



The Red Door

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

December 2022

LET US PREPARE GOD'S CHURCH FOR HIS COMING THE GREENING OF THE CHURCH FOR ADVENT

*"The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, The cypress, the pine, and the box tree together, To beautify the place of My sanctuary;
And I will make the place of My feet glorious."*

Isaiah 60:13

I was looking at the sheets on the wall outside Lacy Hall where many have written their favorite Advent & Christmas Traditions, both personal and for St. Mary's. It's brought back many memories, but I think the one that stands out for me is the Greening of the Church. In my home parish, this took place the 1st weekend of Advent and was accompanied by music (sometimes just taped music from someone's boombox) and lots of food and fellowship.

Admittedly, I have lots of fond memories for this time of the year, but this is the one that has always crystallized the season for me. In the post Black Friday insanity and the Christmas movies that started in October, this was the thing that truly put me in the mind of the true reason for the season. Advent always seemed to get lost in the Christmas Shopping rush, but Advent is about beginnings and anticipation. Beginning of the new Liturgical year. (*Year C now*) A reminder of the hope and promise that God has given us in Christ. The anticipation of the birth of the Messiah. It was a grounding moment.

In the midst of all the hype and parties, and leftover turkey, here we were beautifying the Sanctuary for the arrival of the Christ Child. A community of faith reclaiming the meaning of Advent in a world consumed by Santa and presents. An empty creche awaiting the arrival of Mary, Joseph, and the Baby Jesus.

Many believe that the greens are not supposed to go up until Christmas Eve, but there are many traditions and theological reasons for the "greening" or "hanging of the greens" at the beginning of Advent. In fact, many Christian faith traditions around the world have special liturgies just for the Greening of the Church!

The traditions of using evergreens in homes, and eventually in churches, goes back to pre-Roman times as they were a symbol of peace, joy, and victory. Early Christians used to put them in their windows to indicate that Christ was present in their homes. And, they often decked out their sanctuary with the boughs of evergreens as a promise of the new life, as a sign of the hope that in

Christ all live forever.

Because evergreens are "ever green," they never change color and therefore are ever alive. This symbolizes the unchanging nature of God and a reminder that through Christ, we have received everlasting life.

The greens that we use to adorn the church are extensions of the Advent Wreath, with its circle of evergreens that serve as a reminder that, in the midst of the grey of winter, life and hope continue in the eternal circle and never-ending love of God. Holly and ivy eventually were added to remind us of the Burning Bush and the drops of blood from the Crown of Thorns.

The use of the Christmas tree, often adorned with Chrismons, comes from medieval German outdoor plays that portrayed the creation story. It represented the Tree of Life and was usually a fir tree decorated with apples.

The National Altar Guild Association of the Episcopal Church offers ideas for Advent foliage using evergreens, holly, poinsettias, and boxwoods, including boxwood topiaries with trailing ivy. Poinsettias are traditional Advent and Christmas foliage in the church, particularly at the altar. Poinsettias are an appropriate sign of our regard and concern for one another, providing the opportunity to honor, remember, or celebrate the lives of loved ones.

There are many traditions around greening the church for Advent, but all have the essential purpose of preparing for us for the season of hope and anticipation, calling us to make a place for the Christ Child in our lives. In one of the Hanging of the Greens services, it was equated with the "greening" of ourselves in preparation for receiving Christ into our hearts for the new year!

I missed the opportunity to share the greening of the church during our COVID exile. It will be wonderful to once again return to the comforting and spiritual traditions that make this time of the year hopeful and special.

May this Advent be a blessed season for you. One of hope and promise, of expectation and fulfillment. And may the new church year provide a joyous beginning in your life and the life of St. Mary's.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Terri

VESTRY

Vestry Report (continued from Nov)

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

Newsletter editor—John Glaze

Submissions to *THE RED DOOR* are welcomed. © items cannot be published without consent of the owner.

Samaritan Outreach continues to depend upon donations to meet their current needs. Please help us help SOS serve our community. The collection box is now in the Parish House.



