



St. Mary's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
The Mustard Seed Church

The mission of St. Mary's is to invite all people into a relationship with God and each other in Christ.



April - May 2023 Edition

The Mustard Seed Church Sowing Seeds in the Community...



San Jacinto Festival

St. Mary's will be participating in the San Jacinto Festival held on April 21 and 22. We will be having a game booth in the Kid'Zone.

This is a great way to serve our community and get the word out about St. Mary's. If you have two hours where you can help, contact Dani at the church (979-345-3456) as soon as possible.



Honoring Our Military

Every Sunday, for many years, we have included in the Prayers of the People the names of military personnel who either grew up in our church or are connected to someone in our congregation. These men are currently serving on active duty or are part of the National Guard or Reserves, ready to serve when called.

We will honor the three dedicated military personnel on our prayer list on Armed Forces Day, May 21st, the day the United States honors those who are currently serving in one of the 5 branches of the military. Gift cards and letters will be sent to them, with our prayers, in appreciation of their service and sacrifices.

Donations for the purchase gift cards will be accepted from April 19th to May 7th. You can place donations in the offering plate on Sundays using the envelopes in the Narthex, bring or mail your donation to the church office. or donate through PayPal on our website. Notes thanking them and their families for their service would also be appreciated.

During these uncertain times, these men and their families need to know they are not forgotten. Give what you can for those who give so much and continue to pray for them.



UTO Gathering

The UTO boxes you received on All Saints Sunday last November may be returned on Pentecost Sunday, May 28th. The boxes will be collected during the offertory and then sent to the UTO National Office. UTO is entrusted to receive the offerings, and to distribute 100 percent of what is collected to support mission and ministry throughout The Episcopal Church and Provinces

of the Anglican Communion.

UTO stands for United Thanks Offering. It is a way to give thanks to God for his many blessings.

Notice all of the ways that God is blessing you each day; from little things like a sunshine on your family reunion or a note from a friend to the big things like recovering from an illness or completing a major project. From moments of self-care to interaction with people who care and love us, good things are happening all the time that we simply miss because we are continually rushing.

The UTO blue box allows us to slow down for just a second and give thanks for all those blessings, big and small. Every time you drop a coin or dollar in the box, say a prayer of thanksgiving. Place these boxes anywhere; in the laundry room to catch the change that is left in pockets, in the car for your spare change after ordering through the drive-thru, in your bedroom for all the coins accumulated at the end of the day. You will be amazed how much you are thankful for and how much you will collect.

New UTO boxes will be available on Pentecost Sunday in your red gift bag. There will be extra boxes available so feel free to take as many as you want. Remember to include your children and teens, so they also can give thanks for God's many blessings.



Children's Choir

Gwynne Olson is leading a choir program for children and youth. There is no age limit as long as they have a desire to sing. They will meet right after church in the classroom upstairs for 15 minutes. They will learn the basics of singing and will perform for the church on designated Sundays. Contact Gwynne for more information.



Training for Our Defibrillator

The church has purchased and installed a defibrillator in the Parish Hall. A class on the use of the defibrillator will be held on Sunday, April 23rd, after church during the Youth and Adult Sunday School. All are encouraged to attend this training led by Breanna Smith, Sweeny Hospital.



Parish Dinner

Our next Parish dinner will be Wednesday, May 10th. We will begin gathering around 5:45 p.m. with dinner to be served no later than 6:00. On the menu is BBQ from Kenjo's BBQ in Brazoria.

A sign up sheet is in the Narthex and Parish Hall to get an idea of the number of meals to order. Please sign it even if you are not sure you will come.

Join us for another delicious meal, special time with friends, and a laugh or two. It won't be the same without you there.

Graduation Sunday

Sunday, May 14th, is Graduation Sunday at St. Mary's. It is the time we honor those who are graduating from high school. This year we will be honoring Brayze Schill, son of Jennifer and Adam Schill; Haley Cantrell, daughter of Holly and Tommy Cantrell; and Piper Roddy, daughter of Wade Roddy and stepdaughter of Shyanne Roddy. Please join us for this very special service.

