

# The Red Door

## St. Mary's Episcopal Church

April 2024

### RAMBLINGS FROM THE RECTOR



*Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'* (John 11:25-27 NRSV)

This past Sunday I talked about liminal space. There are many ways that people have tried to describe liminal space. Some speak of it as the time in between what was before and what is to come. Some talk about that moment when we are preparing to take a leap of faith. The word liminal literally means “to do with a doorway or threshold.”

So what is liminal space about for me? I love the picture above as an example. It is a time of choices. It is a time where the future is not certain. It is a time when there is no clear, obvious, unique path forward – when any of several paths could be “the right path.” There are many doorways available.

To me, liminal space is at the core of what it means to be Christian. In our faith, we are constantly called to repentance. Our tradition has turned this into a process of admitting guilt, confession, and absolution. This is not actually repentance. Repentance is a recognition that our current path is not leading to God and choosing a different path that might. Repentance is changing direction or turning around. Repentance is intentionally entering and then leaving liminal space. It is in liminal space that we look for (and potentially find) God.

Rev Warren Huestis

### PARISH READING

#### EXTRACTED FROM THE CLUTTER OF THE RECTOR'S DESK

Draw near: Praying from a liminal space

Lynne Baab • Wednesday February 1 2023



I first met the word “liminal” in 2009 in readings for a new course I was planning to teach on the missional church. I had arrived in New Zealand in 2007 to teach pastoral theology, and I found that many church leaders there were talking about the idea

that Christians need to be missional. They seemed to be contrasting “missional” with traditional church missions. I didn't understand the concept and wanted to learn more. What better way to learn than to design a course around a new topic?

To summarize briefly, “missional” focuses on the idea that we are sent in to the world as Jesus was sent (John 17:18 and 20:21), which of course refers to missionaries sent to distant lands as well as people like you and me who are sent into our families, neighborhoods, workplaces, cities, and countries to bring the aroma of Christ (2 Corinthians 2:15). If you'd like to read more about what “missional church” means, I wrote an article about it.

For this blog post, I want to focus on a word often used in the missional church literature: liminal. The word comes from the Latin *limen*, which means doorway or threshold. A liminal space is an in-between space, which can happen for individuals, groups like congregations, or even cities or countries. Missional church writers began arguing 15 to 20 years ago that the church is in a liminal space as the wider society becomes more secular and as children raised in the church do not attend as adults.

Liminal times are profoundly uncomfortable, and they also offer significant gifts along with the challenges. Paul Tournier, Swiss physician and author, describes the risk and opportunity. “It is like the time when a trapeze artist lets go of the bar and hangs in midair ready to catch another support: it is a time of danger, of expectation, of uncertainty, of excitement, of extraordinary aliveness.” [1]

We might use the term “liminal space” to describe starting a new job, retiring, getting ready to move, settling →

## VESTRY

Barb Zumwalde, Sr Warden  
 Judy Sauer, Jr Warden  
 John Glaze  
 Maggie Hatfield  
 BJ Hopkins  
 Matt Sauer

Newsletter editor—John Glaze

## Parish Reading *(continued)*

into a new place, getting married (or getting divorced), gaining a new in-law or child or grandchild, starting a new volunteer role, or dealing with a new medical issue or surgery. Even those moments before and after a vacation can feel liminal because of the unknown of what's going to happen on vacation, and the unsettled feelings of returning to real life.

Fuller seminary professor Vince L. Bantu provides a description of liminal spaces that can help us pray in those times when we feel that we are between one trapeze and another: "While it can be disorienting to be placed in the space in between, it can also be a helpful reminder to love that which is the Lord's rather than the world (1 John 2:15-17)." [2]

Liminal spaces invite us into a continual turning to the God who loves us. "I need your help in these feelings of disorientation," we might pray. Or, "Please send your Holy Spirit to give me stability when everything feels so unstable." Or, "Help me to be honest about how challenging this liminal space is and turn to you, over and over, in it." Dr. Bantu would encourage us to pray, "Use the challenge of this in-between space to turn my heart (or my congregation's heart) toward you and what you love."

