



So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. Colossians 2:6

From the rector:

The hills are alive with the sound of music. I enjoy that musical, and the accompanying songs. When Maria (Julie Andrews) stands among the mountains and sings, she is facing some known adversarial conditions. War, or at least enemy occupation, is imminent. Maria is in the midst of some personal discernment and challenges. Yet, aware of the glory of God in the world, and the gift of singing God's praises, she looks at her blessings and celebrates.

I have challenged St. Stephen's - let 2022 be a year of counting our blessings. We know what we have been through and what lies ahead is somewhat (always, really) a mystery. So, let's put the path of gratitude and thanksgiving before us and follow that trail. Sometimes small paths will appear that derail us- but only for a moment if we get our bearings.

The Episcopal Church Women distribute blessings boxes. Little cardboard boxes that one leaves on the dresser or a table. Daily or several times a week, one stops and thinks about small blessings and drops a coin in. It is not meant to be a large donation when the boxes are collected. It is designed to help us focus on our daily blessings. And the dimes and nickels add up to then, in turn, bless another. I propose we all use these boxes (they are in the narthex or I can send you one). The purpose is to help us focus on living in an *attitude of gratitude*.

In a mindset of gratitude and thanksgiving, the mountains of our area will indeed be alive- with the sound of praises to God and songs of the kingdom.

Help Wanted! The Little Library in front of the office doors is in need of some serious repair work. The letters are falling off and it shows signs of mildew. It needs paint and TLC. If you appreciate this little ministry and want it to remain, please let Mother Susan know you will come in the spring and tend to the box.

The Annual Report for 2021 is available in the office. If you have any questions, please contact Mother Susan. And good news- when working through the bank statements, we discovered we have \$10,000 more in the building fund. We also have discovered a small stock holding valued at \$200.00.

Thank you to Gary Schroder, Doug Terry and Chris McClain for their work on the Vestry as they retire, and we eagerly welcome Jason Hogie as he joins the leadership team this year.

Thank you

Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.
1 Thessalonians 5:18

Sunday ministers:	Feb. 6 reader: Jason Hogie	Chalice: Jim Vargo
	Feb. 13 reader: Chris McClain	Chalice: Danielle Stewart
	Feb. 20: Chuck Mylinsky	Chalice: Lori Vargo
	Feb. 27: Jane Morton	Chalice: Doug Willis

Announcements:

****Due to the Covid pandemic, once again we will have to skip Mardi Gras. We eagerly await next year's event!**

 ****As I write this newsletter, the retaining wall in the back is being repaired! They are installing nine 'screws' to pull the wall back to an upright position and hold it in place. This spring, we will have a workday to rework the bricks that have slipped out of place. And a special thank you to Ann and Chuck who maintain this special and holy area.**

****Mark your calendars: The consecration for our new bishop will be held March 13th. Our Presiding Bishop will be in attendance. Ordinations and consecrations are wonderful events, filled with rituals and rites and great traditions. More information on how you can attend will be sent out when available.**

****Note: there is a diocesan group that meets online for noonday prayer Monday through Friday, and evening prayer every day. If you would like the sign-in information, please contact Mother Susan.**

For your prayers this month:

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart [and especially the hearts of the people of this land], that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Your prayers are asked especially for: Byron Burgess, Tiger Warfield, Dave Brown, Louis George, Charles, Ann Gerald, Mead Parsons, Issac, Larry, Jack, Carver, Marianne, Kathy & Samuel Evans, Katie, Romana, Jeremy, Linda Kay, Angie, Mariah Patterson, Jaxon Minetti, Randal Hurst, Kim Muncy, Richard Klein, Patricia Meadows, Sandy, Jane Morton, Stephanie Bolen, Catherine Newburg, Preethi Naidu, Bonnie Meyer, Brendon Mann, Valerie Ventura, Paula Sowers, Kay Kinnan, Martha Rucker, Mary Mickel and Marc & family

[Our prayer list has not been updated in quite a while. Please verify with Mother Susan your requests are still active] revclaytor@gmail.com or call the church office 304-253-9672

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
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