Senior Citizen Center Monthly Country Store

The Senior Citizen Center which provides Meals on Wheels, weekday lunches at the center, Bingo, special events, and craft activities for the senior citizens in our area has a Country Store the first of each month. As many of you may know, their Country Store downtown, which was their main source of income, was sold and all their items went into storage. The new Senior Citizen Center that is being build will have the Country Store, but until it is completed, the Center has decided to open their doors on the first Friday and Saturday of each month and sell the items they have in storage along with any new donated items. The times are Friday, May 5, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday, May 6, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Center is located at [629 E. Bernard St., West Columbia](#). Please help support this organization which is completely self-funded.

Images from Holy Week and Easter

Additional pictures will be posted on our website.





Message from Marvin Miller

AN EASTER STORY

There was a certain Professor of Religion named Dr. Christianson who taught at a small college in the Western United States. Dr. Christianson taught the required survey course in Christianity at this particular institution. Every student was required to take this course his or her freshman year regardless of his or her major.

Although Dr. Christianson tried hard to communicate the essence of the gospel in his class, he found that most of his students looked upon the course as nothing but required drudgery. Despite his best efforts, most students refused to take Christianity seriously.

This year, Dr. Christianson had a special student named Steve. Steve was only a freshman but was studying with the intent of going onto seminary for the ministry. Steve was popular, he was well liked, and he was an imposing physical specimen. He was now the starting center on the school football team and was the best student in the professor's class.

One day, Dr. Christianson asked Steve to stay after class so he could talk with him. "How many pushups can you do?"

Steve said, "I do about 200 every night."

"200? That's good, Steve," Dr. Christianson said. "Do you think you could do 300?"

Steve replied, "I don't know...I've never done 300 at a time."

"Do you think you could?" again asked Dr. Christianson.

"Well, I can try," said Steve.

"Can you do 300 in sets of 10? I have a class project in mind, and I need you to do about 300 pushups in sets of ten for this to work. Can you do it? I need you to tell me you can do it", said the professor.

Steve said, "Well...I think I can...yeah, I can do it."

Dr. Christianson said, "Good! I need you to do this on Friday. Let me explain what I have in mind."

Friday came, and Steve got to class early and sat in the front of the room. When class started, the professor pulled out a big box of donuts. These weren't the normal kinds of donuts, they were the extra fancy BIG kind, with cream centers and frosting swirls.

Everyone was pretty excited it was Friday, the last class of the day, and they were going to get an early start on the weekend with a party in Dr. Christianson's class.

Dr. Christianson went to the first girl in the first row and asked, "Cynthia, do you want to have one of these donuts?"

Cynthia said, "Yes."

Dr. Christianson then turned to Steve and asked, "Steve, would you do ten pushups so that Cynthia can have a donut?"

"Sure." Steve jumped down from his desk to do a quick ten.

Then Steve again sat in his desk. Dr. Christianson put a donut on Cynthia's desk.

Dr. Christianson then went to Joe, the next person, and asked, "Joe, do you want a donut?"

Joe said, "Yes."

Dr. Christianson asked, "Steve would you do ten pushups so Joe can have a donut?" Steve did ten pushups, and Joe got a donut.

And so it went, down the first aisle, Steve did ten pushups for every person before they got their donut, and down the second aisle, till Dr. Christianson came to Scott. Scott was on the basketball team and in as good condition as Steve. He was very popular and never lacking for female companionship. When the professor asked, "Scott do you want a donut?"

Scott's reply was, "Well, can I do my own pushups?"

Dr. Christianson said, "No, Steve has to do them."

Then Scott said, "Well, I don't want one then."

Dr. Christianson shrugged and then turned to Steve and asked, "Steve, would you do ten pushups so Scott can have a donut he doesn't want?" With perfect obedience, Steve started to do ten pushups.

Scott said, "HEY! I said I didn't want one!"

Dr. Christianson said, "Look, this is my classroom, my class, my desks, and these are my donuts. Just leave it on the desk if you don't want it." And he put a donut on Scott's desk.

Now by this time, Steve had begun to slow down a little. He just stayed on the floor between sets because it took too much effort to be getting up and down. You could start to see a little perspiration coming out around his brow.

Dr. Christianson started down the third row. Now the students were beginning to get a little angry. Dr. Christianson asked Jenny, "Jenny, do you want a donut?"

Sternly, Jenny said, "No."

Then Dr. Christianson asked Steve, "Steve, would you do ten more pushups so Jenny can have a donut that she doesn't want." Steve did ten, and Jenny got a donut.

