

The Shield

Thanksgiving & Advent 2021



THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

We have much to be thankful for (yes, I know that's bad grammar!), and also much to look forward to (ditto) in these last months of 2021.

Our nation's tradition of setting aside one day a year specifically to consider all the things for which we thank God began with George Washington in 1789, was carried on by Abraham Lincoln in 1863, and became an official federal holiday under Ulysses S. Grant in 1870.



Of course, just as we shouldn't only pray for one hour each Sunday, we should never place limits on our outpouring of thanks to Almighty God for all the gifts we enjoy.

I would add that we need to also thank God for all the mistakes we make, the actions we commit and fail to commit, and all the challenges we face, whether we surmount them or not. Life is about living, and since we live and move and have our being in God through Christ, we ought to be thankful for every moment, regardless of what it brings.

One way we show our gratitude to God is by loving God and our neighbor, and an important means of showing that is by giving back from the many blessings we have received. Gifts of our time, our talents, and our financial resources are tangible indications of our thankfulness. I encourage everyone to do what you can to reach out in generosity to those around us - friends and family, those in nursing homes or other living facilities, and even strangers we have never met.

Five days after Thanksgiving, there is a new event that is called *Giving Tuesday*. While I usually decry the invention of new "holidays" or celebrations, I think that battle was lost long ago - when Black Friday and Cyber Monday were unofficially declared and universally observed.

I actually like the idea of Giving Tuesday as a welcome counterpoint to the

spending sprees that now begin almost right after Labor Day and easily occupy all of November. In a way, I'm sorry that it took so long to add a day at the end of the buying frenzy, when we think about helping those in need and loving our neighbors as ourselves. We really should put giving first.

Thanksgiving weekend will hardly be over when, on Sunday, November 28, we celebrate the First Sunday of Advent. The four Sundays before Christmas offer us the opportunity to slow down, reflect, anticipate, and continue giving thanks to God - for the wonderful gift of Jesus.

There is no doubt that Advent originally represented a "little Lent" - in 567, monks were required to fast every day between dawn on the Feast of Saint Martin of Tours (November 11) and Christmas Eve at midnight. In fact, Advent was called "St Martin's Lent" in some early Christian calendars. The fast was later shortened to begin on St Andrew's Day (November 30). Today, our focus is different.

The word "Advent" means "entering" or "coming toward," and I believe that implies movement in both directions. We are moving toward the day on which we celebrate the Incarnation - the Word of God becoming flesh like us. And God is moving toward us, in love, mercy, and redemption.

In order for us to truly focus on that miraculous event that changed all of human history, we still fast - from putting up Christmas decorations or singing Christmas music in church until Christmas Eve each year.



While stores, streets, and even our homes are ablaze with colored lights, we limit ourselves to four candles, adding one each week to remind ourselves that the Bridegroom is coming nigh, and we need to be awake and watchful.

Someone once asked me, "Jesus has already been born, so what's wrong with celebrating that for all of December - or all the time, for that matter?"

Of course, Jesus has already come to us in human time, and we are not pretending otherwise by waiting for him all over again. But Advent is also a time to think about the Second Coming of Christ - an event that will signal the end of time and the creation of a new heaven and a new earth, and all that these mystifying events represent. Much of our Advent music, as well as the Sunday readings, remind us of the promised Savior, right alongside predictions of the coming Day of the Lord.

It's not surprising that we might feel like everything is rushed and crunched together at the end of the year.

That's why we all need to slow down, take time to reflect on all our blessings, and prepare our hearts and minds to welcome the Savior whose birth in Bethlehem we commemorate, and whose return in glory we anticipate.

I wish you all a blessed and peaceful Thanksgiving, and a thoughtful and serene Advent. Look for another issue of *The Shield* for Christmas and New Year's.

Father Tom +



SPECIAL EVENTS COMING UP

November 21	Feast of Christ the King
November 24	Thanksgiving Day
November 28	First Sunday of Advent - beginning of the new Christian Year
December 24	Christmas Eve Service - 7:00 PM
December 26	Service of Christmas Lessons and Carols - 9:30 AM

GUEST PREACHER

Here is a message I received recently, which I think is very timely.

“All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee.”

All Things Come of Thee is a traditional hymn and prayer whose message reminds us that giving thanks results—for Christ-followers—in giving. *All Things Come of Thee* confesses that anything and everything we give to God ultimately belongs to him, for he gave it to us to begin with. Our Thanks-Giving is but a minimal return to God of the greater and supreme gifts he lavishes on us.

Thanksgiving is a wonderful time to acknowledge that all we have, from the money in our pockets, to the food in our refrigerator and the breath in our lungs, is a gift from God for our life here on earth.

