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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **26<sup>th</sup> Annual Homicide Victim Memorial Service**

**DAYTON, OH (12/05/2016)** – The holidays are a time for joyful celebrations. However, for families and friends who have lost someone to violence, the holiday season can be a time when the sense of loss is overwhelming. Twenty-six years ago the Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office began paying tribute to those whose lives were taken by violence with a gathering of families and friends. The intent of this service is to help survivors through the holiday season. Throughout the years, this service has grown from a small group to an event with over 500 in attendance.

Mathias H. Heck, Jr., Montgomery County Prosecuting Attorney, has announced that this year's service will be held on **Monday, December 5, 2016**. The service will begin at 6:30 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church, on the corner of First and Perry Streets, downtown Dayton. The service includes a presentation of ornaments to a special memorial tree.

Immediately after the ornament presentations, a balloon launch will take place, weather permitting. Many of the balloons will carry cards with memorial or inspirational messages from survivors to those who have died. The soaring balloons, with their messages of love and remembrance, provide an emotional and spiritual lift for the survivors. Afterward, all are invited inside the Common Pleas Court Building for refreshments.

For more information about the Homicide Victim Memorial Service, please contact the Montgomery County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Sandra M. Hunt, Director, Victim/Witness Division at (937) 225-5623.

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