By now, a growing sense of uneasiness filled the room. The students were beginning to say "No" and there were all these uneaten donuts on the desks. Steve also had to really put forth a lot of extra effort to get these pushups done for each donut. There began to be a small pool of sweat on the floor beneath his face. His arms and brow were beginning to get red because of the physical effort involved.

Dr. Christianson started down the fourth row. During his class, however, some students from other classes had wandered in and sat down on the steps along the radiators that ran down the sides of the room. When the professor realized this, he did a quick count and saw that now there were 34 students in the room. He started to worry if Steve would be able to make it.

Dr. Christianson went on to the next person and the next and the next. Near the end of that row, Steve was really having a rough time. He was taking a lot more time to complete each set.

A few moments later, Jason, a recent transfer student, came to the room and was about to come in when all the students yelled in one voice, "NO! Don't come in! Stay out!". Jason didn't know what was going on.

Steve picked up his head and said, "No, let him come."

Professor Christianson said, "You realize that if Jason comes in you will have to do ten pushups for him?"

Steve said, "Yes, let him come in. Give him a donut."

Dr. Christianson said, "Okay, Steve, I'll let you get Jason's out of the way right now. Jason, do you want a donut?"

Jason, new to the room hardly knew what was going on. Yes," he said, "give me a donut."

"Steve, will you do ten pushups so that Jason can have a donut?" Steve did ten pushups very slowly and with great effort. Jason, bewildered, was handed a donut and sat down.

Dr. Christianson finished the fourth row then started on those visitors seated by the heaters. Steve's arms were now shaking with each pushup in a struggle to lift himself against the force of gravity. Sweat was profusely dropping off of his face and, by this time, there was no sound except his heavy breathing. There was not a dry eye in the room.

The very last two students in the room were two young women, both cheerleaders, and very popular. Dr. Christianson went to Linda, the second to last, and asked, "Linda, do you want a doughnut?"

Linda said, very sadly, "No, thank you."

Professor Christianson quietly asked, "Steve, would you do ten pushups so that Linda can have a donut she doesn't want?" Grunting from the effort, Steve did ten very slow pushups for Linda.

Then Dr. Christianson turned to the last girl, Susan. "Susan, do you want a donut?" Susan, with tears flowing down her face, began to cry. "Dr. Christianson, why can't I help him?"

Dr. Christianson, with tears of his own, said, "No, Steve has to do it alone. I have given him this task and he is in charge of seeing that everyone has an opportunity for a donut whether they want it or not. When I decided to have a party this last day of class, I looked at my grade book. Steve is the only student with a perfect grade. Everyone else has failed a test, skipped class, or offered me inferior work. Steve told me that when a player messes up in football practice, he must do pushups. I told Steve that none of you could come to my party unless he paid the price by doing your pushups. He and I made a deal for your sakes. Steve, would you do ten pushups so Susan can have a donut?"

As Steve very slowly finished his last pushup, with the understanding that he had accomplished all that was required of him, having done 350 pushups, his arms buckled beneath him and he fell to the floor.

Dr. Christianson turned to the room and said. "And so it was, that our Savior, Jesus Christ, on the cross, pled to the Father, 'into thy hands I commend my spirit.' With the understanding that He had done everything that was required of Him, he yielded up His life. And like some of those in this room, many of us leave the gift on the desk, uneaten."

Two students helped Steve up off the floor and to a seat, physically exhausted, but wearing a thin smile.

"Well done, good and faithful servant," said the professor, adding, "Not all sermons are preached in words."

Turning to his class the professor said, "My wish is that you might understand and fully comprehend all the riches of grace and mercy that have been given to you through the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for us all, now and forever.

Whether or not we choose to accept His gift to us, the price has been paid. Wouldn't you be foolish and ungrateful to leave it laying on the desk?"

Our New Playground



Community Assistance

During March and the first part of April, the committee approved funds to help 3 families or individuals with their rent.

If you know of anyone needing assistance, please contact Tracy Lane or Jackie Walker.



2023 Flower sign up

The forms to sign up for 2023 flower offerings are in the Narthex. Please stop by and sign up to honor or celebrate special days in your life. The cost is \$50, to be paid in advance.

