

The Piper

December 2020



In This Issue

Message from our Senior Warden	2
Meet Rev. Mary Blessing	3
Thoughts About the Holiday Season	4
Angels in the Kitchen	6
The Windows of St. Andrew's	7
A Funny Thing Happened	8



MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR WARDEN

St. Andrew's – Our Worship Home

Can you imagine the doors of our dear church shut forever? The altar light extinguished. No people. Overgrown garden. Maybe becoming a museum like the other Episcopal church in Boulder Creek?

I can imagine it and that thought makes me incredibly sad. This could become a reality if we were to become stuck in the past when times were better, when there was no Covid, when we had a priest and when there were more of us. Sure, those were the good times. And, these are the hard times.

But it is Advent. For we Christians, it is the time of expectation of the birth of Christ and the message of hope and love that his birth brought to us. Hope and love and hard work can carry St. Andrew's through these hard times.

Can we make it? Yes, we can, but not without your continuing love, and support especially through your pledges of time, money and talent. We have a solid group of dedicated parishioners and supply priests who are working hard to bring you the services that we are allowed to do right now even if it is through a computer. We are paying our bills and working to save money for a new priest search. We are maintaining our gardens and grounds. We are praying and working for the glory of God the Father and for the love that Jesus Christ taught us.

Hang in there with St. Andrew's as we continue to hold our church dear as the home of our worship where we can come together as a family, in whatever way, to spread Jesus' light and love.

Have a hopeful Advent and Merry Christmas!

With love,

Rochelle Kelly, Senior Warden

Meet Rev. Mary Blessing

Bishop Lucinda Ashby has asked Pastor Mary to serve as a per diem priest until January 1, 2021, while St. Andrew's undergoes a process of discernment regarding next steps for our pastoral leadership.



The Rev. Mary Blessing is former Rector of St. Philip the Apostle Episcopal Church, Scotts Valley, having served from 2006 until her early retirement in 2019.

Pastor Mary is a long-time friend of St. Andrew's. Long before she even started on a path to priesthood Pastor Mary enjoyed worship at St. Andrew's while on retreats in Ben Lomond as a Mills College student in the '70's. While first serving in the Diocese of El Camino Real at St. Timothy's, Mountain View, in 1997 she befriended Tillie and George Cunningham through their daughter, Nyna. As she became the Vicar/Rector of St. Philip's she grew the relationship with Tillie to be even stronger through Bible study and community service. Additionally, Pastor Mary was the priest who hired St. Andrew's former member, Elizabeth Forbes, to be St. Philip's Administrative Assistant/Office Manager. Elizabeth and Mary grew a partnership of ministry model of church management and pastoral care which made all the difference in the success of St. Philip's continued growth as a parish.

It is with tremendous joy that Pastor Mary comes to St. Andrew's at this auspicious time of care and transition. We are all counting our blessings as we move forward in Christ's reconciling love into 2021.

Thoughts About This Holiday Season.

By Steve LaFever

Thanksgiving was without the customary 22 people this year. Some stayed home, some went out of the country, and others gave thanks privately. Me? I cooked a turkey thigh and watched football and tried to forget about the Pilgrims in Plymouth. Those Mayflower survivors had a lot to be thankful for. Out of the 130 who started the trip, the first winter was cruel and half died. If it weren't for the Native Americans who helped them with crops and food, I don't think the 65 who were left would have made it either. The great chief Massassoit became a friend of the Pilgrims and shared their food and skills. Their harvest dinner was indeed a celebration of thanksgiving.

It's winter again. We are in Advent. We are approaching Christmas. It doesn't look like a big gathering is in store for this year's celebration dinner. I think it will be a repeat of Thanksgiving. It is difficult to be in a festive mood when you have to wear a mask and stay six feet or more away from others. I really have a hard time with being afraid and paranoid of others.



Each year, I set up a manger with angels, sheep, shepherds, Mary and Joseph, and of course the little baby Jesus. Each year, I buy something else for the manger scene. I do draw a line, though, on putting a mask on everyone. There is just something about that image, I don't wish to carry in my mind. I prefer remembering the birth of Christ just as it was.

Christmas is a time of giving. When Constantine made Christianity the religion of Rome, the Romans celebrated a holiday about this time called Saturnalia. To make the transition more acceptable, the Romans kept the holiday of celebration and giving of presents and renamed it Christmas. I don't think many people know that the early Christians also gave presents to each other during this holiday because of this.

One of the pleasures of gift giving is seeing the smiles on others faces. A child's emotional response to tearing off the wrapping paper and finding that gift he or she wanted is priceless and makes the giving even more satisfying. However, as we separate ourselves from our families, that may not be possible this year.

Now I am back to the manger scene. Perhaps I may not do that this year. So, then, what will Christmas mean to me in 2020. Perhaps all the trappings of decorations, gifts, shopping, and gathering isn't necessary when we look at the real reason we celebrate Christmas --- the birth of Christ. In a way the focus of what Christmas means in this Covid environment, will become centered on this young baby laying there in that manger with his parents and the animals. The gift we can all give to each other, is not regret over gatherings, presents, and the like, but we can give each other the gift of Love.

