

Here's a couple of things we've learned:

The altar area 'swallows' plant material. I literally brought a truckload for Easter last year and it wasn't too much. Huge is really medium size. We can cut down a tree and put it up there and it will look like a nice frond. I almost think a couple of palm trees/ficus trees in containers might be a good investment. Podocarpus, bamboo, LONG tree branches are big enough. They can go behind the drapes and be held upright by ties to the existing hooks.

It is really dark up there. When I use orange or bronze or burgundy, it just disappears into the wood. That is why I brought the white Gauzy fabric and a couple of utility lights w/florescent bulbs - so the preserved leaf circle would show up for fall. You have seen those weekend TV shows where they 'stage' a house for sale? One trick they use that would help us a lot is these lights in cans that shine up a wall. I am keeping an eye out for them. Because things happen during the week, Stephan can usually tell you what happened to the lights and where they might be now. They are needed most of the time.

-Large heavy containers, not small vases (unless a dozen) I bought us a double sized china umbrella stand to use as a vase for taller materials (branches, gladiolas) It is heavy enough that it won't topple. If in doubt, put rock/brick/concrete block in bottom. I know people in the congregation have shrubs in their yard that would be great to prune and bring in. Camellia, hydrangea, Rhododendron. Perhaps a call out by the list-serve when we know calla lilies, flowering trees and such are in bloom? People could just come a couple of minutes early to church, walk up to the prepared vases and put them in.

- Easy, easy way to make a nice look is to cut 4 four foot lengths of vine (potato vine, trumpet vine) and put one on each side of each candelabra like a garland. Fast and effective. There are hooks that run across the top of the wood paneling. Vines with ties can be hung across those as well. Potato vine, trumpet vine etc.

-Although fresh flowers are delightful, I think a basis that for each season Spring/Summer, Fall, Winter should be one very presentable fake arrangement. When every one has a fresh arrangement, just move the fake to the vestry and back when the fresh fades or is removed. I think we have oodles of basic items now, except we could use some super large faux pumpkins.

- A warning on dried arrangements - the weekend that I brought juvenile eucalyptus boughs and dried hydrangea, I found out that children went up during the week

and grabbed them for their crisp crunch. That made enough of a mess that the custodian got rid of them.

-**The vestry** –the room to the right as you face the altar/ the doors under the wood filagree/adjacent to the organ- has big black containers, and big brass containers, two faux painted metal vases and the new big china one. The upright, wooden closet now has linens in it. Use them alone or in combination. Try not to let them get put into storage with decorations going away for the season.

- **Church grounds** - Judicious pruning of plants on the church grounds can be helpful for all. The camellias can be pruned in flower. The magnolias can have some thinning, when in flower, with proper pruning cuts. Dark green Sarcococca shrubs near the recycling bins...The white flowering bulbs can be cut for a coffee room arrangement w/out scalping a clump. In the back courtyard off the coffee room, lots of great materials. Just can't do this every week.