

The Red Door

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

January 2023

RAMBLINGS FROM THE RECTOR

PARISH READING

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14)

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:1-3)

I have been thinking a lot lately about the way we treat our church spaces (sacred space) and the way that we behave while we are in them. The Episcopal Church has a statement shared across the whole denomination (which does not mean that it is true everywhere). That statement is: **All Are Welcome!** What does this really mean, both for us and for those who we encounter through their presence in "our" (God's) sacred space?

This month I have been thinking particularly about children, although this applies to anyone who does not conform to our understanding of "proper church behavior." I hear people talking about how children need to respect church space. To those who say this, it means that children should remain seated as much as possible, stay quiet, and pay attention to what is going on. In other words, they should behave like little adults. Then I look at what Jesus said about children ... let them come to me ... adults should become like children According to Jesus' words, we are doing it exactly backwards. We adults should be moving around – even running. We should be making joyful noise (the bible tells us to do this several times). We should be questioning everything over and over again. We should be getting up and trying to see what is so special about that altar area.

This is how we enter the Kingdom of Heaven! Not by insisting that others behave just like us, but by stepping into their shoes and behaving like them! When we make decisions for our church families, we need to be looking not at what makes us comfortable, but rather how our discomfort might be making someone else, who doesn't yet know Jesus, comfortable.

Rev. Warren Huestis+

Making Outsiders Feel like Insiders

By Molly Phinney Baskette On September 16, 2015

Leading Ideas

Growing churches are churches that have learned that God intends for us to be a people for others. The church needs more than its pastor or senior lay leader to advocate for people who are not there yet. Enlist the opinion of relative newcomers often. Have them speak to their experience of the process of assimilation — positive and negative — with the wider church leadership so that you can find out how you are doing, and what the obstacles to entry are.

I've suggested asking a trusted friend or colleague from outside the church — preferably someone who is not really familiar with church cultural language and rituals — to attend worship as a "mystery worshiper." Ask your friend questions like: "What was confusing?" "What feelings came up for you?" "When did you feel included/excluded?" "Did anything we did seem clubby or unintentionally exclusionary?" Be prepared for honest answers, and notice if you get defensive when you get negative feedback. This kind of criticism can be wildly helpful — if you take it seriously, don't minimize or explain it away, and consider making changes.

Growing churches are churches that have learned that God intends for us to be a people for others.

Perhaps you will hear that the way community prayers are prayed made the visitor feel left out. What in your congregation might feel like a warm and cozy time to catch up on news, might feel to a newcomer like they are eavesdropping on an uncomfortably intimate moment, or are just plain left out of the conversation. The message offered by your well-intentioned, close-knit congregation is, "Our prayers show others how much we love each other, how much we are like a family. Maybe we'll love you like this someday." But the message received is probably quite different.

Let me ask you: Would you go to four or five parties in a row where the same people talked to each other about things they knew about, and while people said "Hi!" in a friendly way, nobody made an effort to explain or really include you in the conversation? After the



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.

ANNUAL
MEETING

22 JAN 2023

Congratulations!

Our Christmas Tree contest featuring people of St. Mary's going back to the 1850s is over and we have our winners!

First: Dea Flinn
Second: Ty Harner
Third: Rob Harner

I will update you all shortly on the status of the building and the lawsuit over the shoddy HVAC installation but before we collectively take a look backward let us take a moment and look forward. 2022 is rapidly (and I do mean rapidly!) coming to an end, which means 2023 is less than a couple weeks away. I am not so good at marketing and coming up with catchy phrases so trying to provide something might be useful in the coming year is a challenge. The best I can come up with is "Let's give it a try." Why that particular phrase? In the coming year, we are going to be given the opportunity to make a lot of choices and decisions, and in many cases the best decisions may not be clear at all, and folks may have very different opinions on what the best course of action is. We are going to be trying out a number of things that have not been in place at St. Mary's for years, so how are we to make the most of the opportunities God has so graciously provided us? One way is to "put on the shelf" our notions and preferences about how things should be. We are going to be trying out new worship schedules and content, as well as trying out a number of options as the Sanctuary work moves ahead. Let us all approach these options with an open mind, and if, after trying something out, we don't like it, so be it. The Vestry is going to try to make little if any decisions on these matters without a trial and error period, so that everyone has a chance to try something new before deciding if it is worth continuing or not. In my experience, our current Vestry has done a good job in keeping everyone informed about the activities of the church and trying to make sure all voices are heard. Please be open to the influence of the Holy Spirit as we embark on a new year.

