



THE CANTERBURY CROSS

St. Thomas à Becket Episcopal Church, Morgantown, WV

November 2016

A Message from Our Deacon, Al Prichard

Until our parish finds a priest to serve us as Priest in Charge (hopefully, this will happen early next year), efforts will be made to ensure the needs of the parish are met and the day-to-day functioning and ministry will continue uninterrupted. As you are aware, arrangements are in place for guest celebrants to be here on Sundays to lead us in worship and in the Eucharist.

During the week, the vestry, led by Corey Farris as Senior Warden, and I, your deacon, will be available to you should any need arise. In particular, if you are in need of pastoral care, which can include bringing you communion, please let me know. You can reach me anytime by phoning the office (304-296-0270) or contacting me directly at 304-594-2134 (home) or 304-276-3229 (cell) as well as emailing me (ahprichard@gmail.com).

May God continue to bless us and keep us. May God grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within the body of the holy Church.

A New Banner for St. Thomas



The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines a banner as “a large strip of cloth with a design, picture, or writing on it.” Our new St. Thomas banner is so much more than that! Cathy Brown crafted the original felt banner during the early days at St. Thomas. It has served us well; but, over the years, that banner became damaged from age, a leaking roof, and use.

Noticing the deteriorating banner, Carol Roberts Spears worked to refurbish it, and our old banner served for an additional year or so. Even with its refurbishing, the time came for us to have a new banner.

David and Gloria Sullivan donated the materials, and once again Carol stepped forward to design and to construct a new banner. Carol said that, when our young acolyte couldn't manage the old banner without his father's help at the National Cathedral, she knew we needed something lighter. She kept this in mind when choosing fabrics and batting.

Over a period of three years, Carol worked to create our new quilted banner (*above with Carol*) to mirror the round window in the sanctuary. The design and craft process was challenging, and at times Carol found herself back at the drawing board with regard to fabric, technique, and cording choices.

The banner's first service was during the funeral mass for Ann Pahl and, fittingly, it is being dedicated in her memory. Having been officially blessed by Bishop Mike, the banner now resides proudly in its home here at St. Thomas.

The next time you are in the church take a moment or two to look at and admire our new banner. If you see David and Gloria Sullivan and Carol Roberts Spears, please thank them for their respective efforts in providing us with our new banner.

What Is Centering Prayer?

by Tom Waggoner

For the last two years, you might have noticed an item on the Parish Post calendar of events occurring every other Saturday at 9 a.m. called Centering Prayer. It was led by Mother Julie, and though we never had many attend (six once, more usually two or three), for several of us it became a rich and meaningful way to worship.

We would like to continue this practice if there is interest, and so I am giving this brief description of what Centering Prayer is all about.

Typically, we gather in the Chapel, chat a bit, share a spoken prayer or spiritual writing, and then sit in silence for 30 minutes. That's it. Simple, right? But, if it seems somewhat strange, it is a beautiful way to pray.

No words are needed. In fact, they might just get in the way of what is the essence of Centering Prayer: opening your heart, mind and soul – your very being – to God's presence.

Of course, thoughts are bound to intrude. You might be quite surprised by your brain's creativity in producing distractions. Welcome them all. Your brain is just doing its job. Then gently return focus to your purpose. If you're like me, you might have to repeat this process a couple thousand times!

We use some tools that help us find the stillness beneath the normal flow of mental activity:

- Reduce external distractions by finding a quiet place, closing eyes, adopting a sitting posture that can be comfortably maintained for 20 to 30 minutes.
- Mark the beginning and end of meditation with a bell sound.
- Adopt a sacred word that you can say to yourself when you realize your attention has wandered a word that signifies your acceptance and consent to God's presence.

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Outreach and Sunday School Planning Thanksgiving Baskets

by *Aurie Acciavatti*

It all started back in 2003 when the Sunday School and Outreach Committee prepared Thanksgiving baskets for six families for Scott's Run Settlement House. Once again we will be preparing baskets, and this year 34 families and 115 people will receive our baskets. The help of everyone in the congregation is needed to accomplish this feat.

Grocery bags with the list of recommended items were distributed Oct. 30 and will again be distributed **Nov. 6**. Buy what you can from the list and bring the food no later than **Nov. 13**. Gift certificates/cards toward the purchase of a turkey from Kroger or Giant Eagle are requested. Please write on each gift card the amount of the card. That will help us to distribute the cards to the families. Although extra food is appreciated, please donate only what is on the list. Please check the expiration date on all food.