Paul Tournier argues that a liminal space is "a time of danger, of expectation, of uncertainty, of excitement, of extraordinary aliveness." Each of his descriptors can be turned into a prayer:

- ◆ "Please, mighty God, keep me safe in my feelings of danger."
- ◆ "Jesus, you walk with us every day. Help us to expect to see you at work."
- ◆ "Help us to trust you in our uncertainty."
- ◆ "This exciting transitional time makes me feel fresh and alive. Help me to perceive that aliveness as a gift from you. Help me to serve you with this energy I'm feeling."

I found the quotation by Paul Tournier in an article in a Fuller Seminary Magazine entitled "[Liminality as an Incubator for Growth](#)." [3] That title alone is a good fuel for prayer. "God who transforms and shapes us, use my in-between places as a source of growth and transformation into the image of your beloved son, Jesus." We might pray for our congregation, city, or country to experience growth because of liminal spaces.

Many of our congregations are in liminal spaces. Many of us are personally in liminal spaces. I encourage you to think about the areas of your life, the lives of your friends and family members, your congregation, your city or country, that feel like in-between places, perhaps with the high risk of a trapeze artist who has just let go. I encourage you to use some of the prayers in this post, or create your own, to help you draw near to God and trust in God's goodness, and pray for yourself, those you love, and those who lead.

(Next week: praying to recognize the good. Illustration by Dave Baab: Lake Washington, Bellevue, the Cascade Mountains, and the Interstate 90 floating bridge from Mount Baker Park, Seattle. Notice how rough the lake is on the right side of the bridge. The wind is coming from the right, the south. If you'd like to receive an email when I post on this blog, sign up under "subscribe" below.)

For further reading

- ◆ Developing a missional approach: Being sent into the world as Jesus was sent
- ◆ Developing a missional posture or stance
- ◆ Richard Halvorson on being sent

[1] Paul Tournier, *A Place for you: Psychology and Religion* (New York: Harper Collins, 1968). Quoted in "[Liminality as an Incubator for Growth](#)" by Jose Abraham, Fuller Seminary Magazine, Issue #20, page 64.

[2] "[A Home In Between](#)" by Vince L. Bantu, Fuller Seminary Magazine, Issue #20, page 40.

[3] "[Liminality as an Incubator for Growth](#)" by Jose Abraham.

<https://www.lynebaab.com/blog/draw-near-praying-from-a-liminal-space>

## Easter 2024



As we celebrate Easter at St. Mary's, I thought it would be of interest to revisit past Easters to learn just what momentous celebrations have previously taken place. What I found often included sad times, such as the departure of beloved rectors. That story and more begins on the following page.

# Senior Warden Report

Good morning or good evening, Saint Mary's:

As I write this, the painters are busy at work painting the nave. Our flooring will be completed soon. The electrician will be repairing our bell system that is temporarily not working. We are close! I myself can't wait. The feeling of being in the nave for services is difficult to explain. For myself, sitting there is a spiritual experience. You can't but feel the presence of God. It's an emotional time. I feel His presence, His warmth and His love. As I sit there and view our breath-taking altar and hear the organ singing sweetly, I can feel his arms reaching out and embracing me. How can you not feel it? We are truly in the house of the Lord. I know we have been worshipping in Lacy Hall and it has been great, but there is no comparison. Once back in the nave I think all will feel the spiritual experience rise thru us. If you haven't been able to attend, please try to once we are back in. If you are new and have only experienced Lacy Hall, be prepared for a spiritual event like no other. I love our church and God has blessed us with caring for this wonderful place.

*Barb Zumwalde*  
Senior Warden

## Easter 1889

Few are history nuts as much as I, your ever-faithful newsletter editor. As I have bathed in the history of St. Mary's, I have come to know so many folks who pre-date me by nearly a century, in some cases. I feel that I know some as well as I know those now living.

