare our budgets and operations for this New Year. Also, please note we are tentatively planning our Annual meeting for the third Sunday in March, which is March 20. It will be after church in Lacy Hall, conditions permitting. We need at least one additional Vestry member, so please consider stepping up or suggesting someone who might be interested. We will also share the results of our interviews from the "Why" of St. Mary's project that began last fall. Lastly, I would like to express our gratitude from the St. Mary's family to Rev. David Bailey for his steadying hand and wonderful sermons the past 18 months. We all wish David the best as he begins a new assignment on March 1. The Diocese has arranged for a priest to fill in from March 1 for 2-4 months as we work toward getting a more permanent arrangement in place for our pastoral leadership. Note that this may not look the same as the full time or part time arrangements we have had for the past many years, due to the shortage of available clergy.

Respectfully submitted,

John Joy
Senior Warden



Mildred Morgan Evans remembered Mrs. Collins, They lived on the next property and became fast friends. She remembered that there was exactly 90 years difference in their ages.

(Left) Cartharine Collins with Mildred Morgan (Evans).

PLEDGE CARDS?
Please turn YOURS in today!

We know of Col. William Collins and his son, Caspar, as they are historically well documented. But how about William Collins' wife, Catharine Wever Collins?

Catherine Willis Wever was born 30 Oct 1818 in Weverton, Maryland to Col. Caspar Wever and Jane Catharine Dunlop Wever. You should remember some time back, we brought you the story of Col Wever who worked as an engineer and was also involved in railroad development. *(Read more about him and his work by checking out a book about him from our library.)* How did a Marylandian come to Hillsborough? We know that



her sister, Virginia Hedessa Wever came to teach at the Hillsborough Female College and to be close to her sister, Catharine. Virginia was an earnest worker at St. Mary's also. Another sister, Charlotte, was married to Dr. Carleton Sams, another of our founders. The common denominator seems to be Isaac Sams (another of our founders), who had taught in Maryland and knew the Wever family.

Catharine loved Dogwood Knob, the name of their home on what is now Collins Avenue. The house still stands, in an enlarged state. Originally, Collins Avenue was the name of the street between Rite Aid and 5/3 Bank, now known as Catharine Street (named after Mrs. Collins) and their property extended from there to Somers St (named for Somers, CT, birthplace of William) as well as from US 62 to SR 73. The large property had many gardens, orchards, vineyards and kept Catharine busy (although she employed help). There were barns for the horses and other uses.

In 1863, Catharine traveled west to visit her husband and son, an arduous journey involving as many modes of transportation as can be imagined. Her letters back home are quite interesting, but she continues to be a mother to her children. A portion of her letter to Josie from St. Louis, Nov 4, 1863:

"Tell Fannie (*Kellogg*) she must write to me soon, if I can only get good pens, I will write very often. I enclose you \$5 (*\$110.64 in 2022*) to pay Mrs. Buckner for my bonnet \$3.15 (*\$69.70 in 2022*). I have paid for everything else and also to pay for the making and trimmings of Fannie's dress. I hope you have money to buy pens &c. Good-bye my darling child and God bless you."

Catharine's letter on Christmas is from Fort Laramie:

"Christmas night—I have been to two entertainments...the first at Mr. Bullock's. He has a very pretty house and the parlor is a beautiful though not large room with handsome curtains to the 3 windows, a beautiful brussels carpet, a few pictures and other nice furniture. In one corner, two very elegant bowls filled with egg-nogg and two fine cakes, with goblets and small china plates were placed on a circular table. One of the cakes was a

Receiving Holy Communion helps you feel a part of the Parish of St. Mary's. Rev. David will bring communion to you on Sunday following the service at the church. Call the office to request!

PARISH PRAYER LIST*

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation and these on our Parish prayer list: Herschel Hook, Nancy Orth, Mary Reynolds, Jim Shirkey, Maxine McGrath, Sharon Kamm, Bob & Dorothy Hodson, Susan Bright, Dan Fisher, Elmer Highley, Randall Jones, Bob Lowell, **Ken Joy, Gary & Sandy Ferrell**, Becki Crum, those suffering with coronavirus as well as all health workers treating them, the patients and staff at Georgetown Veterans Home as well as those serving in our armed forces: Macy Lyle, Henry Sherrill, Jaden Chin-Franz and Javier Paula.

Names in **Bold will be removed at the end of the month. If you know the person continues to need our prayers, please call the church office.*

superb fruit—the other jelly. Mrs. Van Winkle ladled out the egg-nogg. I cut the cake and Mr. B—passed it around himself. All the ladies who were at the dinner with the exception of Mrs. Wright were there and Capts. Van Winkle, Marshall, Love and Koehne and Lieuts. Glenn, Reeves, Boalt, Brown, Waters and Collins. (*Caspar Collins*) There were a few songs sung and I was sorry to have to leave and go to another supper. However, go we did, and you should have seen the table. It was furnished with the greatest abundance and our "glorious banner" festooned above it."

Catharine began her homeward journey on 4 August 1864. After describing the mode of transport,

"Last night we camped in a beautiful meadow opposite the Indian Agency 28 miles from Fort Laramie. We took our supper seated round a camp chest and soon after retired to our respective tents. I believe the best one is pitched for my use and Florence and I sleep on buffalo robes with a bearskin bolster. We were up at two o'clock this morning and breakfasted and on the road by 4 o'clock."





February

1—*Dea Flinn*

2—*Jennie Harner*

5—*John Joy*

7—*BJ Gee*

27—*Charles Everhart*

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St. Mary's Episcopal Church
234 N. High St.
Hillsboro, OH 45133



As you know, Mrs. Collins did safely arrive back in Hillsboro and lived here until her death at the age of 93 in 1911. If you are interested in further readings about the Collins family, or specifically her letters home, contact John.

COFFEE HOUR - 27 FEB

TO HONOR DAVID BAILEY'S TIME HERE!

Lector & Intercessor Schedule

1st week	Betty & Jim Heathcote
2nd week	Connie Reynolds & Dea Flinn
3rd week	Carol & John Joy
4th week	Rich Davis & Connie Reynolds
5th week	Connie Reynolds & Dea Flinn

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH INFORMATION

The Diocese of Southern Ohio
St. Mary's Episcopal Church
234 N. High St Hillsboro, OH 45133
937-393-2043

The Rev. David Bailey
Supply Priest

SUNDAY WORSHIP - 10:00 am
IN PERSON & Streaming on Facebook
COMMUNION FOR THE HOMEBOUND—
Sunday after service.

We strive to be safe and make our parishioners and guests feel safe and welcome!

WEB SITE:
www.smehillsboro.weebly.com