



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.



August 2022

It's Back

After being gone the months of June and July, The Bells of St. Mary's is back. If you have any articles or suggestions for future publications, please submit them to the office before the 26th of each month.

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

School Supplies Drive

Our annual school drive is in progress. The following items are sought for West Columbia Elementary to help those students who cannot afford the supplies they need as well as help the teachers who each year spend their own money to make sure none of their students go without supplies.

Supply List

1. dry erase markers
2. facial tissue (Kleenex, Puffs, etc.)
3. headphones (no ear buds) for computers and iPads
4. Zip Lock baggies – variety of sizes
5. new children's socks – variety of sizes
6. new children's underwear – variety of sizes

There are baskets in the Narthex and Parish Hall for donations along with lists of the supplies needed. There are also envelopes for those who would like to leave a monetary donation. Donations will be accepted until Sunday, August 14th, Back to School Sunday. Together let's help the students and teachers get started on a wonderful new school year.



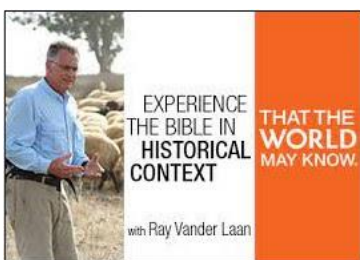
Back to School Sunday

As students, teachers, and all other school personnel prepare to return to the classroom, St. Mary's wants to honor, celebrate, and bless them at this important time with our annual Back to School Sunday service and the Blessing of the Backpacks.

This year, as in the past few years, there is apprehension, uncertainty, and nervousness; but the teachers, students, and other school personnel are ready to face it with optimism, hope, and adaptability. The Back to School service and The Blessing of the Backpacks reminds all our children, youth, teachers and other school personnel from kindergarten to college, that God is there with them through it all, so they are never alone.

Bring your backpacks, book bags, supplies, etc. to church on Sunday, August 14th for the Blessing of the Backpacks. Backpack tags will also be blessed and made available for those in attendance as well as those who are not able to attend. A special gift will be given to all school personnel in attendance. Let us embrace and support our children, youth, and school personnel as we remind them "Be Loved, Be Kind, Be You."

Invite your friends and fellow school employees to this very special service.



Sunday School (6th Grade – Adults)

That The World May Know Series

This fall, we will continue *That the World May Know series*. Join us on a trip to ancient times, places, and customs with trusted Bible scholar Ray Vander Laan as your fun and engaging tour guide.

Filmed in Israel, Egypt, Turkey, and Greece, these powerful videos explore what it meant to follow Jesus in the first century—and what it means to follow him today. Each of class provides visually stunning video sessions as well as an easy-to-follow discovery guide that illuminates Jesus' teachings and helps us understand the context in which he lived and preached.

Classes begin Sunday, September 11th in the Parish Hall from 10:30 – 11:15. Each Class begins with a 20 minute video, followed by 20 minutes of discussion.

(Led by Fr. Paul and Gwynne Olson) Supervised activities are provided for children so parents can attend the classes.

That the World May Know

Ray Vander Laan

DVD 8 -God Heard Their Cry

This series of videos looks deeper into God's plan for reclaiming and restoring his broken world. While it is helpful to speak of Scripture in terms of old and new Testaments, these descriptions also can be misleading if they are interpreted to mean old and outdated in contrast to a new replacement. The Old Testament describes the foundational events and people through whom God began the work that eventually led to the arrival of the Messiah. Our Bible is not complete without both testaments; together they comprise God's one revelation; his one plan to reclaim his world and restore harmony between himself and humankind.

Understanding Scriptures involves more than knowing what words mean. It also requires learning about the culture of the Hebrew world and becoming familiar with the everyday experiences and images the text employs to reveal God's message to us. Whereas we might describe God as omniscient or all-powerful, the Hebrews would describe him as Shepherd, or as the Potter to their clay. Many of the Bible's well-known images occur first during the exodus: Israel as God's bride, God as shepherd, the desert as a metaphor for life's difficult experiences, God as living water, God as king, the saving blood of the lamb. The Israelites experienced these and many more familiar images as they left Egypt, spent forty years in the desert, and then entered the Promised Land.