All Things Come of Thee is often linked with King David’s prayer of thanksgiving for the willing and generous gifts given for the construction of God’s Temple. Though his people had responded generously to his appeal for funds to build the Temple, most of all David thanked God, saying: “But who am I, and who are my people, that we should give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand” [1 Chronicles 29:14].

It’s been said that we should feel sorry for atheists at Thanksgiving because they don’t know to whom they should direct their thanks. Perhaps we should also feel sorry for all who know *to whom* they should give thanks but seemingly don’t know *how*.

The secular holiday of Thanksgiving is overwhelmed by too much food, too many distractions of travel and too much entertainment. Sadly, the lessons of gratitude deeply embedded within the holiday of Thanksgiving are, for our children, often hurried over in the rush to get more material stuff at Christmas. And in many cases, perhaps most, children are taught to attribute the gifts they receive at Christmas to Santa Claus, rather than God, or even parents.

To whom are we thankful? Who is the Source of all goodness and the giver of every good and perfect gift? Like detectives at a crime scene, in our thanksgiving we always return to the scene and Source of the gift. The scene of giving is filled with the source, the fingerprints of God. The scene of all that we have is filled with evidence of the Source, who gives to us out of his lavish, never-ending love, grace, and mercy.

A comedian tells the story of being on a plane while listening to people com-

plain because they were unable to use their cell phones. There they were, he says, up in the air, floating in the sky, traveling at a speed and with a comfort level their ancestors would never have imagined. They were, of all things, flying like birds in a heavy metal tube that elementary reason suggests as being too heavy to fly...let alone loaded down with humans, baggage, and cargo.

There they were, flying above the crime-infested, war-torn, poverty-ridden, oppressed earth below...and all they could do was complain about the lack of coverage for their cell phones.

The comedian observed, "How quickly we humans come to believe the world owes us something that we didn't even know existed until a few years before" – airline travel and cell phones in this case. His point was that we are more likely to gripe and complain about what we feel entitled to, than we are to give thanks.

We do have a tendency to forget. We do so often think of our world in terms of our needs and desires rather than being thankful for what we have been given, particularly in the light of the favorable circumstances we enjoy that the vast majority of the rest of mankind does not.

Martin Luther once said "The greater God's gifts and works, the less they are regarded." A North American with an average standard of living is more likely to be unsatisfied and desire more of what they do not have than an impoverished average citizen of planet Earth who wakes up not knowing where his food for the day will come from.

A lonely person in a nursing home is more likely to deeply appreciate one visit, phone call or letter than one of their grandchildren might be with the gifts they received for their more recent birthday. Thanksgiving involves perspective and the wisdom born of many experiences and endurances. Perspective, experience, and endurance can produce God-given appreciation.

Thanksgiving can be difficult, and I don't mean the prospect of having to be with relatives who might have a longstanding disagreement with you. Thanksgiving can be difficult because many of us experience far less suffering and need than we do blessings and prosperity.

Suffering and doing without can motivate us to give thanks in a way that health, blessings and prosperity do not. Suffering, whether our own, or that of others – or the relative lack of suffering, suffering we might have experienced were it not for the grace of God ("there but for the grace of God...") can drive us to our knees in thanksgiving.

And suffering often leads us to the question, “What is God like?”

“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them? For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.” [*Romans 11:33-36*].

God is the source of all life, of all goodness—the means and the goal of all things. God is our all in all—by grace we are Christ-followers. Our lives are God’s gift, and when our earthly journey is complete, we will return to God and be in and with him just as we are now, in our mortality, as we rest in Christ.

Happy Thanksgiving—your brother in Christ, *Greg Albrecht*

As Christians,
we share the joy of Thanksgiving in our Lord Jesus.
We share in his joy – whether we sing or shout aloud
or experience that joy quietly within our hearts and spirit –
we all give thanks for our-lives-in-him and his-life-in-us.
We use the joy of Thanksgiving,
not to think of what we do not have,
but to think of how we can share all we have been given.
As we give our joy and thanksgiving to Jesus,
he gives his joy and thanksgiving right back to us.
And for that, we can be joyful and thankful
each day of the year.

