



The Bells of St. Mary's

April Edition



In her book *The Liturgical Year*, Sr. Joan Chittister tells of a story she once heard of a busy New York City airport. Travelers are hustling through the airport, running to get through security, running to make it to their terminal or gate, running to catch that airplane because to miss it would mean a significant travel delay or missed connecting flight. One group of travelers zoomed past a fruit cart. Briefcases or travel bags jostled it as the travelers continued rushing to meet the clock's incessant demand. Crash! It went down. Apples and oranges went flying and rolling down the concourse. The girl behind the cart burst into tears and began crawling on the floor, trying to gather her merchandise. While others continued on and rushed by her, one man stopped to help her, picking up an apple here, an orange there. She continued to cry and exclaim, "It is all bruised...it is all ruined!" The man realized that the woman was blind as she felt her way to finding her scattered produce. Realizing she was probably right, he took bills out of his wallet, pressed them into her hand, saying "Here's \$40 to cover the damage we've done." And as he got up to re-enter the stream of fast-moving people, the woman grasped his sleeve and asked him, "Sir, are you Jesus?"

Long ago, Christians got this label because the world identified them as being "little Christs." God calls us to become like Jesus – we commit to that task through our baptismal vows. Lent is the time of year when we take stock of how that's going – through self-examination, prayer, study, self-denial, and repentance – we see how we measure up. The results are sometimes disappointing.

But then comes Easter – Easter always follows Lent, resurrection always follows suffering and death. New life emerges from the dark tomb. What new life are you being called into this Easter?

Blessings,



Parish Dinner

Our monthly parish dinners are an opportunity for all of us to gather together for no other reason but to share a meal and conversation.

There are no lessons, no studies, no agenda, just a time for fellowship.

The dinners are usually scheduled for the third Wednesday of the month, but in April that Wednesday falls during Holy Week. As a result, our next dinner will be a week later. Marvin and Theata Miller will be providing their Dutch Oven Lasagna. A signup sheet will be placed in the Parish Hall for those wishing to provide side dishes, bread, drinks, or desserts.

Mark your calendar now, so we can all have a great time together at our next Parish Dinner on Wednesday, April 24th, at 5:30.

Calling all grillers. Be looking ahead to Wednesday, May 15th, when our Parish Dinner will be our annual end of school and Christian Formation celebration with hamburgers and all the fixings. Let the office know if you can help with the cooking.

CUMC Lenten Luncheons

Columbia United Methodist Church invites the West Columbia community to their ongoing Lenten Thursday luncheons covering the events of Holy Week. Light lunch and presentations from local pastors will continue through April 18. The Rev. Sharron Cox will be presenting at the April 4th luncheon from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. Should you be interested in attending this or any of the luncheons, please call CUMC at 345-4642 so an adequate number of lunches are available.



Good Friday Offering

During the Good Friday service, the offertory plates will be set out for anyone who would like to contribute to the Good Friday Offering. This offering "brings The Episcopal Church together across all of our cultures, languages, and ethnic diversity - from domestic and overseas dioceses."

Contributions to this special offering "further the Jesus Movement through the parishes and institutions of healing and education throughout the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East."

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday – April 14th

Depending on the weather, the Palm Sunday service will begin at 9:00 in the Prayer Garden beside the church. Following the Liturgy of the Palms, the congregation will process into the church.

Maundy Thursday – April 18th

The service will begin at 6:00. Maundy Thursday commemorates the first Eucharist, The Last Supper, when Jesus met with his disciples the day before he was to be crucified. Please come and celebrate this special Eucharist as we remember the last days of our Lord Jesus Christ. At the end of the service, the Altar Guild will strip the altar and prepare it for Good Friday.

Good Friday – April 19th

The service will begin at noon. Good Friday is the day on which the church commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus, the day when our Lord Jesus Christ suffered “death upon the cross so that we might be saved and become heirs with him of everlasting life.” The liturgy of the day includes John's account of the Passion gospel, a solemn form of intercession known as the solemn collects, and devotions before the cross. (Book of Common Prayer and episcopalchurch.org)



Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!

Calling all vocalists! There is interest in putting together a small vocal ensemble to sing an anthem at the Easter service on April 21st. If you are interested in participating, please contact Gwynne Olson at either gwynneolson@gmail.com or 303-915-8487. It is anticipated that one or two rehearsals might be necessary. All ages and abilities are welcome!

