



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S HOUSE

3316 Draher Road, Oxford, MI 48370-2506 • 248-628-5155
office@staugustineshouse.org

NEWSLETTER

Advent, A.D. 2024/2025

The Congregation of the Servants of Christ, St. Augustine's House, is an ecumenical Christian community whose life of discipleship is inspired and shaped by the Holy Rule of St. Benedict. We identify with the Lutheran tradition, understood as a movement within and for the one holy catholic and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ.

We are committed to the growth of the permanent resident community, to the pursuit of ecumenical understanding, and to the provision of retreats for members of the Fellowship of St. Augustine and others. We seek to serve the whole Church by our life of prayer and by the use of our facilities.

✠ PAX

And Mary said, "Behold, I am the Handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38)

When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; (Matthew 1:24)

My grandfather was 62 when he retired. There is nothing outstanding about that; at that time 62 was a standard retirement age. My grandmother, who was the same age as my grandfather, retired at the same time. From the time of their mid-teens, they had done most everything together, so retiring together most likely seemed like the thing to do.

What brings this to mind at this time is that I am now 62, the age my grandfather was when he retired, and as I find myself more and more speaking like him, acting like him, and even looking like him, I spend quite a bit of time considering what it was like for him to be 62 years old and going through this major life transition.

From my perspective of 20 years of age at that time, my grandparents' retiring was the first major shift from normalcy that I remember in my family. Grandpa had always farmed and worked on trucks, school buses, and farm equipment, as a diesel mechanic. Grandma had always run the chicken noodle soup filler at Campbell's Soup Co. Yes, if you opened a can of Campbell's chicken noodle soup during those 30 odd years she worked there, there was a good chance it had been filled by my grandmother. My whole life, that had been my grandparents' life. But then, at age 62, they began to live their life in a very different way.

I had gone through my own major changes by that time, graduating high school, going off to college a whole 30 miles away, getting married, having a child, all in the span of a few years' time, but this was the first major shift in my familial context, which up until then had been uncharacteristically stable. Of course, I did not realize at that time that it was uncharacteristic; it was just the way things were. All of a sudden, my grandparents were living a totally different life than I had ever known them to live, and, surprisingly, it was all right.

It was all right because of the stability they had provided for everyone in my family, which was a precious gift for all of us. Even more precious, theirs was a stability born from a life of the faithfulness that comes from Faith: faithfulness to each other, their family, and their community,



grounded in Faith in Jesus Christ, their Savior Who had forgiven them of all their sins.

I speak of them as a unit, because they truly were one flesh in every way. Out of that one flesh, as they gave themselves to each other, God produced both physical and spiritual life, first for children, then for grandchildren, then for great-grandchildren, then for great-great-grandchildren.

This life for so many others came about through great self-sacrifice on their part. Because of their Faith in Jesus Christ, they knew what it was to put themselves aside for the sake of others. Not that either one of them was an “angel”. There were plenty of instances of selfishness rather than selflessness, particularly in the necessity of caring for their aging parents in their young years and dealing with one another in their physically difficult later years, but, because of their Faith, the selfishness occurred within a context of greater selflessness rather than the other way around. Since they knew that God in Christ Jesus had

died for them and forgiven them, they were able to forgive others and die to themselves for the sake of living for others. In the Holy Spirit atmosphere of the Love of God in Christ Jesus, out of the death of self came life for others. When we, in the Obedience of Faith, follow the Holy Spirit’s lead for us instead of following our own way, God is able to create and provide life for others.

This life producing obedience of Faith is seen most clearly from a human vantage point in the responses of Joseph and Mary to the commanding Grace of God. What a difficult situation, which so easily could have resulted in death. A young, engaged woman found to be with child before she comes together with her husband in marriage. Scandalous. Yet, both Joseph and Mary, by the Power of the Holy Spirit, willingly entered into this societally shameful situation, bearing societal shame that was not their own, for the sake of producing and raising the Savior of God’s People and the world, Who in His ignominious end would also bear the shame of sin that was not His to bear, bringing forgiveness of that sin to the world.



*Chapel of the Virgin at Eglise St. Roch in Paris, France.
Photo by Robert Page.*

Remarkably, in His Birth is Death, and in His Death is Birth. In Christ, birth and death are not two separate points on each individual’s earthly timeline, but rather birth and death come together in Him so that in all of our births throughout life is death, and in all of our deaths throughout life is birth. The foundation of this principle is in the forgiveness of our sins, so that the death that we

bring about for ourselves and others through our sin does not result in ultimate death, but rather ultimate Life as we receive and share His Mercy and Grace.