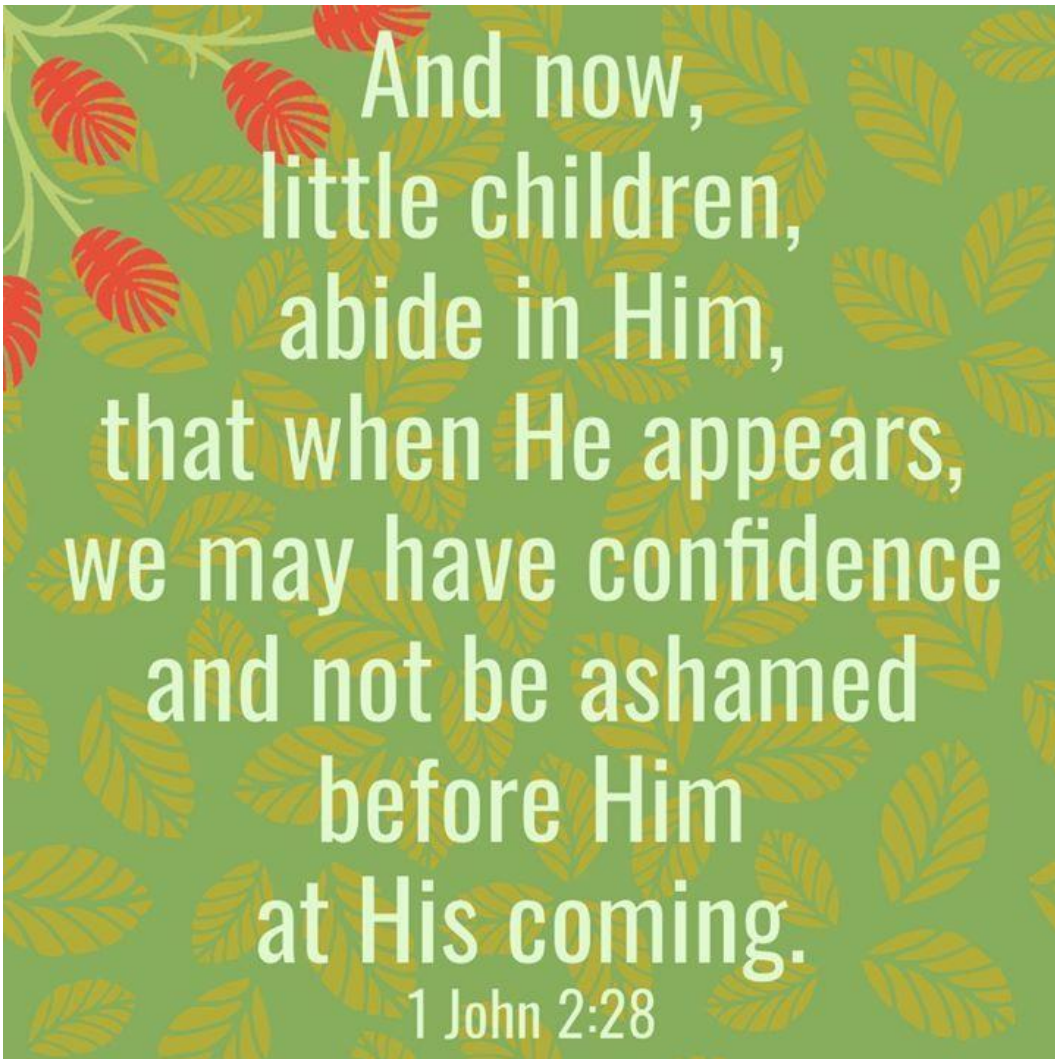
—Ed Dunn, in *Plain Truth* magazine 11/21

ALWAYS PRAY...
to have eyes that see the best in people,
a mind that forgets the bad,
a heart that forgives the worst.
and a soul that radiates kindness.



CHRISTMAS FLOWER MEMORIALS

If you would like to make a contribution toward the cost of the Christmas flowers and decorations, please place your check in an envelope and label it “Christmas Flowers” with your name and the name of the person(s) in whose memory you are making the donation. You may drop the envelope in the Offering Plate or give it to a member of the Altar Guild or one of the Parish Secretaries.



CHANGES TO COMMUNION COMING SOON

Beginning on the First Sunday of Advent—November 28—you will have the option of receiving Holy Communion under the forms of both bread and wine.

The congregation will resume coming forward and kneeling (as able) at the altar rail to receive Communion. The priest will come to you and place the bread (wafer) in your hand. At that point, you may lift your mask, consume the bread, and return to your seat—or you may wait to receive the wine, which will be distributed by the assistant.

If you choose to receive the wine, hold the wafer between your thumb and first finger and lightly dip it straight down into the dish (paten) holding a small amount of the wine. Then lift your mask and consume both.

This is an ancient method of receiving Communion called *intinction*, which means “dipping.” We hope that we may all be able to share the Cup in the coming year.

You may also come forward as in the past, simply to receive a blessing at the altar rail.

INFORMATION FROM OUR PARISH NURSE

As we as a congregation are getting ready for the upcoming winter, please remember to get your flu shots. Most of us are also eligible to receive a COVID booster. If you need a booster, here are some options:

- Moderna is being given at the Pharmicare on the Bedford Road or the CVS on Baltimore Street.
- Pfizer is being given at CVS in LaVale.
- Allegany Health Department is giving booster at the Fairgrounds. All vaccines and flu shots are available with an appointment. Contact the Health Department for dates and times.