The message of the Bible is eternal and unchanging, and the mission of God's people remains the same. However, the circumstances of the people of the Bible are unique to their times. Therefore, we most clearly understand God's truth when we know the cultural context within which he spoke and acted. As we explore the Egypt of the Bible and study the people and events in their geographic and historic contexts, we will discover the *who*, *what*, and *where* of the exodus story and will then better understand the *why*. Our purpose is simply to follow God's intent as revealed to Ezekiel:

"Son of man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and pay attention to everything that I am going to show you; for that is why you have been brought here. Declare to the house of Israel all that you see." (Ezekiel 40.4)

Sunday, September 11, Lesson 1: *How Big is our God?*

The exodus of the Hebrew slaves from Egypt is a captivating story in and of itself; however, it is only an early chapter of God's greater story. And what is truly amazing is that God chose to accomplish his purpose in partnership with people, the same created humans who ruined it in the Garden the first time. In today's story, God invites the Hebrews to partner with him, so that through them whole world will know of God's restoration of harmony. But God's story is not the only story. The other story is that of the evil one. Beginning with the snake's temptation in the garden until now, the evil one promises harmony, but he only delivers chaos and brokenness.

The two stories – God's restoration of his people (*salvation*) versus the chaos and destruction of the evil one – are present at all times and in all places, including our own. Thus, the most important question of our lives is, "Whose story will you believe and live by?"

Sunday, September 18, Lesson 2: *Israel in Bondage: God Heard Their Cry*

As we visit Egypt, the land of the Nile, and view its lush beauty, an obvious question comes to mind. That is, "why did God choose Canaan, a small rocky piece of land with little water as the Promised Land, rather than helping the Israelites overthrow their Egyptian masters and just stay where they were?" We will talk about that question and surmise as best we can what God had in mind. As we contemplate the ways in which God revealed himself and molded the Israelites through their 40-year journey to the promised land, we hope to also learn how God may be molding us in our struggles.

Sunday, September 25, Lesson 3: *Finger of God: The Plagues*

Egypt was the land of plenty and an empire at the peak of its power at the time of the exodus of the Israelites. It is inconceivable to historians that a revolt by slaves would have any chance of success at that time; Egypt was too strong and powerful for unarmed slaves to escape, no matter how many their number. It was simply impossible. Impossible, that is, unless God intervened and actually accomplished what the Bible says that he did. Our study today assumes that God acted so powerfully and dramatically through the ten plagues that there could be no mistake about who he is. The study will explore God's intent and purpose for the plagues, and how they sent a powerful message to anyone who would hear – even the Pharaoh.

Sunday, October 2, Lesson 4: *Watch with Me: Israel Leaves Egypt*

As the tenth and final plague neared, God gave the Hebrews an active role that required them to take steps of faith. God instituted a new Passover ritual that would always be a reminder of how the Hebrews were spared from the final plague. As the death angel passed over Egypt, the only households that were spared were those marked with the blood of the Passover lamb. Before the night was over, the Pharaoh himself urged Moses and the Hebrews to leave as fast as they could.

Sunday, October 9, Lesson 5: *The Lord Reigns: The Red Sea*

Crossing the Red Sea and fleeing from Egyptians was an incredible event, fraught with all the danger and drama of a miraculous escape. But that incredible night was just the beginning! The Israelites were no longer idol-worshiping slaves that cried out in anguish to an invisible God. They were now free people who were beginning to know and appreciate the love and promises that their God offered. As they looked back from the other side of the Red Sea and danced and celebrated their redemption, they had no idea about the magnitude of the journey that lay ahead of them. They only knew that God's kingdom had somehow come to earth and saved them. The good news of God's kingdom that Jesus proclaimed was also shaped by the exodus experience. When we stand with the Israelites and seek to understand their deliverance as they experienced it, we will appreciate more fully the grace-filled message and work of Jesus the Messiah.

Sunday School for Children

Sunday School for Children age 2 years to 5th grade will begin Sunday, September 11th. The children will meet during the service, leaving the sanctuary during the Praise Song and returning during the Peace.

