

Church of the Advent

Celebrating 150 Years

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Comm/unity in Another Age

We have been watching “Anne with an E.” This is a television production loosely based on Anne of Green Gables. You may remember the books or the television production for youth from several years ago. Unlike the original, the series makes it a point not to gloss over the difficulties of late Victorian rural life. The setting is Prince Edward Island off the coast of Canada. The title figure, Anne, is an orphan. She has been kept in an abusive orphanage and mistreated by a family which essentially hired her for child care and domestic work. By chance she is sent into rural P.E.I. where she is adopted by an older farming couple, a brother and a sister.

For those of us who enjoy the charming architecture and other tangible arts of Victoriana, including a carpenter gothic worship space, the portrayal of Anne may draw us up short. It is an age in which women and men are given very precise roles with each being expected to behave in only one way. It is a time before the advances of twentieth century medicine and the results of infection or injury could be cruel. Limited financial reversals could mean complete catastrophe. A lost crop was a disaster. There was no social safety net.

On the other side of the equation there was the excitement of a new age, and a sense of community. I suspect that the importance of community, formed by living in the same small area of your birth, by shared responses to disaster, by a common schooling, by being a member of the same church community, were all responses to and the acquired habits of a very uncertain age. In the event of illness, fire or some other disaster who could you turn to if not to community? That same community could be stifling and oppressive; but it was essential to survival. The community, including Anne’s, would resist the new and different; but one reason for resistance was the importance of the same community for survival.

In this program the risk of disease, expectations of marriage, premature death, financial loss and an orphan introduced into the fabric of a closed society create the tensions that make for a well told story (and it is well told; and I will be upset if it is not

renewed for another season!). For me however, those same tensions suggest a value to community which we tend to forget.

They relied on each other because the risks of not doing so were so obvious. We, on the other hand, tend to assume that each of us is and ought to be self-sufficient. We are told that it is just a matter of working harder. As individuals we can do anything and need no one. As a result we tend to forget or de-value community. I don't think our risks are any less. We just don't see them as risks until it is too late. We pretend as if we can do it all by ourselves; and we continue to pretend until we realize that we cannot. We do need community. We need to come together as one every bit as much as the farmers of Victorian Prince Edward Island.

I am writing just as we approach Pentecost. In one way it is a feast of the individual. The Holy Spirit comes to each of us. Each of us receives a gift and each of us is given responsibility to go into the world. The old practice of having the Gospel read in different languages simultaneously underscored the uniqueness of our gifts, but also the chaos of not being one.

The time which follows the Ascension and the time after Pentecost is about being called. It is about individual risk and venture. It is also a time to gather. It is a time to remember community. This is how we experience the feast, together. This is not a solitary exercise. The gift of the spirit is both individual and collective. Pentecost is, by tradition, marked as the birthday of the church. It is recognition that we are not only called individually, we are called together. As Jesus has said, the object is that we "all may be one." Here is our strength in an uncertain, challenging and sometimes hostile world.

The orphan Anne understands the need to be a part of community, first in a family and then the broader group. Finding a place in community is the means by which Anne survives and flourishes. The importance of that process argues against our affection for individualism and self-sufficiency, the devaluation of the traditions of community. Pentecost calls us to a community of faith, to common mission. What each of us is given is also what we share as one in common.

--*John*+

RECOGNITION OF LEMs

Join us on Sunday, June 11, at the 10:30 service when we recognize the dedication of our Lay Eucharistic Ministers. Our LEMs serve all year by visiting and offering communion at local nursing homes and to our shut-in parishioners. Now is the time to recognize these faithful volunteers.

SUNDAY SCHOOL RECOGNITION

Join us on Sunday, June 18, at the 10:30 service when we recognize the dedication of our Sunday school teachers. During the course of the year our Sunday school teachers have taken on the responsibility of teaching and leading our youth with Bible stories, projects, even a Christmas pageant. Now is the time to recognize these faithful volunteers.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

Anyone who is interested in applying for an award can do so by sending a brief email to Mrs. Bourgeau at bourgeau3@msn.com, with a brief description of your plans for higher education in the coming year and your ultimate goal. Please include the name of the school you will attend. Students engaged in any form of higher education, be it college, junior college or vocational training school, will be considered for an award.