Please remember our shut-ins with visits or phone calls.

Ruth Beal	(Sterling Nursing Home)
Darrell Glass	(at home)
Mary Sue Glass	(Sterling Nursing Home)
Evelyn & Gene Hausrath	(at home)
Eleanor Robinson	(Sterling Nursing Home)

All visits should be preceded by a phone call. The nursing homes continue with limited visiting, by appointment only.

FOOD PANTRY



The Mount Savage Food Pantry will be offering gift cards for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Please contact Karen Bonner or Sharon Logsdon if you know someone in need at any time. The pantry is accepting monetary donations only at this time.

SUPER/SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

In January, St George's will collect family-size containers of vegetables, soups, pastas, beans, rice, etc. to be donated to the [Union Rescue Mission of Western Maryland](#), which offers three hot meals a day, plus shelters for women, men, families, and handicapped persons.



Saint George's Prayer List

Becky Watkins
Bonnie Pryor
Bud Bridges
Carol Harr
Carolyn Monahan
Charles Glass
Clarence Finzel
Darrell & Mary Sue Glass
Dawn Downey
Dennis Carder
Don Witteg
Donna Jean Bittner
Ellen Jenkins Davis
Emily Carnell
Evelyn Hausrath
Frank Morgan
Grace Lepley
Grayson Turano
Henry Snyder
Janet Reynard
Janie Taccino
Jeff Hall
Jerome Cassidy
John Bridges
John J. Watts, Sr
Joshua Abbot

Judy Hudson
Lester Beal
Lynda Folk
Lynne Campisi
Mario Campisi
Mary Louise McKenzie
Mike Logsdon
Mina Uhl
Ollie Rephann
Porter Beard
Rebecca Ryan
Robert Flynn
Rusty Bridges
Ruth Beal
Sandra Swanger
Shawn Dom
Shirley Bridges

Prayer for the Sick

O God of heavenly powers, by the might of your command you drive away from our bodies all sickness and all infirmity: Be present in your goodness with your servants for whom we pray, that their weakness may be banished and their strength restored; and that, their health being renewed, they may bless your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

November

Birthdays

Katlin Wilson
Mike Jenkins
David Logan Snyder
Catherine Simpson
Elizabeth Dawn Jenkins
John Natolly II
Shannon Davis
Theresa Kuhn

December

Birthdays

Rachel Krieger
Jim Rice
Aiden Preston
Daniel Rice
Bill Davis
Ruth Beal
Sharon Logsdon
Heather Otto
Pamela Stevens
Tracey Win
Eliza Yantz
Abigail Stallings
Laken Glass
Jesus of Nazareth
Mina Uhl
Jamie Wolford
Stephanie
Avery Lewis
Russell Bridges

Anniversaries

Anniversaries

Darrell & Mary Sue Glass
Pam & Rick Neder

God's Blessings!

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Contact Information

Links are active in PDF version only

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Web Sites

www.stgeorgesmtsavage.org
www.facebook.com/stgeorgesmtsavage

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland

www.episcopalmaryland.org
1-800-443-1399

The Anglican Communion

The Most Rev. and Right Honourable
Justin T. Welby, 105th *Archbishop of Canterbury*

The Episcopal Church

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, 27th *Presiding Bishop*

The Diocese of Maryland

The Right Rev. Eugene T. Sutton, 14th *Bishop of Maryland*

The Right Rev. Robert W. Ihloff,

Assisting Bishop, 13th Bishop of Maryland

Parish Officers, Staff & Volunteers

Dee Stallings	Senior Warden, Organist, Treasurer of the Women of St George's, Vestryperson (2022)
Jim Rice	Junior Warden, Worship Leader, Acolyte Leader, Lay Eucharistic Minister, Vestryperson <i>ex officio</i>
Ken Preston	Treasurer, Camera Operator, Vestryperson <i>ex officio</i>
Lynda Folk	Assistant Treasurer
Peggy Hess	Registrar, Altar Guild, Eucharistic Visitor, Secretary of the Women of St George's, Vestryperson <i>ex officio</i>
Karen Bonner	Altar Guild Chairperson, President of the Women of St George's, Vestryperson (2022)
Sharon Logsdon	Parish Nurse, Eucharistic Visitor, Parish Secretary Vestryperson (2024)
Karen Preston	Altar Guild, Parish Secretary, Vestryperson (2023)
Jeff Hall	Vestryperson (2023), Usher
Russell Bridges	Bell ringer, Altar Guild (candle oil)
Elliott Stallings	Bell ringer, Vestryperson (2024)