For me it will be a time of reflection about caring for my family and friends. It will become a time to think about what I can do next year to help others less fortunate than I. It will become a time for me to reach out and let others know they have a friend in me. Yes, there is good to be found in this social distancing Christmas. We have the opportunity to become focused on the good things of life and to look forward to a healthy future with each other. We have the opportunity to celebrate the birth of this little baby and what He brings to this world. We have the opportunity to feel real love for each other. I think that is the real intention of Christmas. Silent night, holy night, Christ our savior is born!





Angel in the Kitchen
Feel'n good when cook'n
Sharing the love of God through your love of
cooking



This is a family favorite for both Thanksgiving and Christmas. Our daughter won a blue ribbon for it when we lived in Texas (she was about 10) and was in the 4-H Club. Instead of showing an animal that she raised, she entered the cooking contest and won!



Green Bean & Cheese Sauce Casserole

2 T. Butter

2 T. Flour

1 t. Salt, Pepper & Sugar

1/2 C. Milk

2 T. Grated Onion

1 Cup Sour Cream

4 Cans "Cut" Green Beans (drained)

3 Cups Shredded Swiss and /or Monterey Jack Cheese

Topping:

2 T. Butter

1 Cup Cornflake Crumbs or Panko Crumbs



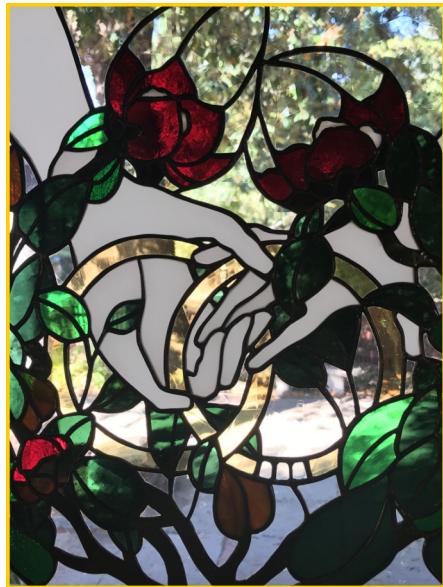
In a small pan, melt the butter & blend in flour, salt, pepper & sugar. Cook stirring until bubbly. Blend in milk, remove from heat & stir in the onion & sour cream. In a large bowl, combine the green beans & cheese. Add sauce to the beans and stir till combined well. Spray a 9 x 13 casserole dish with PAM or butter the dish and spread bean mixture evenly. Wash out small pan and add the butter for the topping, when melted add the crumbs and stir till all are covered with butter. Spread evenly on top of the casserole. Bake at 400* for 20 minutes till bubbly and crumbs are slightly brown.

Enjoy!!

The Windows of St Andrews

by Judyth Suttle

Our second newest stained glass window has the theme of marriage, one of the seven Sacraments and the occasion of Jesus's first miracle, the water into wine at Cana. Dedicated to Tilly and George Cunningham, it was funded by their family and the St Andrews congregation. It features large intertwining wedding bands, Tilly's with three diamonds, against their clasped hands. Deep red camellias surrounding the rings were suggested by several church donors and by the family. Tilly and George grew camellias in their yard and transferred many to our garden. Virginia Fordyce, stained glass designer, says she loves to work with hands, and the glass she chose for the couple's hands is a favorite of hers. This window looks out onto George's memorial garden.



A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to The Mall

“Is it wrong I’m laughing right now?”, I texted to a young neighbor/mom the other day. Yeah, well, I didn’t get a reply. Yikes, my bad. (Do they even say that nowadays?) Eh, probably not, anyhow, it had me reflecting, perhaps a mother must achieve a certain age or years of experience to recognize some of the funniest child-rearing memories are in hindsight. Because I have to be honest, I had a few doozies. The Kid Car Seat Unbuckled Debacle, the Thrown Outta, the Window Shoe Capper and one of my favorites, the Paint Pyramid Collapse at Sears. Let me tell you, none of these scenarios was in the slightest bit amusing at the time. I was filled with anxiety, guilt, anger, tears, well, you get the picture.

So to my young neighbor/mom I apologize if I laughed too soon when you texted me you drove all the way to the mall only to find out your daughter didn’t have any shoes when you got there and had to drive home and plan the shopping trip for another day. I feel your pain; I do. Been there, done that. See Thrown Outta the Window Shoe Caper.

I hope one day you’ll look back on your exasperated, exhausted and overworked self and be able to laugh or at least chuckle that Junie didn’t wear her shoes to the mall. It was not a wasted trip. You were with the babies you love. And, trust me, in the big scheme of things it’s an exceptional day when you can look back and remember the day with love and laughter. I ought to know, I was the mom that made the same trip.

**Prediction: There will
be a minor baby boom
in 9 months, and then
one day in 2033, we
shall witness the rise
of THE
QUARANTEENS.**