HYMN SING IN JULY

Mark your calendars on July 16, 2017 for our Hymn Sing. More information will be available closer to that date.



Notes from the ECM

The next breakfast meeting of the ECM will be Tuesday June 7. The meeting begins at 8:30 AM, with coffee ready by 8:00 AM. The cost is \$5.00 and all men of the parish are invited.

ADVENT BOOK CLUB

The next meeting of the Book Club will be Tuesday, June 20, at the home of Lynda and Corbin Cogswell. The book for discussion is *A Piece of the World* by Christina Baker Kline. The Book Club will not meet in July and August.

ANNUAL JUNE LUNCHEON

The ECW is sponsoring the annual June Luncheon for all church members. Each person may also invite one guest. The Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, June 13, at noon at the Washington Inn. The cost is \$20.00 and entree choices are: Sauteed Chicken Breast Topped with a Pecan Beurre Blanc Sauce with Roasted Red and Green Grapes or Plancha Seared Mahi Mahi topped with a Light Lemon butter Sauce, Tomatoes and Capers. There is a sign-up list in the back of the church or contact Carol Obligado (898-9699) or cobligado@aol.com before June 5.

JUNE CHURCH DINNER

The next dinner of this season will be Saturday, June 24. The menu is Roast Beef. There is also a vegetarian entrée. All dinners include coffee, tea and homemade desserts. Guests are welcome to bring beer, wine or soda to accompany their meal.

Table service begins at 4:30 PM and continues until 7:00 PM. Take-out meals are also available. The cost is \$15.00 at the door (\$6.00 for children). If you purchase your tickets in advance, the price is \$13.00 (\$6.00 for children). Consider purchasing our 10-meal ticket for \$120.00 (a \$150.00 value).

T.E.A.C.H.

TEACH is a special project which is part of Advent's Outreach Committee, very much "hands on". Our members provide cooking classes for new mothers who are engaged in high school studies outside the traditional public school system. We have just completed another successful school year, continuing to focus on nutritional, inexpensive, and easy to prepare meals to fit the busy schedules of student/moms. We look forward to sharing culinary times with next year's students.

Glenda Unzelmann

ANNUAL CHOIR CAMP

Sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey and Church of the Advent, the program's focus is on learning to use the gift of our voices and enjoy the art of singing. It is open to all youth ages 10 and up, whatever their faith home. The camp begins on Sunday, July 23 and ends on Thursday, July 27 with an Evensong service, to which the community is invited. For day students the camp will begin at 9:00 AM and end at 5:00 PM. The fee for the week is \$50 (scholarships are available). Students or parents who are interested should contact the church office (884-3065).

THE NEXT VESTRY MEETING IS SUNDAY, JUNE 25 AT NOON IN THE UPPER ROOM

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Plans are underway for Vacation Bible School at Church of the Advent. The dates are July 31 to August 4, 2017 and it will be held in the early evening. If you would like to be a part of the VBS adventure this year, please contact the church office at 884-3065 or adventsecretary@comcast.net. Many small tasks go into creating a successful event, so please do not hesitate to share your talents and interests! We begin our serious planning this month.

BUS TRIP

Church of the Advent is sponsoring a bus trip on Tuesday, July 11 to Brandywine River Museum to view the special exhibit, “Andrew Wyeth: In Retrospect” celebrating Wyeth’s 100th birthday. The show will explore Wyeth’s finest works between the 1930’s and his death in 2009. Later, there will be a tour of nearby historic Barns-Brinton House built in 1714 as a tavern. Concluding the day, there will be a stop at The Woodlands at Phillips to view the mushroom-growing garden, and have the opportunity to purchase everything mushroom.

Cost of the trip is \$60 and includes a voucher lunch at the Museum. The bus will leave the Big Lots parking lot at 8:00 am and return between 6:00 and 7:00 pm. Deadline for reservations is June 27. Please call Glenda Unzelmann at 443-243-7615 or email her at werneru@verizon.net.