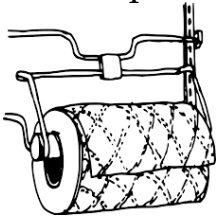
Diapers



Clothes Washing Liquid

Toilet Paper

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*If you would prefer to mail a monetary donation:
Samaritan Outreach Services
PO Box 242
Hillsboro, OH 45133*

About 3 am in the morning after our third full day, I got up from bed, wide awake, with my mind racing. I kept seeing images of the various rock formations, the wide open plains, the granite and other rock formations, as well as one clear picture in my mind of a bison rolling in the dust, with prairie dogs sticking their heads out of the numerous nearby holes. What sense is to be made of all this, I thought. The next thing I knew I was thinking about one of my favorite movies, *The Shawshank Redemption*, where towards the end the character Red, played by Morgan Freeman, attempts to explain his friend Andy Duframe's escape from prison. He does so in part by commenting on Andy's fondness for rocks and geology, and says "Geology is the study of pressure and time. That's all it takes really, pressure, and time." Now I really don't know what qualifies for an "ah ha" moment for anyone else, or me, for that matter. What I can tell you is that I found some additional calmness, during the rest of the trip and started looking at things a little differently. I found myself becoming more aware of how the surroundings made me feel, rather than what I thought about them. The last two days were spent looking at a Minuteman missile silo, visiting Wall Drug, touring part of Badlands National Park, attending the annual Buffalo Roundup at Custer State Park, and touring the Crazy Horse monument and museum. While there was more information available to us than most of us could process, the processing part was no longer a big concern. There are several areas in Badlands National Park that some of the Native American tribes hold as sacred. While some of the views are breath taking, there are areas there that seem little more than something outcast from a barren, forbidden, foreign world. By week's end, I had quickly shelved that perception from my thinking. I thought of the bison image, the bull rolling on his back in the dust, and how timeless that was. We were told on two separate occasions that the Native Americans, when they spoke to their Holy Spirit, never asked for anything for themselves. They prayed, if you will, for the buffalo, knowing that as long as there were the herds of buffalo, they could survive. I began to see some timelessness in the living bison, as well as the spectacular geography surrounding them. I mentioned to begin with that our first night speaker, John Esposti, was fond of quoting South Dakota poet Badger Clark. In closing, here is part of Badger Clark's poem, God's Reserve:

*So the folks all shy from desert land,
'Cept mebbe a few that kin understand.*

*There the world's the same as the day 'twas new,
With the land as clean as the smokeless sky
And never a noise as the years have flew,
But the sound of the warm wind driftin' by'
And there, alone, with the man's world far,
There's a chance to think who you really are.
And over the reach of the desert bare,
When the sun drops low and day wind stills,
Sometimes you kin almost see Him there,
As He sits alone on the blue-gray hills,
A-thinkin' of things that's beyond our ken
And restin' Himself from the noise of men.*

Respectfully submitted,
John Joy



I recently read FIVE PRINCIPLES OF GODLY STEWARDSHIP in the Autumn edition of “The Anglican Digest” and thought I’d share the bare bones, Reader’s Digest and compacted version with you. (Originally appeared in The Evangelist Newsletter of St. Mark’s Cathedral in Shreveport LA)

GOD OWNS EVERYTHING and “everything” means EVERYTHING! See Psalm 24:1. God appointed man to manage this creation. See Genesis 2:15.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE GOD’S MANAGEMENT COMPANY Just as we expect our children to share in the chores which make the household run smoothly, we are in contract with God to be a good steward of our part. Choices you make must give God the glory!

STEWARDSHIP: RESPONSIBILITY WITH ACCOUNTABILITY We are created not to be servants, but relatives of God. God receives tremendous glory from people who willingly serve. God watches how we respond to the temptations of money.

STEWARDSHIP DEMANDS A COMMITMENT TO OTHERS Stewardship is doing something for others with HIS money. Your *attitude*, Paul wrote, should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, taking the very nature of a servant. See Phil 2:5-7. *“Stewardship is both an expression of your love for God and the realization of that love in your relationships to others.”*

STEWARDSHIP HAS ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES Jesus’ teachings assumes that your life on earth will prepare you for your future in heaven. Stewardship builds heavenly treasure by transferring wealth from your bank account to your heavenly account.