All the blueprints for the support and design for the new sanctuary floor have been completed, along with the design to repair the damaged and improper HVAC opening in the north wall. Building permits have obtained and we expect the contractor, Legacy, to start work in the Sanctuary any day. It would have begun last week, but illness hit the contractor's crew as well as some of the rest of us. We are not going to re-install the marble slabs around the bottom of the walls as we originally thought. They are not part of the original construction and we thought to be added years later. (*These were part of Rev. Louis Durr's gift to the church around 1915-ish. -Ed.*) The original quote for removing them, sending them for refurbishing and cleaning, and reinstalling them on solid mounts was \$37,708. We are going to store the slabs and try out the space first, perhaps we can agree on wall coverings to replace the marble that folks will like better and perhaps provide us some money we can better use elsewhere in the Sanctuary remodel. The marble will be stored and we can use all or part of it if that is decided as the way to proceed. We are also going to store the old pews and explore some alternative seating in our Sanctuary as soon as the remodeling will allow us to do so. As with the marble, we are storing the pews in the event some or all of them are needed later. We are moving forward with the lawsuit on the HVAC issues to try and recover at least some of the harm caused by the contractor's overcharges, damage, and inadequate and unprofessional installation of equipment and ductwork.

In closing, please pay attention to the news and dates provided elsewhere in the newsletter. As we transition from Rev. Terri to Rev. Warren, let us all look forward to the prospects of a New Year, which I hope and pray will continue to rebuild St. Mary's spiritually along with the physical rebuild, and that we can continue to grow our Outreach and Mission efforts. God bless you all, and have a Merry Christmas!

John Joy
 Senior Warden

first party or two, unless you are a mega-extrovert with a bulletproof ego, you would likely just stay home in your jammies.

There are ways to be intimate while also making outsiders feel like insiders. A skilled worship leader will, in sermon, prayers, and announcements, give plenty of context, explain inside jokes in a way that doesn't kill the punch line, and otherwise bring everybody along.

That said, there are some structures — coffee hours, prayers of the people, passing the peace — that are natural soft entry points for newbies. If these structures are too hard in your congregation, no matter how soft they seem to you, you might need to forego your own preferences for the others who are about to walk through your door.

This article is an excerpt from Molly's book Real Good Church: How Our Church Came Back from the Dead, and Yours Can, Too, © 2014, used by permission from The Pilgrim Press. It is available from Cokesbury and Amazon
<https://www.churchleadership.com/leading-ideas/making-outsiders-feel-like-insiders/>

This was extracted from the clutter on the Rector's desk!

Thursday morning, November 1, 1855, a most complimentary article appeared in the "Highland Weekly News," which was published here in Hillsborough. It started with this wonderful sentence:

"We may be accused by people at a distance of exaggeration, and a vain desire to puff up our town, but nevertheless we answer on the best authority and without fear of contradiction, that Hillsborough can now justly boast of containing the most beautiful church edifice in the State."

The author continued to report that the church was consecrated on Thursday last and referred to the location as one of the most eligible sites in the town. The height to the top of the belfry was reported at 55 feet. While there is an entrance facing the street, the most-used entrance is sure to be the arched vestibule or porch located on the north side of the building.

So, I invite you to come with me on a tour of this outstanding new structure! As we drive on the High Street, we notice the large front window facing the street. It features an ornamental centerpiece in terra cotta, which is an imitation of carved stone work. On the corners of the building we see small minarets ornamenting the building. They also appear to be terra cotta. Seen on the back wall of the building (the front and back walls stand taller than the roof) is a Greek Cross. The architect, Mr. Hamilton, certainly knew what he was doing! Very beautiful! We learned that the handsome bluish-gray limestone for the building was quarried locally.

