



The Bells of St. Mary's February 2019



During the season which follows the Feast of the Epiphany, our gospel readings spotlight the various manifestations of God through the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. We learn that Jesus is king, not just for the Hebrews but for all the world. We learn that Jesus' fundamental identity is the beloved of God. We learn that Jesus is teacher, healer, miracle-worker, and prophet. Through these manifestations, God's presence among us is made known, is seen clearly.

Typically, the gospel reading which is read the last Sunday after the Epiphany is the story of Jesus' transfiguration when his appearance was altered as he was joined by the glorified figures of Moses and Elijah, representing the law and the prophets. This manifestation is when Jesus' disciples, Peter, James, and John, learned that not only was Jesus the fulfillment of the law and the prophets but were also told by a voice from heaven "This is my Son..." This event is significant to our faith because it was a moment when human and divine, heaven and earth were bridged through the transfiguration, the change in appearance, of Jesus on that mountain.

We will not be reading this scripture on the Last Sunday after the Epiphany this year. Instead, on Sunday morning March 3rd, we will have a brief Morning Prayer service and assemble in the Parish Hall to have a facilitated conversation about how St. Mary's can bridge our past and our future. Former Canon of Parish Development for the Diocese of Texas Mary MacGregor will lead us through a three-hour visioning process that morning to assist us in developing our mission to one another as well as our community of West Columbia.

Everyone's voice is needed in this conversation, everyone's hopes and dreams for St. Mary's is needed if we are seeking to discern and align our programs and activities with God's vision for all of us. Please plan to be a part of this important time for our parish on Sunday, March 3rd!

Blessings,

P.S. A huge thanks to all of you who participated in the planning, setting up, and serving at last week's "Celebration of a New Ministry." Too many people were involved for me to name, for I'm sure I would miss someone if I made such an attempt! I heard a parishioner say that it felt good to show off St. Mary's hospitality – I hope others of you feel the same way! My prayer is that we continue to partner together in ministry to God here at St. Mary's as we have the last eleven months!

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

Journals for the Discovery Program

One hundred fifth graders will be attending the Discovery Program at Camp Allen over the next two weeks. St. Mary's provides journals for these students to write their notes and thoughts during this learning experience. At the front of each journal is a short message written by our parishioners to the students. On Sunday, February 10th, we will gather in the Parish Hall after the service, not for adult Christian Formation, but to write a special message to each student. Plan on helping with this very meaningful project as we share the beauty of God's creation with the fifth graders in our community.



Parish Dinner

Our next Parish Dinner will be Wednesday, February 20th at 5:30. Theata, Marvin, and Jackie will be providing brisket and sausage from The Brisket House whose owner is Ernie French. He is the caterer who provided the delicious meal at Rev. Sharron's reception. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall for those who would like to provide side dishes, desserts, or drinks. Mark your calendar and plan on attending this time of great food, friendly conversations, and wonderful fellowship.

New Time for Wednesday Night Christian Formation

The Wednesday night Christian Formation for children and youth will begin at 5:15 and end at 6:45. This is fifteen minutes earlier than it was in the fall. Dinner will be from 5:15 to 5:45 and then the two groups will meet in their areas at 5:45.



Valentine Boxes for College Students

As we have done in the past, Saint Mary's will be sending valentine boxes full of goodies and encouragement to our six college students. If you would like to participate in this project, please bring any items to the church on or before Sunday, February 10th. A container will be placed in the Parish Hall for all donations. Below is a list of possible items. Please do not send anything too heavy.

Students

Justin HusseyMegan Hussey
Hannah HusseyMaddie Lane
Daniel Mikel..... Aaron Mikel

Possible items – all single servings

- Candy
- Ramen Noodles
- Instant soup
- Pens, mechanical pencils
- Post-its
- small snack packs – cookies, crackers, etc.
- gift cards to national fast food restaurants (McDonalds, Burger King, Pizza Hut, Subway, Starbucks, Chick-fi-la)
- Sample sized personal care items like lip balm
- Chewing gum
- Notes of encouragement
- Anything a college student would like

The boxes will be mailed Monday, February 11th.

*Shrove Tuesday
Pancake Dinner*



Shrove Tuesday

St. Mary's Episcopal Church will host its annual Pancake Supper on Tuesday, March 5th beginning at 5:00. Just as last year, this event is one of the outreach programs sponsored by The Brotherhood and is open to the public without any charge. It will include pancakes, sausage, juice, and coffee. Food will continue to be served until it runs out. Come join us and invite your friends for a great meal and warm and friendly fellowship.

The season of Lent is just around the corner....!