One of the items in the archives of the church is a small booklet. Hand-written on the outside is the date "1889" and "The services at Hillsboro Episcopal Church when The Stained Glass Memorial Windows to dear Katie Trimble (were dedicated)." The inside is a report on Easter Services:

The attendance at St. Mary's Episcopal Church last Sunday was very large, and the services were very impressive. At the regular morning services at 10:30 the choir was assisted by Prof. Ed. Frey and Mr. H. B. Thompson, and rendered the joyous Easter music in a delightful manner. The ladies of the church had donated flowers for the occasion, and the magnificent floral decorations rendered the scene a most charming one. Two beautiful memorial windows, given by Mrs. Wm. H. Trimble, were unveiled. The first one is on the left side, near the organ, and bears the following inscription:

**In Memory of Katherine  
Buckingham Trimble.**

**Entered into rest at Woodland, July ninth, 1883,  
"And we also bless thy holy name for all thy  
servants departed this life in thy faith and fear."**

The second window is on the opposite side of the church. It is inscribed:

**In Memory of the Founders of St. Mary's  
Protestant Episcopal Church.**

**Prof. Isaac Sams  
J. Milton Boyd  
Col. Wm. H. Trimble  
Carlton C. Sams, M.D.  
Col. Wm. O. Collins**

**Alexander B. Sams  
William H. Bayard**

*(as previously mentioned, the founders window was originally located where the St. Cecelia window is now.*

In the afternoon service at 4 o'clock Rev. George B. Beecher was present and delivered a beautiful and interesting address. Mr. Beecher said:

"I have been requested to tell in a few words why these windows which are unveiled today have been placed here. They bear upon them certain names which art, by brush and fire, has striven to make imperishable. In many a stately cathedral of the Old World are gorgeous windows put there hundreds of years ago to commemorate the virtues and heroisms of noble men and women. In the same buildings are marble statues and brazen tablets commemorating the names and deeds of their contemporaries. But the corroding tooth of time has crumbled the marble, and the feet of many generations have worn smooth the brazen tablets, till they have well nigh ceased to tell their story. But the unfading and unchanging glass, with its pure and gorgeous colors, is as fresh and brilliant today as when first unveiled, and the delighted eyes of succeeding generations never weary of reading in their radiant beauty the names and deeds of the heroic and the good.

These windows have been placed here to bring to our memories and to hand down to coming times certain loved and honored names. They are the memorials which love and admiration set up in their fond endeavor to make worth and goodness as immortal on earth as they are in Heaven. But what are these names and why are they chosen from the many good and worth names of the passing generation to be here enrolled?

That window is in memory of a loved and loving daughter. One who by her patient fortitude, her unselfish devotion to others, and her gentle Christian faith, has left us a beautiful example of true womanhood.

On this window are the names of the men who founded this church; the men who by their labors and sacrifices reared this edifice for the church of Christ; who by their patient perseverance and unflinching devotion through these many years have maintained the sacred fire of love and faith upon its altar.

Rev. Beecher then recounts the lives of these men, giving some of their history and involvement both in the church and the community. He then continues:

These then were the men who founded St. Mary's. What they were, I feel only too keenly, has been most inadequately told, and yet even this recital shows them to have been a band of men well worthy to have



**APRIL**  
**Happy Birthday!**

***If you haven't let us  
know your birthday,  
please do! And if it's  
April, Happy Birthday!***



# The Red Door

St. Mary's Episcopal Church  
234 N. High St.  
Hillsboro, OH 45133  
937-393-2043

**SERVICE TIME**  
**Sunday - 9 am**

## *Easter 1889 (cont.)*

their names handed down to posterity for its love and honor. They were worthy, not alone as churchmen, but as men; worthy for what they did here, and worthy for what they did in the larger and broader field of humanity. They were earnest churchmen, generous and devoted, and they were earnest men, without narrowness or bigotry. They were broad, catholic, charitable. They believed in a Lord who is Lord of all, and for his honor and praise they builded this church. And so here in the church they built, on this glad Easter day, which of all the Sundays of the year proclaims most emphatically the glorious news of immortality, we unveil these memorials, not thinking thereby to make our loved and honored immortal, but because we believe they are immortal. If the departed are lost to us forever wisdom were as speedily as possible to forget them. But because they live, as this glorious Easter day declares, we do well to love and honor and cherish their memories, till the twilight is past and the day dawns, and we meet again on the glad rising morn of eternity.