Easter Lilies

Donations are now being accepted for the Easter lilies that will be placed in the church for our Easter service. If you would like to make a donation, envelopes are available in the narthex and in the Parish Hall. The envelopes can be placed in the offertory plate any Sunday before Easter. They can also be mailed to or dropped off at the church office.



Easter

Alleluia, Christ is Risen. The Lord is Risen Indeed Alleluia

Our Easter service, the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, will begin at 9:00 am on Easter Sunday, April 21st. Please bring flowers and come a little early for the traditional flowering of the cross. There will be a special anthem sung by our vocal ensemble during the Offertory. Following the service we will have hospitality in the parish hall and our annual Easter egg hunt.



Eggs Needed

Our annual Easter egg hunt is fun and exciting for all who participate. Once again, we are asking for parishioners to provide plastic eggs filled with goodies (candy, toys, coins, etc.). You can bring the eggs on Palm Sunday or wait until Easter morning. There are a few empty plastic eggs in the Parish Hall that you can take and fill or you can provide your own plastic eggs. Children remember to bring your Easter baskets on Easter Sunday.



Military Donation

Almost 69 years ago, the first Armed Forces Day was celebrated "in order for citizens to unite and honor our military heroes." (Google) Even in 1963, President John F. Kennedy wrote "Our Servicemen and women are serving throughout the world as guardians of peace--many of them away from their homes, their friends, and their families."

For several years, St. Mary's has made donations monthly to US Troops Not Forgotten, an organization that mails supplies to military units in dangerous areas. Instead of following this practice, we are now going to collect items once a year in honor of Armed Forces Day, which this year is Saturday, May 18th. Beginning on Sunday, April 27th, a container will be placed in the Parish Hall to collect donations. Lists of suggested items can be found on the table next to the donation box. Please give generously as we remember those who have given so much for us.



News from the Vestry

Gwynne Olson, Clerk

The vestry met Monday, March 18, 2019.

Rector Report: The Reverend Sharron Cox

Rev. Sharron asked the vestry for their feedback on the Vision and Mission Exercise on March 3rd with Mary MacGregor. Feedback from the vestry is that it was a successful and valuable session. The two goals that came out of the meeting were to pursue Invite Welcome and Connect and explore the opportunity of an occasional alternate worship service. The takeaways from the alternative worship service meeting were discussed. Rev. Sharron believes that these goals are achievable in 2019.

Senior Warden's Report: Charlotte Blount

Charlotte stated that she, Rev. Sharron, and Bill Bullard will attend a Best Practices for Stewardship meeting with the Diocese on Saturday, March 23rd in Dickinson. Charlotte and Rev Sharron also attended a Kitty Nash Groce talk given by Laurie Kincannon. Mayor Kincannon read Kitty Nash Groce's will to explain the important of Kitty's legacy to West Columbia. Mayor Kincannon shared that St. Mary's sponsors the Discovery Camp for the 5th graders of West Columbia. Mayor Kincannon shared that Kitty Nash Groce left funds to a health care facility in West Columbia. Mayor Kincannon is interested in a facility to assist the seniors of the community.

Junior Warden's Report: Andrea Anderson

Andrea stated that the painting of the narthex and minor interior patches will begin the first week of May. She also stated that we are still waiting on the bid for the side and front parking spaces repair.

A copy of the vestry minutes will be placed on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall once approved at the April meeting.

Episcopal Health Foundation

The Episcopal Health Foundation (EHF) is calling on all those who wish to build healthier communities. EHF has scheduled three regional day-long events for parishes to learn how others are engaging in their communities and be equipped to make a difference in their own. On May 10-11, this free "In Common" workshop will be held at St. James Episcopal Church in Houston. Should anyone wish to learn new skills and transformational tools, please check out the In Common website or speak with Rev. Sharron.

Reesie Cantrell earned placement on the A/B Honor Roll at West Brazos Junior High.

Brayze Schill placed 2nd in junior high pole vault and qualified for the district meet in April.

Ally Lane is a member of the Columbia High School golf team that continues to add to their outstanding record by winning two tournaments in March.



Haley Cantrell will be the Feature Twirler for Columbia High School during the 2019-2020 school year. She is also the 2019 MA National Jr. Soloist in twirling.