All food must be at the church by **Nov. 13**, so that volunteers can sort the food to see what extra food needs to be bought. On Friday, **Nov. 18**, beginning at 6 p.m., the Sunday School children, and anyone else who is willing to give a hand, will meet at the church to help fill the Thanksgiving boxes. This is the fourteenth year we have done this activity. It is such a rewarding and fun time. Pizza and juice will be served; the work will continue after supper. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for volunteers.

The Sunday School children will be preparing a craft to include in the boxes. Money received from their bake sale will be used to buy fruit. A note will be attached to the fruit saying: ***In memory and in honor of Mrs. Ann Pahl, who was a nurse who knew the power of healthy fresh fruit and was also a loving, giving member of the St. Thomas à Becket Parish who helped put these baskets together for many years.***

The SRSRH clients will come to St. Thomas à Becket to pick up their boxes on Sunday, **Nov. 20**. There will be opportunities for members of St. Thomas to help the clients take their boxes to their cars. Look for further information in the Parish Post in the coming weeks to find out how you can help.

This is going to be a big challenge again this year. Anyone can help with this project, not just Sunday School and Outreach members.



It's Flower Time!

Buy your holiday flower arrangements for your family and friends! Baskets, wreaths, live arrangements (closer to the holidays) and

other decorations are for sale by the Flower Guild. Look for these in the Parish Hall. Proceeds go to the Capital Improvement Fund.

Centering Prayer

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Ideally, Centering Prayer is to be practiced once or twice daily for 20 to 30 minutes. I admit I fall far short of this, except during Lent, when I make a special effort to meditate daily. The regular sessions with others help guide and reinforce the private prayer and add the powerfully spiritual dimension of sharing the experience in a holy setting.

For those who think they might be interested, I would be happy to set up a one-session introduction to Centering Prayer and attempt to answer questions and have one or two brief meditations. Contact me at landtwaggoner@gmail.com.



Thinking about Proportional Giving

A Stewardship Message by Bill French

What follows is another 2009 essay by Bill French, reprinted with kind permission from his wife, Marty French. Bill died in 2012, but his words live on.

Has God blessed you? Do you think about blessings when you think about giving to the church? Most of us at least think about tithing. We know that tithing is supposed to be 10% of our income, a figure derived from the Old Testament (Leviticus 27:30, among other passages). The New Testament says nothing at all about tithing. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 16:2, says that a Christian should give "a sum of money in keeping with his (or her) income." Literally, the word "tithe" means 10%, though few Christians actually give that much (the average for American Christians is 2.6%).

Wait a minute. This is abstract, historical stuff, hardly fit for human consumption. Let's think for real.

And go back to the original question: Has God blessed you? God has certainly blessed us as members of St. Thomas à Becket, no questions about it. I think about the blessings of my life: the illnesses that God has seen me and my spouse through; our wonderful, healthy, loving children; our house that keeps us warm, dry, and comfortable; meaningful, rewarding work; our Becket family. I could go on. So can you.

Rehearsing all the ways our lives are blessed is a form of prayer, and when we think about stewardship, that's how we might pray: How has God blessed me? Then we can pray about how much we can afford to give our church as proportional giving. For proportional giving means **intentional giving** – we think about it, pray about it, we talk with our spouses about it. It's not what's left over; our gift to the church is a **priority** built into our family budget. And to put proportional giving into practice, we look at what we are currently giving for God's work as a percentage of our earnings, and then discern what God is calling us to offer as a true thank you to God for His blessings.

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Bake Sale, Diaper Derby, and Pumpkin Raffle Successful

by Amy Robbins, Director of Children's Programs

On October 30, the Sunday School and Youth Church held their annual bake sale and pumpkin raffle with great success. For the Bake Sale, the children had a pie-versus-cake contest. Most people were undecided between the two, but over \$300 was collected to purchase fruit to include with our church's Thanksgiving baskets. The fruit will be purchased in memory of Ann Pahl.

Carol Spears won the pumpkin raffle with a near perfect guess of this 11.1 pound pumpkin. The raffle generated \$26, which will be donated to UNICEF.



Left: Anna Robbins (standing), Lilah Claycomb, and James Robbins with some of the diapers donated for SRSH.
Right: James Robbins (left) and Charlie Heiskell at the bake sale.

During October, 1,030 diapers were collected by the Sunday School Program to donate to Scott's Run Settlement House.

Also, the Sunday School and Youth Church children decorated 36 wreaths to go into our church's Thanksgiving baskets. We hope the families who receive them will enjoy them.

As always we thank the congregation for its support!

Congratulations to Corey Farris



Corey Farris who is dean of students and currently associate vice president of student life will be named the head of student life effective Jan. 2, 2017.

