



The Red Door

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

December 2019

ADVENT

THE ADVENT WREATH

Music at St. Mary's



Concert

Series

2019-2020

Christmas
Celebrations

8 Dec

15 Dec

22 Dec

3:00pm

Advent is derived from the Latin word *Adventus*, the second coming. It is an intentional time to prepare ourselves for the symbolic coming of Christ, Christmas. Advent is the beginning of the church year, and a time for new beginnings for each of us. We begin a new lectionary year. Year A is focused on the Gospel of Matthew, a Jew writing to Jews that have found Christ's way to be truth. Preparation for this new year begins in Advent. As in Lent, we are to examine ourselves in light of how we are loving God and loving our neighbor. In this introspection, we ponder our successes and failures in doing so. More importantly we put the past in the past and look forward to the future, and all that can be accomplished in this new year.

How will you reach out into the community this year? What are the hopes and dreams for St. Mary's in this new year? How will you accomplish these goals? The focus of these goals begins in Advent. This year let us be intentional about all things Advent. As we open each door on our Advent calendar, read, mark and inwardly digest the scripture therein. As we light the candles on the Advent wreath, let us focus on the light of Christ that it represents. Let us go deep within our souls and scrub out the dust and dirt that interferes and inhibits our life in Christ. Let us come to Christmas a new creation in the Love of God. We are and have always been the beloved of God, but we are human and in our humanness we fall away and return, we succeed and we fail, we fall but we always get up. This, for me, is the meaning of Advent.

As the snow begins to dust the fallow fields and the chill of winter sets in, we settle into the season of Advent, the season of fires and blankets and thoughts of Christmas. Emmanuel is coming, God with us is here.

Peace and All Good,

George+



The Advent Wreath, candles on a wreath of evergreen, one additional being lit each Sunday during the Advent season, reminds us to focus on one of the four virtues Jesus brings to us: Hope, Love, Joy and Peace. The helps us in our spiritual preparation leading up to the birth or coming of the Lord, Jesus Christ. The wreath, typically a circular garland of evergreen branches, is a symbol of eternity and unending love. Five candles are arranged on the wreath.

The concept of the Advent wreath originated among German Lutherans in the 16th Century. However, it was not until three centuries later that the modern Advent wreath took shape.

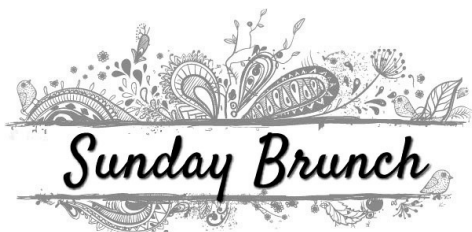
Research by Prof. Haemig of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, points to Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808-1881), a Protestant pastor in Germany and a pioneer in urban mission work among the poor as the inventor of the modern Advent wreath in the 19th century. Professor Haemig's research also indicates that the custom did not reach the United States until the 1930s, even among German Lutheran immigrants.

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VESTRY

Bob Lowell, Sr Warden
Betsy Miller, Jr Warden
Sandy Ferrell
Judy Franklin

Feel free to contact any Vestry member with questions, concerns, ideas, etc.



Sunday Brunch

December 1—Jennie Harner
(note date change)

**Brunch is
always a
good idea**

NEW in the library!

BOOKS

**about 100 of them
on many subjects
such as
commentaries
and devotionals!**

SENIOR WARDEN REPORT



I hope your Thanksgiving Holiday was full of friends, family, good times, shared memories, a special meal, and of course, a nap. I am personally thankful for my own blessings as well as all the good work and fellowship happening in our church. Our monthly Brunch continues to be a blessing. Thanks so much to John and Carol Joy for their generosity in hosting our November Brunch. The food was great and the company the same.

I want to take care of some business before I begin talking about our December celebrations and plans. First, the Vestry has been working toward making needed changes regarding the way our money is handled. We are working toward getting a budget which will carry us through the year, identifying needs, including grants that will help with funding some of our building improvements and projects and pursuing bids for the work that needs to be done. We have also decided to place all monies donated for special use, such as the Organ Fund and Music at St. Mary's into a restricted funds classification so that they will be used only for the purpose they were intended.

We would like to collect any Pledge forms by the end of November so that we can continue to work on the Budget for 2020. I hope that you are considering nominations for new Vestry positions. The Vestry is a true service to our congregation and we need people who will serve. Please consider whether you have a person who would make a good member or consider accepting if you are nominated. You may turn in your nomination for a Vestry member anytime. Nominations are also accepted from the floor during the January meeting planned for the 3rd Sunday of the month.

Our Sunday Brunches will continue next year. We have designated the 2nd Sunday of the month, but we can be flexible. If you want to host and find that the date is not convenient you may change to another Sunday. Just put your name in the Sunday slot on the calendar and write in "Brunch." And, of course, anyone can sign up for a coffee hour anytime of the month. This month our Brunch will be on the first Sunday of December and will be hosted by Jennie Harner. The new calendars for Coffee Hour and Altar Flowers are posted on the bulletin board in Lacy Hall.

St. Mary's is working toward some charitable Christmas projects including one for the needy which will be introduced at Church by Sandy Ferrell and a project identified by Reverend George where we can send cookies and other items of good cheer to a Tug Boat. The crews on the tug boats spend the Christmas season working on the boats and barges without being home with their families since their schedule requires them to be on 28 days and off 28 days. Reverend George is continuing the Wednesday Noon Healing Services with Jim Heathcote as faithful backup.