For seventeen hundred years, Christians have set aside the forty days before Easter as a time of prayer, penitence, and preparation for the glorious celebration of Christ's resurrection at Easter. Lent begins this year on Wednesday, March 6th. There will be no children or youth formation programs that evening because St. Mary's will mark the beginning of Lent with an Ash Wednesday service at 6:00 p.m.

As part of the somberness of the season of Lent, the Church has a custom of omitting the "Alleluias" typically proclaimed throughout its liturgy. It generally takes us a few weeks to get that through our system, so no worries if an "Alleluia" slips out now and again!

During Lent, we will begin our service with a silent procession and the Penitential Order rather than an opening hymn. As we did during the Church's other season of preparation, Advent, St. Mary's will experiment with a different hymn to replace the festive *Gloria*. Rev. Sharron will lead a practice session for a sung version of the *Kyrie Eleison* before our service on Sunday, March 10th.



Lenten Devotionals

Living Compass has once again published a book of Lenten devotionals called *Practicing Forgiveness With All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind*. Although we will not be having a Lenten Study Program this year, if you would like one of these books for your own personal Lenten devotional, please let Dani know by Thursday, February 14th, so she can place the order.

World Day of Prayer USA

Columbia United Methodist Church have invited the women of St. Mary's to participate in the World Day of Prayer on Friday, March 1st at 10:30 am. "World Day of Prayer promotes justice and equality for women through prayer, partnerships, service, and celebration."



Wellness Ministry - Yoga Class

St. Mary's is sponsoring a weekly yoga class beginning Thursday, January 3rd at 10:00 am. Sheila Conner will lead the class. There is a suggested fee of \$3 per class, but the first class is free so you can try it out! All levels of ability are welcome. Bring a yoga mat, wear comfortable clothing, and join the fun.

Message from Marvin Miller

CHURCH IS –

(By Jim Gentil)

I sat in a meeting. The discussion was heated. The conversation heavy.

Hearts were burdened. Chests were puffed. Sorrow, pain, arrogance, curiosity, humility, fear, courage, and forgiveness sat together in a single room.

As I looked around the church, I just kept thinking-

Church is hard.

Church is hard for the person walking through the doors, afraid of judgement.

Church is hard for the pastor's family, under the microscope of an entire body.

Church is hard for the prodigal soul returning home, broken and battered by the world.

Church is hard for the girl who looks like she has it all together, but doesn't.

Church is hard for the couple who fought the entire ride to service.

Church is hard for the single mom, surrounded by couples holding hands, and seemingly perfect families.

Church is hard for the widow and widower with no invitation to lunch after service.

Church is hard for the deacon with an estranged child.

Church is hard for the choir member overwhelmed by the weight of the lyrics in that song.

Church is hard for the man insecure in his role as a leader.

Church is hard for the wife who longs to be led by a righteous man.

Church is hard for the nursery volunteer who desperately longs for a baby to love.

Church is hard for the single woman and single man, praying God brings them a mate.

Church is hard for the teenage girl, wearing a scarlet letter, ashamed of her mistakes.

Church is hard for the gays, adulterers, liars, cheats, and slanderers.

Church is hard for the sinners.

Church is hard for me.

It's hard because on the outside it all looks shiny and perfect. Sunday best in behavior and dress.

However, underneath those layers, you find a body of imperfect people, carnal souls, selfish motives.

But, here is the beauty of church -

Church isn't a building, mentality, or expectation.

Church is a body.

Church is a group of sinners, saved by grace, living in fellowship as saints.

Church is a body of believers bound as brothers and sisters by an eternal love.

Church is a holy ground where sinners stand as equals before the Throne of Grace.

Church is a refuge for broken hearts and a training ground for mighty warriors.

Church is a converging of confrontation and invitation. Where sin is confronted and hearts are invited to seek restoration.

Church is a lesson in faith and trust.

Church is a bearer of burdens and a giver of hope.

Church is a family. A family coming together, setting aside differences, forgetting past mistakes, rejoicing in the smallest of victories.

Church, the body, and the circle of sinners-turned-saints, is where He resides, and if we ask, He is faithful to come.

- So even on the hard days at church -

The days when I am at odds with a sister. When I've fought with my husband because we're late once again. When I've walked in bearing burdens heavier than my heart can handle, yet masking the pain with a smile on my face. When I've worn a scarlet letter, under the microscope. When I've longed for a baby to hold, or fought tears as the lyrics were sung.

When I've walked back in, afraid and broken, after walking away.

I'll remember, He has never failed to meet me there.



News from the Vestry

The vestry met Monday, January 21, 2019

Rector Report: The Reverend Sharron Cox

Rev. Sharron discussed the 3 hour professionally led workshop for the parishioners that will help develop vision and a mission for the church.

