



THE CANTERBURY CROSS

July 2019

St. Thomas à Becket Episcopal Church | Morgantown, WV

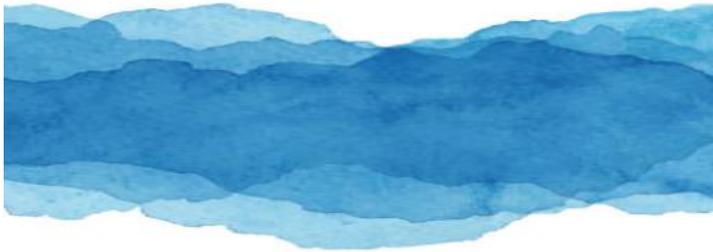
THE RECTOR'S CORNER

By John Lein

Water can mark significant boundaries in both our physical and spiritual geographies. The last Sunday of June and first of July both have stories of a river as a significant turning point or mark of calling. From Moses to John the Baptist, the Jordan is more than simply muddy water, and for us our baptisms are both mere H₂O and something much more.

Rivers indeed demarcate my life journey.

In the beginning there were two creeks near a little town on the edge of the Ozark mountains: Sager Creek and the Cincinnati. My wife Miriam grew up on a farm straddling the latter, finding swimming holes in the ever-shifting gravel banks in the hot Arkansas summers. I lived alongside the former as a child, later again as a high schooler, and then for many years after.



These minor waterways come together by meandering-digression yet at the end seemingly-inevitable flow in the nearby Illinois River. So also our lives intertwined as eight-year-old homeschoolers, were held by a thread of hand-written letters through many travels, and came together again most significantly this month nineteen years ago as we wedded at Siloam Springs Bible Church.

By these shores we raised our first child, buried our second, and grew our family to five. Here we learned, worked, sorrowed, rejoiced, lived, and worshiped with our church and extended families throughout our first three decades.

Then we crossed the Rhine.

This mighty European waterway bounded our lives in the *Dreiländereck* of Germany. I imagined an ending; found beginning too. Here on the edges of the Black Forest hills we encountered a far larger world; geographically, culturally, and religiously. Within three months of my new vocation as evangelical missionary my faith was gone, disappeared into the mists of theology and doubt. There began a long struggle back, cycling back and forth just as I navigated along the canals of France on my bike during that long year and more, deconstructing and building anew.

We returned to our home waters as a family of six yet crossed the banks to a new home at Grace Episcopal Church, walking along the Canterbury Trail like pilgrims finding heart's home in a foreign land. Here I began formation; here I began discernment; here I found definition to calling; and here we left yet again.

Towed and tugged, we tumbled down the Potomac.

On the Holy Hill between Holmes Run and Taylor Run I studied, fought and fumed; I formed and was formed; and I found my people and was found by them. We journeyed together through the deep Jordan of exegesis, across the turbulent Galilee of systematics, and washed up on the Mediterranean shores of liturgy before circling the gates of Jericho with mighty hymns at commencement to come out with our diplomas in hand just weeks ago.

Now we live beside the Monongahela.

I sit on our deck seeing light over the ripples as I wonder: what is here for me, for us, for those around us? What is yet calling, what is yet moving, who am I/we to become?

These are questions we each ask in our lives. The beauty of a faith family is that we journey in community, mutually discerning and receiving/giving support in each of our roles and gifts. I am grateful to have been called to you, our new people, for this next bend of our life, and I look forward to finding a few answers and many new and better questions together.

BACKPACK COLLECTION FOR SCOTT'S RUN

Please help us to collect a hundred backpacks this summer! St. Thomas à Becket Church will again be collecting school backpacks for Scott's Run Settlement House to distribute to needy local school children. Donations of backpacks for any school age, from pre-kindergarten to high school, will help us meet our goal.

Please bring backpacks to the Sunday School room and place them in Ann Pahl's cradle, which is in the corner by the window to the far right side (from the doorway).

If you don't have time to shop or would prefer to make a monetary donation, Aurie Acciavatti will be making a trip to buy backpacks. Please give Aurie either cash or a check made to her with "backpacks" in the memo line by July 21.

Backpacks should be brought to church by Sunday, **July 21** so that they can be delivered to SRSB by the July 26 deadline.



STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

"Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Luke 20:25).

"The chief priests and scribes tried to trap Jesus. After a fulsome compliment, they asked Him, 'Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?' They thought they had impaled Him on the sharp horns of a dilemma. If He spoke out against paying taxes to Rome, He would be in trouble with the Roman authorities. If He affirmed paying taxes, He would raise the indignation of the strong anti-Rome movement among the Jews.

"At first glance, Jesus' answer seems like He sidestepped the issue. Not so when we understand the full impact of what He meant...

"The implication is that Caesar and his realm belonged to God as much as any religious possession or responsibility. Actually, Jesus' answer exposes the false division between the sacred and the secular. He claimed all of life as sacred. Everything we have and are belongs to God. He cannot be excluded from any realm of life. We are responsible for everything we say, do, spend, and save. The secret of dynamic discipleship is using all things, all of life, as a sacred trust from the Lord."

[*Silent Strength*, Lloyd John Ogilvie]



Parishioners help the Lein family move in.

Thank you Ann Claycomb for your hard work and dedication in leading Sunday School this past year! St. Thomas was lucky to have you!

DETAILS FOR PRESIDING BISHOP'S VISIT TO WHEELING

Saint Matthew's will be privileged to have Presiding Bishop Curry as our guest preacher on Sunday, Oct 6 at 10:30 am. We have seating for a little more than 100 available in the sanctuary. There are also 32 seats in the balcony in the rear of the sanctuary. You will need to be physically fit to climb the stairs to sit there. We would like people to form themselves into groups of four if possible as each section of our pews seats four.

If you would like to reserve one of these seats for the service please contact Mary Paull, our parish administrator, at 304-233-0133. She is typically in the office from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

We would be delighted to have you join us for this part of our celebration of the 200th Anniversary of Saint Matthew's founding.

Please don't forget that the Presiding Bishop will be speaking at Wesbanco Arena in Wheeling on Saturday, Oct. 5 at 3:00 pm. The Arena seats 6000. We would be overjoyed for the Arena to be full for his talk on 'The Way of Love'. Tickets can be obtained through the Arena online or by phone at 304-233-7000. Please share this information with anyone in your community who might be interested. I hope you will be able to join us in Wheeling on either Oct 5 or 6!

The Rev. Mark Seitz

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*Thank you, Becket
Green Team for
keeping the grounds
beautiful!*

Our Worship Schedule

John Elliott Lein, M.Div, Incoming Priest-in-Charge

The Rev. Tony Setley, Interim Priest-in-Charge

The Rev. Al Prichard, Deacon



Sunday

8:00 am (Rite I, spoken)

10:30 am (Rite II, with music)

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

St. Thomas à Becket Episcopal Church

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