We are rapidly approaching Christmas! I hope you will make the events at church a priority in your plans for preparing yourself for this sacred and beautiful season. Advent begins on the first Sunday in December. The first of our Advent suppers and services begins on December 4th at Peace Lutheran at 6:00 p.m. The second Wednesday Advent meal and service is December 11th and will be held and hosted by St. Mary's at 6:00 p.m. The last Wednesday Advent supper and service will be December 18th back at Peace Lutheran at 6:00 p.m. Karen Vlaskamp is coordinating the meal for St. Mary's on December 11th. She is planning to have soup, sandwiches, and desserts and will need help from the congregation. If you can provide help in the areas of food or clean-up, please call Karen at (937) 393-3999.

Don't forget all the great Music at St. Mary's concerts during December: the Southern State Singers on Sunday, December 8th, "The Cheezies" on Sunday, December the 15th, and the musicians of St. Mary's on December 22nd. The concerts begin at 3:00 p.m. and are followed by a cookies and punch reception in Lacy Hall. If you can help by providing cookies for the receptions, call Lynn Lowell or Sandy Ferrell or bring a
(continued next page)

Purple has traditionally been the primary color of Advent. This hue symbolizes repentance and fasting, as denying oneself food is one way Christians show their devotion to God. Purple is also the color of royalty and the sovereignty of Christ, also known as the "King of Kings." So, purple in this instance demonstrates the anticipation of and reception of the coming King celebrated during Advent.



Today, many churches have begun to use blue instead of purple, as a means of distinguishing Advent from Lent. The first candle of the Advent wreath, the prophecy candle, or candle of **Hope**, is blue. The second, called the Bethlehem or **Peace** candle, (or the candle of preparation), is also blue. Likewise, the fourth Advent candle color is blue. It's called the angel candle, or the Candle of **Love**.

Pink (or rose) is also one of the colors of Advent used during the third Sunday of Advent, also known as Gaudete Sunday in the Catholic Church. Pink or rose represents **Joy** or rejoicing and reveals a shift in the season

away from repentance and toward celebration.

White is the color of Advent representing purity and light. Christ is the sinless, spotless, pure Savior. He is the light come into a dark and dying world. Also, those who receive Jesus Christ as savior are washed of their sins and made whiter than snow. The **Christ** candle is the fifth Advent candle, positioned in the center of the wreath. This Advent candle's color is white.

Spiritually preparing by focusing on the colors of Advent in the weeks leading up to Christmas is a great way for Christian families to keep Christ the center of Christmas, and for parents to teach their children the true meaning of Christmas.

Info from Dea Flinn, Wikipedia and Fairchild, Mary. "The 3 Main Advent Colors Are Full of Meaning." Learn Religions, Apr. 17, 2019, learnreligions.com/symbolic-colors-of-advent-700445.



Well, yes, Martha, it's VERY festive, but the Advent Wreath only has 5 candles!

Senior Warden *(continued)* batch on Sunday morning.

I continue to be amazed at how commercialized Christmas has become. Just walk into any Big Box Store the day after HALLOWEEN (!) and see the big displays of Christmas trees, ornaments, toys, electronics, and SALES! SALES! SALES! It is sad, but it does seem to become more about money every year. Christmas is a great time to get together for presents and decorations, celebrations, and food, but, more every year I want personally to remember the real reason for Christmas: Christ's birth. And even though he was God made Man, he came as a human being. An ordinary baby born in a stable, swaddled in the clothes of the time. His mother an ordinary Jewish girl. His father a carpenter. He came as one of us, but we can't forget that he was ordinary with an extraordinary purpose. For Jesus was born just so he could die for you and me. While all the parties and prep are fun, I can't think of a better place to be than in Church on Christmas Eve. That night, of all nights, is the culmination of all our human hopes.

Lynn and I often remember and talk about our first Midnight Christmas Eve service at St. Mary's. As we came out of the candlelit *(continued next page)*

SERVERS Altar Guild: Lynn Lowell & Sandy Ferrell

DEC	LECTOR	CHALICE	ACOLYTES & CRUCIFER	TORCHES	USHERS	INTERCESSOR
1	Connie Reynolds	Connie Reynolds	Charles Everhart Dallas Harner	Rob Harner Ty Harner	Carol & John Joy	Carolinn Shibley
8	Jim Heathcote	Jim Heathcote	Richard Davis Rob Harner	Ty Harner Dallas Harner	Andrea Harner Shirley Gilliam	Betty Heathcote
15	Jennie Harner	Connie Reynolds	Sandy Ferrell Dallas Harner	Ty Harner Rob Harner	Carolinn Shibley Deanna Flinn	
22 24 29	Morning Prayer TBA Lessons & Carols					

If you have an emergency on your assigned Sunday, either find someone to take your place, or call Deanna Flinn.

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



Senior Warden *(continued)*

quiet of the church it was snowing. It was beautiful. A freshly fallen snow and the start of a new day. I believe it was symbolic of starting a new life with Christ. The freshly fallen blanket of snow covers the past and you can have a new start in life.

This year St. Mary's Christmas Eve service will be held at 4:00 p.m. Please mark the time on your calendars. There will be candles, fellowship, music and that wonderful sense of awe and the Presence that we especially feel on this Holy Night. So, please. Come. Come to the stable. Come and worship Christ, the King.

**"For unto you is born this day, in the city of David,
a Savior which is Christ the Lord."**

Luke 2:11

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Lowell, Senior Warden

Sorry! No room to tell you about the wonderful concerts for MUSIC AT ST. MARY'S in December. Please read about them on our website:

**www.masmhillsboro.weebly.com
or our brochure**

St. Mary's Episcopal Church Information

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

The Rev. George Sherrill

The Diocese of Southern Ohio
The Rt. Rev. Thomas E. Breidenthal, Diocesan Bishop

WEB SITE:

www.smehillsboro.weebly.com

SUNDAY WORSHIP and SUNDAY
SCHOOL 10:00 am