Senior Warden's Report: Karen Logue

Karen reported that all the current activities of the church are going as planned.

Junior Warden's Report: Andrea Anderson

The conversion of florescent light bulbs to LED continues. Cost estimates for the parking lot repairs, trimming of dead limbs, and repairs and painting to interior are being sought.

Financial Report: Dani Mikel

Rev. Sharron and Dani presented the final draft of the 2019 budget which the vestry approved.

Discipleship Report

The rector's installation was discussed. Rev. Sharron presented the Christian Formation schedule for the Spring semester.

Mission Report

The yoga classes are going well with 13 to 14 participants.

Calendar

- **The next three vestry meetings will be on February 18th at 4:00, March 18th at 4:00, and April 15th at 4:00.**
- **Diocesan Council is February 21st - 23rd.**
- **Rev. Sharron will be the chaplain at Camp Allen from February 11th-16th.**

A copy of the vestry minutes will be placed on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall.



TEBS (Thursday Evening Bible Study)

by Karen Logue

The TEBS meets Thursday evenings at 6 pm in the St. Mary's fellowship hall. We'd love to have your company around the table as we discuss the book of Luke. Our study culminates with the death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ just in time for Easter. Come be a part Luke's glorious gospel.



Community Assistance

In January, two households were helped with groceries and another household was helped with bills.

If you know of anyone needing assistance, please contact Tracy or Karen.



Camp Allen Events

Abundant Living: March 4-6

Family Campout: April 26-27

Birds & Blooms: April 26-28

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.



Are You Smarter Than An Acolyte

In the training conducted by Rev. Sharron, the acolytes learned the names of the implements used during Holy Communion, the parts of the church, the items worn by the acolytes, and other correct terminology in the Episcopal Church. Below are four pictures. Can you match the correct name to each picture? The word choices are **bread box, corporal, nave, narthex, paten, and alms basin and collection plates.**



A. _____

B. _____



C. _____

D. _____

Bill Bullard, our seminarian, passed his canonical exams.

Reesie Cantrell made the A Honor Roll at West Brazos Junior High.



Abigail Roddy received the 0 conduct award and the perfect attendance award at West Columbia Elementary. At the Twirling Competition in the Woodlands, she received 2nd place in show twirl and 3rd place in basic strut.

Hunter Weisinger graduated Air Force Basic Training and is now going through tech school at Goodfellow Air Force Base.

Trace Roddy had perfect attendance and excellent conduct at West Columbia Elementary.

Haley Cantrell made the A/B Honor Roll at West Brazos Junior High.

Ashlie Weisinger received the Wonderful Wildcatter award at West Columbia Elementary.



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.

- outdoor canvas folding chairs for the youth room
- 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:

- **all who participated in and helped with the Celebration of a New Ministry and reception.**
- **the Brotherhood for the breakfast tacos at the annual meeting.**
- **all who provided food and drink for the annual meeting.**
- **Theata, Marvin, and Shyanne for providing meals for the Wednesday Christian Formation classes.**

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

February 3 - Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

February 5 - DOK Meeting (9:30)

February 6 - Christian Formation
(5:15pm)

February 7 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study (6:00 pm)

February 10 - Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)
Writing in Journals for Discovery
Program (10:20 am)

February 11 - 16 - Rev. Sharron is at
Camp Allen

February 13 - Christian Formation
(5:15 pm)

February 14 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study (6:00 pm)

February 17 -Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Sunday Service with Commissioning
(9:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

February 18 - Vestry meeting (4:00 pm)

February 20 - Parish Dinner (5:30 pm)

February 21 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study (6:00 pm)

February 21 - 23 - Diocesan Council

February 24 - Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

February 27 - Christian Formation
(5:15 pm)

February 28 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study (6:00 pm)

March 3 - Morning Prayer (9:00)
Vision and Mission Workshop
(9:30 am)

March 5 - Shove Tuesday
Pancake Supper (5:00 pm)

March 6 - Ash Wednesday Service
(6:00 pm)

February Birthdays

Karen Logue - February 2

Mike Blount - February 4

Brian Lane - February 13

Bonnie Cole - February 16

Dick McGuire - February 19

Dan Roddy - February 27

February Anniversaries

St. Mary's Leadership

Rector

The Reverend Sharron Cox

Vestry

Sr. Warden: Charlotte Blount

Jr. Warden: Andrea Anderson

Clerk: Gwynne Olson

Answers to Are You Smarter Than An Acolyte?

**A. nave..... B. bread box..... C. alms basin and collection plates
D. paten**

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.