There are two Sunday School classes:

- Godly Play and The Path are for our younger parishioners from age 2 to first grade under the direction of Miss Dani. Godly play is "an imaginative approach to working with children; an approach that supports, challenges, nourishes, and guides their spiritual quest."
- Miss Shyanne will be leading the 2nd graders through 5th graders. They will use a curriculum that "foster the spiritual formation and growth of our children in Christ's love and mercy, teach the spirit of forgiveness, and send our children out into the world as Christ's ambassador."

Volunteers are needed to help with our children's Sunday School. You can help every Sunday or just occasionally. Contact Dani or Shyanne if you would like to volunteer your time and talent to this important ministry.



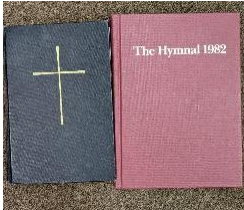
Parish Dinner

Our next Parish dinner will be Wednesday, September 21st, at 5:30 p.m. More information will be made available closer to the date.

Mark your calendars for a wonderful meal, special time with friends, and a laugh or two. It won't be the same without you there.

Worship Leaders

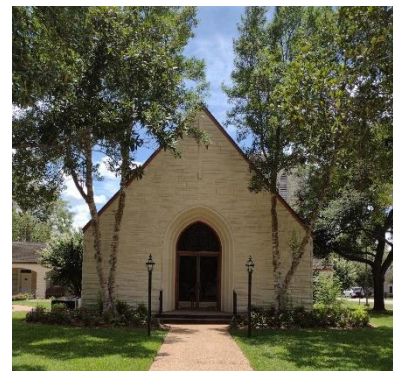
This summer, we saw the addition of two new worship leaders, Jasey Hussey as an acolyte and Jay Wiggins as an usher. More are still needed. If you would like to serve as an acolyte, usher, altar guild member, lector, leader of the Prayers of the People, or Lay Eucharist Minister (server of the chalice) please let Father Paul or Dani know.



Books Available

When the Narthex was being renovated, extra copies of The Book of Common Prayer and The Hymnal were found. Those still in good condition have been placed in the Library. If you would like a copy of either or both of these books to take home for your personal use, just let Dani know.

Have You Seen the Latest Renovations



Over the summer, several projects were completed. The entire outside of the church and parish hall was power washed, removing the mold and dark areas. The Narthex was remodeled, opening it up and making it a more inviting area. The landscaping begun earlier in the year with the removal of several large bushes was completed with the addition of new plants and the removal of the dead pecan tree. Bishop Monterroso, on his visit to St. Mary's, was very impressed with the beauty of our church.

What Happened This Summer

St. Mary's was not idle this summer. In addition to the renovations and remodeling mentioned in another article, there were three special events that happened here.

The Right Reverend Hector Monterroso celebrated the Holy Eucharist and confirmed Theresa Crawford, Travis Prater, and Bill Olson on June 12th.

We celebrated our nation's freedom with our annual parish picnic on July 3rd.

We fed breakfast to the Columbia United volunteers on June 17th and provided popsicles to all the volunteers during the week.



St. Mary's Website

Have you had a chance to check out St. Mary's website? There are several features you might find interesting.

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.

Other additions are being added to the website to keep it current and informative.

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

Message from Marvin Miller

THE SILVERSMITH

Malachi 3:3 says: "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."

This verse puzzled some women in a Bible study and they wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible Study.

That week, the woman called a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest as to burn away all the impurities.

The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot; then she thought again about the verse that says:

"He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver." She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed. The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?" He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's easy ----when I see my image in it"

If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, remember that God has his eye on you and will keep watching you until He sees His image in you.



Community Assistance

During May, June, and July, the committee approved funds to help 10 families or individuals with electric or partial electric bills, rent or partial rent, purchase of supplies to help repair a house after a fire, lodging for a week, and the purchase of a bike.

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



2022 Flower sign up

The forms to sign up for 2021 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.

Since April

Maddie Lane is engaged to Matthew Hagen.

Kendy Hankins received Grand Champion Shorthorn Plus with her heifer at the Primetime Classic.