For more information call the church office at 979-345-3456.

Congratulations NICE GOING!
GREAT! Way to Go!
Yea! FELICITATIONS
CHEERS Take A BEST
BOW! WISHES!

March and April

Edison Grey Mikel was born April 5. He is the son of Robert and Sydney Mikel and the grandson of AJ and Dani Mikel.

Abigail Roddy's twirling team won first place at the MA Nationals. She also "Rang the Bell" at West Columbia Elementary for mastering her math facts.

Trace Roddy received the Excellence Award at West Columbia Elementary. He also "Rang the Bell" for knowing his math facts.

Cesylie Guizar, Jasey Hussey, and Madeline Roddy completed the First Communion class and received their award on Easter.

Piper Roddy and the Columbia High School choir won the Sweepstakes Trophy at the state competition.



Don't Forget

Remember to keep your empty print cartridges for St. Mary's. All brands and types are welcomed. We have been turning in 10 cartridges a month, earning a \$20 credit. This greatly helps defray the cost of our office supplies.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Special thanks and gratitude to

- Theata Miller, Dan Roddy, Colleen Matocha, Dani Mikel, AJ Mikel, Marvin Miller, Shyanne Roddy, Abigail Roddy, Trace Roddy, Jasey Hussey, Hannah Hussey, Justin Hussey, Tracy Lane, Sherry Wehner, Jackie Walker, Ouida Thomas, Travis Prater, Gwynne Olson, and Bill Olson for serving as Worship Leaders in March.
- Amber Prater for setting up the Livestreaming on our Facebook site, monitoring the feed during the service, and responding to on-line viewers.
- Sherry and Father Paul Wehner, Colleen Matocha, Shyanne and Wade Roddy, and the Brotherhood for providing treats for our March and Palm Sunday Hospitality and Fellowship.
- Theata and Marvin Miller for stapling the service bulletins.
- Mary Stewart for organizing the children's bags for Sunday service.
- Wade Roddy, Shyanne Roddy, Abigail Roddy, Dani Mikel, AJ Mikel, Tracy Lane, Colleen Matocha, and Jackie Walker for reading the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ on Palm Sunday.
- Theata Miller, Brayze Schill, Colleen Matocha, Tracy Lane, Jay Wiggins, AJ Mikel, Dani Mikel, Jackie Walker, Kendy Hankins, Wendy Hankins, Trace Roddy, Abigail Roddy, Jasey Hussey, Madeline Roddy, Gwynne Olson, Bill Olson, Travis Prater, Mary Stewart, Theresa Crawford, and Braylee Schill for serving during one or more of the services during Holy Week and Easter.
- Sherry Stratton, Rena Thames, Ethel Mills, Carla Clinton, and Susie Jenkins for picking up the Easter flowers from Brookwood.
- Gwynne Olson, Bill Olson, Father Wehner, Dani Mikel, Theata Miller, and Marvin Miller for preparing the church for Easter.
- Sherry Wehner for the flowers used for Flowering the Cross.
- Jackie Walker for the decorations used in the Parish Hall for Easter and for providing the beautiful cake for hospitality.
- everyone who brought eggs for the Easter egg hunt.
- The Reverend Mark Crawford for serving as our celebrant when Father Paul was gone.

You are awesome, and St. Mary's greatly appreciates all you do.



Prayer Request

If you or someone you know is in need of prayer, please notify the office by email or phone. The prayer list will be updated each month, so if prayers need to continue for an individual person, please fill out a new card or let

Dani know. Prayers for the sick and those in need are the joyful duty of the Christian community. Help us keep our parish prayer list current by notifying us of those in need of prayer and when those listed are no longer in need.



Camp Allen Events

Summer Camp - June 4 - July 29: Applications are now being accepted for Camp Allen summer camp. St. Mary's pays 2/3 of the cost for camp. Once you have registered your child, let Dani Mikel know. If you need more information visit the Camp Allen website or contact Dani. A schedule of the camp sessions is on the bulletin board in the Narthex.

Needlepoint Retreat - June 5 - 9: Join fellow needlepointers for this midweek retreat.

Summer Camp for Moms - July 14-16: a weekend of relaxation, renewal, and adventure...just for moms

Thank You

St. Mary's Episcopal Church,
Thank you everyone who donated to the valentine's box I received. Everything inside is greatly appreciated and will be put to good use as was last year's box.