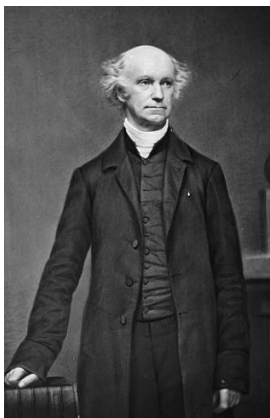
Our horse, Laddie, pulls our buggy up close to the steps leading to the porch and, since it is snowing today, we quickly tie him up and rush up the steps onto the porch. We note that there is a nicely tiled floor to the porch leading us to the large heavy doors, which we swing open to find ourselves inside the large sanctuary. Right away we notice the beautiful windows, which provide the primary light source. Each one is arched and filled with ground glass cut into small diamond panes, each window with a colored border and all fastened in lead sash. As we walk toward the chancel, we stop to count the windows we see. Along the north side there are four identical windows and on the south side there are five. Looking up above that door in the back of the sanctuary, there is a very large window, also constructed of the ground glass diamond pattern as the side windows. Now we notice the beautiful window above the small wooden altar is very similar to all of the other windows, but it has stunning red border panes, each decorated in a vine motif. At the top are some blue panes in a four-leaf clover type of design. Most beautiful, don't you agree?

We turn our attention to the chancel around that window and we are impressed by the arched recess with the elaborately groined ceiling--the window providing the primary light for that area. The ceiling is painted a delicate blue and they tell us that

the walls are to be painted also, but of a different color. We wonder if the walls around the altar will be painted the same color or perhaps a blue to match the ceiling? They plan a border of painted decoration around each of the windows in the sanctuary also. Heat is provided by large stoves on either side of the sanctuary with chimneys reaching through the roof.

Now, let's take a look at some other fixtures. Hard to miss is this beautifully sculptured baptismal font of Waverly sandstone which is standing right in front of the wooden chancel railing. Next we notice that the pulpit on the right side of the chancel and the reading desk on the left are both built of pine which has been decorated with Gothic carving and varnished. Next we look out into the sanctuary where we see four rows of pews reaching to near the back wall. They tell us they will be able to seat between 300 and 400 persons. In addition, the seats are all free! No subscriptions required! This surely is a very modern congregation!

We learn that the baptismal font was donated by Mr. Thomas P. Cummings of New York City. In addition to bringing that with him from New York, he also donated the stunningly beautiful pulpit Bible and Prayer Books, all bound in Moroccan leather and gilded. As though these weren't sufficient, Mr. Cummings also brought a beautiful silver communion service, which we feel will continue to be used for many many years to come, perhaps for centuries to come! It was crafted in New York City by well-known silversmiths, Francis W. Cooper and Richard Fisher.



C. P. McIlvaine

Thomas Cummings is a long-time friend of William H. Bayard, one of the founders of St. Mary's Church.

We also read in the paper that the ceremony of consecration was performed last Thursday morning at 10 1/2 o'clock by the Rt. Rev. C. P. McIlvaine, Bishop of Ohio. The first service was held the evening previous when a sermon was preached by the Bishop. Following the consecration, regular morning service was held and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered by the Bishop, assisted by Rev. Richard Gray of Cincinnati and the church's Rector, Rev. Noah Hunt Schenck. Thursday evening another service was held with the Bishop preaching and then administering the rite of Confirmation. Several children were baptized at both morning and evening service.

We remembered that only in June of 1854, building of this marvelous structure was begun and now just a year and several months later, here we are, inside. At the cost

of \$10,000 for the church, the lot and the rectory (\$7,000 for the church alone), we think these folks have provided a beautiful addition to our community. Around the time the congregation began meeting, some two years ago, the number of communicants was only twelve. Now, it is 46 with 8 having been lost by removal, death or other means. Now, with this building, we feel certain that number will grow by leaps and bounds!



Noah Hunt Schenck



January
4—Jim Price
12—Carol Joy
16—Lynn Lowell
16—Margaret Lyons
29—Jim Gee

The Red Door

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



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST. MARY'S?

By the time you receive this newsletter, work should have started on the Sanctuary Floor! Many more things taking place and you will want to be part of it all! Get involved!

Don't miss the ANNUAL MEETING - 22 JAN!

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. Warren Huestis
Rector

The Rev. Terri Thornton
Transitional 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