He will be overseeing all components of the Division of Student Life.

Corey is also the senior warden at St. Thomas à Becket. He was elected to the Vestry in 2015 and was elected senior warden this past January 2016.

Proportional Giving

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Thinking and praying along these lines adds up to the idea that our proportional giving equals joy. Again Paul: "Each one should give as they decide, not with regret or out of a sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly." (2 Corinthians 9:7)

Think about it; pray about it. Count your blessings. And give not dutifully, but gladly, "for God loves the one who gives gladly." *Proportional giving* is giving in proportion to how you have been blessed and how your blessings and your joy will be made manifold in God's love.

New Quartet Opens Becket Arts Season



On Sunday, Oct. 9, Becket Arts kicked off its 2016-2017 season with the Beta Flute Quartet. This was the inaugural performance of the quartet (left).

The next Becket Arts! program will feature vocalists Rebeckah Valentine and Rosemary Hathaway, with pianist William Haller, on Sunday, Dec. 11.

The concert will be at 3 p.m. and will be followed by a reception in the Parish Hall. Tickets will be available at the door. The cost of tickets will be \$8 for a single ticket, \$6 for seniors, and free for students. You can still purchase season tickets for \$60. Season tickets allow you to bring two guests to all performances.

Add Angel Tree to Your Shopping List

No, Thanksgiving isn't even here yet. But, yes, it's time to make some plans for Christmas. Please plan to be prepared to shop for our annual Salvation Army Angel Tree family.

Every year, we have a very short turnaround time between when the Salvation Army gives us a list of our family's needed items and when we must deliver the purchased clothes, toys, and other Christmas gifts to the Salvation Army's office.

Sometime after Thanksgiving, we will get the list. Then during the first 10 days of December, we must deliver the gifts. We don't know the exact dates or the needed gifts, but we do know that St. Thomas à Becket will be a blessing a family in need again this Christmas.

Share Your Blessings -- Ingathering Sunday Is November 20

Remember to fill out and bring your *Doing God's Work* offering forms along with your *Ministries and Gifts Survey* forms to St. Thomas on Ingathering Sunday. If you are unable to be at church on that Sunday, you can return them to the church office or place them in the alms basin by Nov. 30.

Our Worship Schedule

The Rev. Dn. Al Prichard



Sunday

8:00 a.m. (Rite I, spoken)

10:30 a.m. (Rite II, with music)

Nursery care and Sunday School with children's worship are offered during the 10:30 a.m. service.

Please contact us at

St. Thomas à Becket Episcopal Church

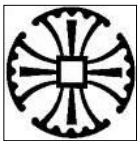
75 Old Cheat Road

Morgantown, WV 26508

304-296-0270

thomasabecket.wv@gmail.com

www.thomasabecket.org



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75 Old Cheat Road

Morgantown, WV

26508



November 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6 All Saints' Sunday Bishop Black 8 a.m. Rite I 9:15 a.m. Becket Choir 10:30 a.m. Rite II Sunday Sch. / Youth Ch. Parish Soup Luncheon Silent Service Auction Begins	7	8	9 Backpack Feeding Program at SRSH 12:30 p.m.	10 Vestry Mtg. 7 p.m.	11	12
13 Bishop Black 8 a.m. Rite I 9:15 a.m. Becket Choir Outreach Comm. Mtg. 10:30 a.m. Rite II Sunday Sch. / Youth Ch. Finance Comm. Mtg. Silent Service Auction Ends (10:30 a.m.)	14	15	16	17 Women's Grief Support Group 6 p.m.	18	19
20 Christ the King Ingathering Sunday Bishop Black 8 a.m. Rite I 9:15 a.m. Becket Choir 10:30 a.m. Rite II Sunday Sch. / Youth Ch.	21	22	23	24 Thanksgiving 	25	26
	Church office closed for holiday					
27 1 Advent Bishop Black 8 a.m. Rite I 9:15 a.m. Becket Choir 10:30 a.m. Rite II Sunday Sch. / Youth Ch. Girl Scouts (Robbins) 5-8 p.m.	28	29 Newsletter Articles Deadline	30 Backpack Feeding Program at SRSH 12:30 p.m.			

Dates Remaining for Our Annual Scott's Run Thanksgiving Basket Schedule

- November 6** - Distribute decorated food bags.
- November 13** - **Deadline for all food donations to be delivered to church.**
- November 13** - Sort and inventory food after church.
- November 18** - Pack Thanksgiving baskets at 6 p.m. This night is for everyone in the congregation to help.
- November 20** - Distribute baskets from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Clients will come to St. Thomas.