Happy belated Valentine's Day. Thank you all.

Saben Denbow

Stephen F. Austin State University 2023

No Newsletter in May

There will be no newsletter in May. Emails will be sent out periodically to all parishioners with important information and upcoming events. If you receive an email from St. Mary's, please open it. For those who do not have an email address, you will be notified by mail or telephone.

St. Mary's Website

St. Mary's website has several continually updated tabs.

Under the "Calendar" tap there are events and services listed for each month. The calendar is kept up-to-date and edited as new events and services are added. If you click on the event or service, more details will pop up.

The most recent Upcoming Events will now be featured on the front page of the website. This will make it easier to remember what will be happening, so you don't miss anything.

The service bulletin for the upcoming Sunday service can be found under the Worship tab.

A new Photo Gallery has been added and will continually be updated with the latest pictures. Check out what has been going on since the beginning of Advent 2021.

Our website is stmaryswestcolumbia.com. You can access it using the link below or at the top of the newsletter.

April, May, and June Birthdays

Emilea Anderson - Apr. 7

Saren and Scout Case - Apr. 9

Kip Olson - Apr. 20

Reesie Cantrell - May 15

Dane Arana, Sr. - May 19

AJ Mikel - May 28

Jasey Hussey - May 30

Buck Barnes - June 13

Carol Jones - June 21

John Cole - June 29

April, May, and June Anniversaries

Shyanne and Wade Roddy - Apr. 24

Rachel and Jason Davidson - June 9

Wendy and Kurt Hankins - June 10

Jennifer and Adam Schill - June 12

Theata and Marvin Miller - June 13

Ann and Robert Kay - June 17

Dates to Remember

Sunday services are streamed on St. Mary's Facebook Live at 9:00 a.m.

April 23 - Brotherhood (7:30 a.m.)

**April 23 - Sunday Service - Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Nan Doerr
Children's Sunday School**

April 23 - Hospitality and Fellowship (10:00 - 10:30 a.m.)

April 23 - Children's Choir (10:15-10:30 a.m.)

April 23 - Defibrillator training after church

April 26 - Vestry meeting (5:15 p.m.)

**April 30 - Sunday Service - Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner
Children's Sunday School**

April 30 - Hospitality and Fellowship (10:00 - 10:30 a.m.)

April 30 - Children's Choir (10:15 - 10:30 a.m.)

April 30 - Youth and Adult Sunday School and children activities (10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)

May 5 - Senior Citizen Country Store - (1:00 - 4:00 p.m.)

May 6 - Senior Citizen Country Store - (8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.)

May 7 - Brotherhood (7:30 a.m.)

**May 7 - Sunday Service - Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner
Children Sunday School**

May 7- Hospitality and Fellowship (10:00 - 10:30 a.m.)

May 7 - Children's Choir (10:15-10:30 a.m.)

May 7 - Youth and Adult Sunday School and children activities (10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)

May 10 - Parish Dinner catered by Kenjo's BBQ (5:45 p.m.)

May 14 - Graduation and Mother's Day Sunday Service
Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner

May 14 - Hospitality and Fellowship (10:00 - 10:30 a.m.)

May 14 - Children's Choir (10:15 - 10:30 a.m.)

May 14- Youth and Adult Sunday School and children activities (10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)

May 21 - Brotherhood (7:30 a.m.)

May 21 - Sunday Service - Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Nan Doerr

May 21 - Hospitality and Fellowship (10:00 - 10:30 a.m.)

May 21 - Children's Choir (10:15 - 10:30 a.m.)

May 28 - DOK meeting (7:45 a.m.)

May 28 - Sunday Service - Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner

May 28 - Hospitality and Fellowship (10:00 - 10:30 a.m.)

St. Mary's Leadership

Vestry

Rector: the Reverend Paul Wehner

Sr. Warden: Gwynne Olson

Jr. Warden: Dan Roddy

Clerk: Colleen Matocha

Outreach Chair: Jackie Walker

New email address for St. Mary's - stmaryswestcolumbia@gmail.com

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The Bells of St. Mary's is a monthly newsletter for members and friends of St Mary's Episcopal Church. Submissions for publication should be sent to the church office on or before the 25th of the month prior to the publication.