DECEMBER 11 - Lessons and Carols service will be celebrated with our friends at All Saints in Washington CH. There will be no service in Hillsboro that day. In addition, the folks at All Saints will have a meal for us to stay and enjoy with them. Make plans now to travel to Washington for this special 10am service!



DECEMBER 24
Christmas Eve service will be celebrated both in Hillsboro and in Washington. Watch for times and places!

The entry forms are ready and will be available the first Sunday in Advent! You’ll have until the 3rd Sunday in Advent (Gaudete Sunday) to submit your entry and prizes will be determined and handed out at the Christmas Eve Service! As you may remember, we will have prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places! In the case of duplicate winning numbers, there will be a drawing to award the prizes!



There are paper ornaments on the tree displaying photos of folks associated in some with St. Mary’s. Your job is to identify each of these folks! So, you see, how hard could this be? These are all St. Mary’s PEEPS!

Now, use of any reference materials is permitted, but keep in mind that sharing your answers with others will only lessen your own chance of winning!
GOOD LUCK!

Additional Memorials for Carlene Phillips

We thank the following for their generous gifts in memory of Carlene Phillips:
Donald B Phillips
Peggy Addington
Larry Addington

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

The season of Advent is not like Lent, a time of penitence, but rather a time to prepare joyfully for Christ’s return and his reign. The Lord’s return does have a relationship to penitence, but primarily it leads to repentance—an action of turning around and being turned around by the work of God in us. Each of the four Advent Sundays has its own particular emphasis, and each reveals the Lord who enters into time and space, into our personal and corporate lives, whenever the “right time” occurs.

By reflecting on our lives in the light of God’s Word, we recognize the direction in which our present values and habits are leading us and we see that those values and ways of living must be changed. We further recognize that only the action of God can make that change in us. In the words of the Collect for the First Sunday of Advent, it is God who enables us “to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light.”

(The Book of Common Prayer, page 211)

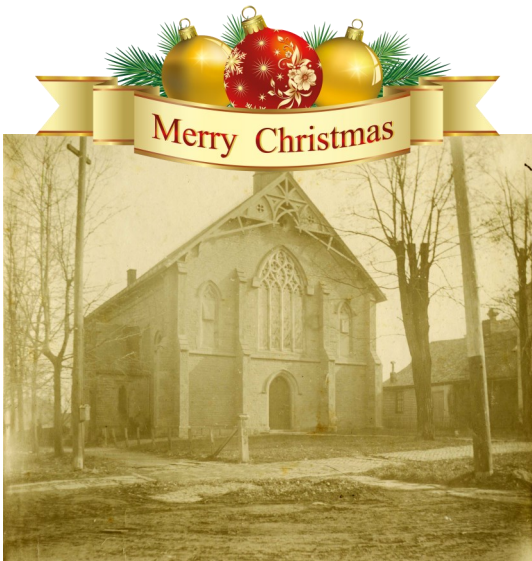


PARISH PRAYER LIST

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation. We remember Dale Phillips, Eleanor Cumberland, Shirley Gilliam, Margaret Lyons, Joyce Kittrell, Herschel Hook, Nancy Orth, Maxine McGrath, Sharon Kamm, Bob & Dorothy Hodson, Dan Fisher, Bob Lowell, the families and friends of Dan Pitsos, the prayer concerns of Paul and Joyce Nort, those affected by the Coronavirus pandemic and those serving to relieve their suffering, those thousands who have lost loved ones in Ukraine. the patients and staff at Georgetown Veterans Home as well as all of those now serving in our armed forces, especially Macy Lyle, Henry Sherrill, Jaden Chin-Franz and Javier Paula.

The Red Door

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



December

16 - Grant Joy

Lector & Intercessor Schedule

- 1st wk Betty & Jim Heathcote**
- 2nd wk Connie Reynolds & Dea Flinn**
- 3rd wk Carol & John Joy**
- 4th wk Rich Davis & Connie Reynolds**
- 5th wk 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. Terri Thornton
Supply Priest

SUNDAY WORSHIP - 10:00 am
IN PERSON & *delayed posting 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