Braylee Schill made 7th grade cheerleader at West Brazos Junior High for the 2019-2020 school year. She also placed 3rd for her age group at the San Antonio Kids Spartan and qualified for the World Championship Spartan in November.

Ashlie Weisinger earned the Wonderful Wildcatter Award at West Columbia Elementary by receiving zero conduct marks.

Kendy Hankins earned placement on the A/B Honor Roll at West Columbia Elementary. She also won 2nd runner up in the Pre-Teen talent division of the International Junior Miss Pageant in Houston.

Taize Worship Service

On Friday, April 26, there will be a Taize worship service at the Villa de Matel Chapel in east Houston. The service begins at 7:30. Let Rev. Sharron know if you are interested in attending and possibly going out to dinner prior to the service if schedules allow.



Community Assistance

At the end of February, assistance was provided to one household to help with electrical problems. There were no requests in March. If you know of anyone needing assistance, please contact Tracy or Karen.



Camp Allen Events

Family Campout (April 26-27) is a one-night family retreat full of Piney Woods, starry skies, and wilderness fun! Packages include equipment for tent setup, outdoor cooking skills for three classic campout meals, outdoor living skills workshop, guided hiking, kayaking and a nostalgic campfire with skits and smores.

Birds & Blooms (April 26-28) is for all nature and bird lovers! Enjoy the camp's 1,100 forested acres, attend expert led workshops and hike scenic trails with experienced guides. Presentations include: wildlife photography, Audubon presentations, life owl and hawk demonstrations, birding identifications, sunrise bird watching, and more.

Fly Fishing for All (May 17-19) is a weekend co-ed fishing retreat. All levels and abilities are invited to attend sessions on fly fishing, Texas fly fishing, and fly casting. The per person rate includes two-night hotel accommodations, six buffet meals, and lake access for fishing.

There are many events that take place at Camp Allen during the year. When the church office receives information about an event, it will be posted on the bulletin board. If you are interested in something posted, let Dani know and she will get you more information.



There are several items that we would like to have at St. Mary's. If you would like to donate any of these items, you can bring them by the church office or leave them in the parish hall.

- small bookcases for the Godly Play Room



Don't Forget

Please check the table when entering the parish hall. The Hospitality calendar and other important information can be found there.

Remember to look at the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. New information, cards, news clippings, etc. are added frequently.

The "Take a Book, Share a Book" bookcase is located in the Parish Hall. If you see a book or tape you like, take it. If you have books you would like to donate, add them to the bookcase.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Special thanks and gratitude to:

- Mary Stewart for providing the delicious King Ranch Chicken for our Parish Dinner.
- everyone who provided the side dishes, desserts, and drinks for the Parish Dinner.
- Marvin and Theata Miller, Jennifer and Adam Schill, and Jackie Walker for providing meals for the Wednesday Christian Formation classes.
- Lou Crutcher for folding the service bulletins.
- Karen Logue for organizing The Greeters' Ministry and Invite, Welcome, Connect.
- Sue Davidson, Rachel Davidson, and Allan Dinsmore for conducting St. Mary's annual review of financial records.

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

Prayer Request

If you or someone you know is in need of prayers, you can fill out a prayer request card found in the pews or notify the office directly. 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.

Dates to Remember

April 2 - DOK Meeting (9:30)

April 3 - Christian Formation
for children and youth (5:15)

April 4 - Greeters' Meeting (8:30 am)
Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study (6:00 pm)

April 7 - Sunday Service - (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

April 10 - Christian Formation
for children and youth (5:15)

April 11 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study (6:00 pm)

April 14 - Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Palm Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

April 15 - Vestry meeting (4:00 pm)

April 17 - Christian Formation
for children and youth (5:15)

April 18 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Maundy Thursday Service (6:00 pm)

April 19 - Good Friday Service (noon)

April 21 - Easter Service (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Easter Egg Hunt (10:20 am)

April 24 - Parish Dinner (5:30 pm)

April 25 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study (6:00 pm)

April 26 - Taize Worship Service in Houston

April 28 - Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

April Birthdays

Kip Olson - April 20

April Anniversaries

Dick and Dorothy McGuire - April 4

Wade and Shyanne Roddy - April 24

St. Mary's Leadership

Rector

The Reverend Sharron Cox

Vestry

Sr. Warden: Charlotte Blount

Jr. Warden: Andrea Anderson

Clerk: Gwynne Olson