Brayze Schill finished Reserve Champion at the Texas High School State Finals and 9th place at the High School Nationals Finals Rodeo.

Travis Prater, Bill Olson, and Theresa Crawford were confirmed by Bishop Monterroso on June 12th.

Ally Lane took a trip to an offshore rig with her internship.

Braylee Schill made all As for the last nine weeks at Columbia High School.

Luke Davidson attended Camp Allen for the first time this summer.

Jasey Hussey acolyted for the first time in July.

Travis Prater achieved the rank of First Class Scout. He also earned several merit badges, including his most difficult one so far – Personal Fitness.

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



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.



Camp Allen Events

Needlepoint Retreats - September 12-16, and December 5-9 - Join fellow needlepointers for a three day, two night retreat.

Labor Day Family Camp - September 2 -4 - This is the perfect "back to school" family weekend with something for everyone. Activities include rock climbing, zip line, giant water slide, canoeing, swimming, horseback rides, family movie night, water inflatables, arts and crafts and more!

Fly Fish Retreat - November 4-5 - Grab your rod and reels for this weekend co-ed fishing retreat. All levels and abilities are invited to attend sessions on fly fishing, Texas fly fishing, and fly casting

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Special thanks and gratitude to

- Theata Miller, Sherry Wehner, Shyanne Roddy, Travis Prater, Tracy Lane, Gwynne Olson, Jackie Walker, Colleen Matocha, Dani Mikel, Bill Olson, AJ Mikel, Dan Roddy, Marvin Miller, Abigail Roddy, Trace Roddy, Haley Cantrell, Reesie Cantrell, Wendy Hankins, Kendy Hankins, Jasey Hussey, Jay Wiggins, Adam Schill, Brayze Schill, Jennifer Schill, and Braylee Schill for serving as Worship Leaders during the months of May, June, and July.
- Marvin Miller, Shyanne Roddy, Abigail Roddy, Trace Roddy, Madeline Roddy, Dan Roddy, Donna Roddy, Jay Wiggins, Bill Olson, and Gwynne Olson for helping with breakfast and delivering popsicles for the Columbia United volunteers.
- Marvin Miller for his delicious lasagna and everyone who provided the side dishes and desserts for our Parish Dinner in May.
- Amber Prater for setting up the Livestreaming on our Facebook site, monitoring the feed during the service, and responding to those viewing on-line.
- Theata and Marvin Miller, Dani and AJ Mikel, Sherry and Father Paul Wehner, and Gwynne and Bill Olson for providing treats for our May, June, and July Hospitality and Fellowship.
- everyone who helped cook, set up, and clean-up for the annual Parish picnic celebrating our nation's freedom.
- everyone who helped with the funeral and reception for Doris Grosvenor.
- everyone who helped with the reception for Bishop Monterroso and our confirmands.
- Theata Miller for stapling the service bulletins.
- Dan Roddy, Donna Roddy, Jackie Walker, Gwynne Olson, Bill Olson, Marvin Miller, Colleen Matocha, AJ Mikel, and Dani Mikel volunteering during the church's Work Day.
- the Reverend Nan Doerr for being our celebrant while Father Paul and family were on vacation.

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.

August Birthdays

Wendy Hankins - August 6
Holly Cantrell - August 8
Theresa Crawford - August 10
Heather Mikel - August 12
Donna Roddy - August 21
Kaylea Anderson - August 21
Caroline Culbreath - August 28

August Anniversaries

none

St. Mary's Leadership

Vestry

Rector: the Reverend Paul Wehner
Sr. Warden: Gwynne Olson
Jr. Warden: Dan Roddy
Clerk: Colleen Matocha
Outreach Coordinator: Jackie Walker

Dates to Remember

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

August 1 - 14 - collecting school supplies and monetary donations
for West Columbia Elementary

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

August 9 - Vestry Meeting (5:15 p.m.)

August 14 - Brotherhood (7:30 a.m.)

August 14 - Back to School Service and Blessing of the Backpacks
Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)

August 14 - last day for school supplies donations

August 21 - Sunday Service - Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner

August 28 - Brotherhood (7:30 a.m.)

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

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.