This is the foundation of Faith upon which the Lord was able to construct a secure habitation through my grandparents for all around them. I realize that not everyone had this type of familial security growing up. However, my own upbringing was not necessarily safe overall, and I would further challenge all of us, instead of being

upset that we did not have whatever we needed growing up, to forgive, and to follow the example of Mary

and Joseph that my grandparents did: answer the call of God in the Obedience of Faith to look around them and follow the Lord’s lead to create safe space for others to thrive through the knowledge of the forgiving Grace of God.

In that way, Jesus Christ will truly be born in us today, even as we expectantly await Him in His Final Coming to set all things right, even our own selves.

Peace,

+Jeffrey

Christmas Schedule

Dec. 15th, 6:00 pm: Advent Lessons & Carols

Dec. 24th, 7:00 pm: Mass of the Angels

Dec. 25th, 10:00 am: Mass of the Eternal Word

Dec. 29th, 5:00 pm: Organ Recital

News and Notes

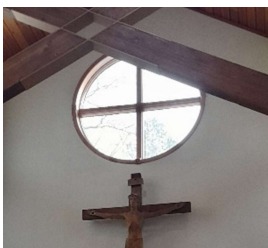
The last Sunday in September organist David Enos presented a recital in our church as a part of our Fifth Sunday at Five series. In addition to Bach and Buxtehude several more contemporary works were performed. He was assisted by oboist Lynne Marie Mangan. As usual the program concluded with the singing of a hymn by all present accompanied by the organ.

We again hosted a group of students and staff from Hillsdale College during their fall break in the middle of October.

In November we hosted a prayer retreat for members of the Anglican Church of the Advent. Their priest, Fr. Shaun Laduc, also celebrates some of our weekday Masses here at St. Augustine's. On December 15th at six in the evening, members of the church will conduct a ceremony of Advent Lessons and Carols in our church. All are welcome to attend

Another Fifth Sunday at Five Organ Recital will be given by our organist Daniel John Susan on the Sunday in the Christmas Octave, December 29th, at 5:00 in the afternoon. The program will include the complete Trio Sonata in E-Flat Major by Johann Sebastian Bach, some seasonal works, and a hymn sung by all. Three short works by twentieth century organist Marcel Dupre will highlight the flexibility of the organ.

We have been using our new church building for over two decades now, and during this time we have continuously made little—and not so little—improvements and additions. Currently we are exploring adding stained glass to the large round window facing east above the crucifix. We have recruited a local artist, Robert Kane, to help us design and execute the work. We have in mind an abstract, sunburst pattern. Below: the east window and one suggested design.



David Enos, Lynne Marie Mangan, and Daniel John Susan



Hillsdale College Student Group



Church of the Advent Group

Fellowship Day 2024

The 67th annual Fellowship Day was held here on Saturday, October 12th. The day began with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by Bishop Jeffrey. After a time of coffee and visiting, we returned to the church for a presentation by our regular organist Daniel John Susan. He played and led the singing of various old and new hymns along with spoken commentary on them. After praying the midday office a luncheon was served in the refectory for those present.

The following day Bishop Aubrey Bougher celebrated the Sunday liturgy which was also the Feast of Dedication for our monastery church. In his homily Bp. Bougher noted that this was the 35th anniversary of the death of our founder, Fr. Arthur Carl Keinheder.



Fellowship Day Presentation

Sing, but Keep Going

Let us sing now, not in order to enjoy a life of leisure, but in order to lighten our labors. You should sing as wayfarers do—sing, but continue your journey. Do not be lazy, but sing to make your journey more enjoyable. Sing, but keep going. What do I mean by keep going? Keep on making progress. This progress, however, must be in virtue; for there are some, the Apostle warns, whose only progress is in vice. If you make progress, you will be continuing your journey, but be sure that your progress is in virtue, true faith and right living, Sing then, but keep going.

—*St. Augustine*

*We wish you all a joyous Christmas
and a blessed new year.
Christ is born! Glorify Him!*



*When this old world drew on toward night,
you came; but not in splendor bright,
not as a monarch, but the child
of Mary, blameless mother mild.*

—from the hymn at Vespers in Advent

Gifts are gratefully acknowledged in memory of

CARL W. AMES
ERNIE and MARY LOU BAKER
JOHN R. COCHRAN
JAMES and JOAN FACKLER
MARTIN J. HEINECKEN
PATRICIA ANN HEINLEIN
KEITH JORDAN
NANCY LOU KLEMME
ARTHUR CARL KREINHEDER
JOAN W. MILLER
DONALD MOTAKA
NORMAN E. NETHING

and in honor of

DEVIN AMES
CHRISTOPHER ERNST TORGLER

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