## *Easter 1854 and more*

During the period leading up to Easter of 1854, what was going on with the congregation of St. Mary's? Well, planning for a building is probably the biggest news of the day. The actual work on St. Mary's building was begun on Good Friday, April 14, 1854, with the laying out of the foundation on In-Lot #37, 99 x 198 feet, on the southeast corner of North High and North Streets.

Ever a supporter of the local economy as well as the local people, one of the matters of contention between architect Hamilton and the Building Committee of Isaac Sams, J. Milton Boyd and Wm. O. Collins was the matter of employing mechanics from Cincinnati or hiring local workmen. In a letter to Mr. Boyd dated April 6, 1854, Hamilton wrote, "I have first rate mechanics here in each department of the work who are ready to do the entire work for that sum (\$5,000) according to my plan and specifications."

It appears, however, that carpenter John Henning was the only Cincinnati contractor who worked on the building, with the exception that the "terra cotta" work was done in the shop of Foot & Henzler in Cincinnati. Although it is not possible to identify all of the "terra cotta" work, a newspaper account of the consecration of the church published in the Highland Weekly News of Nov. 1, 1855 reports, "The front entrance is an arched door with a heavy cornice, immediately over which is a large window, 19 feet in height, with diamond panes and ornamental centre-piece in 'terra cotta'--a beautiful imitation of carved stone work. The front and rear corners of the main building are ornamented with

## *Easter 1854 (cont.)*

small minarets, also in 'terra cotta.'" In a bill from the "terra cotta" shop in Cincinnati there is a reference to "16 brackets and 4 chimney tops," which brackets may well have been to support lamps along the side walls of the church.

Moving ahead to 1907, we read: "Easter Day proved to be one of the most joyous and blessed the parish has ever experienced. The church was beautifully decorated with palms, blossoms and lilies, and though the decorations were not as costly as on former occasions, they were quite as effective. The choir is justly famous in Hillsboro, and upon this occasion came up to the high standard set for it. The church was filled with an interested and devotional congregation. The offering was one of the largest ever taken and amounted to more than \$100. (*That is \$3301.34 in 2024.*)

Jumping ahead to 1910, the April 1910 copy of "The Church Chronicle" includes another article from St. Mary's. It begins by reporting: "Holy Week services were well attended, especially the 'three hours' on Good Friday. On Easter Day this charming little church never looked more beautiful in its decorations of white and yellow. There were bushels of jonquils and quantities of Easter lilies, and the effect was overpoweringly beautiful..."

Many rectors who resigned did so effective following Easter Sunday. But perhaps one of the resignations affecting the congregation the most was the resignation of long-time organist, Meta Wright. We read the news in 1959:

### **ORGANIST RETIRES AFTER 35 YEARS AT CHURCH CONSOLE**

The strains of Easter Sunday music, as they poured forth from the organ of St. Mary's Episcopal Church on Easter Sunday morning, must have carried a hidden special message for Mrs. Meta Wright, who played the church organ for the last time after 35 years as church organist at St. Mary's. The message was "fairwell to thee, faithful friend."

Mrs. Wright was honored Sunday at the regular church service, in her honor, at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, following which a reception was held for her in the parish house of the beautiful old church on North High Street.

Mrs. Wright took over as church organist upon the retirement of Miss Sarah Murphy in 1924. Since that time the strains of Lohengrin, Baptismal music, Easter and Christmas hymns as well as the regular service hymns of the Episcopal faith, have been played many times by "Meta."

*John Glaze*