

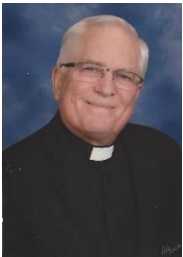


St. Mary's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
The Mustard Seed Church

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



February - March 2022



Message from Father Paul
Presented at the Annual Meeting

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell - and great was its fall!" (Matthew 7:24-27)

Dear people of St. Mary's,

The above passage reminds us of the importance of building our church and our faith on a strong foundation. Jesus compares the wisdom of following him as being like building a house on a strong foundation. He does not promise that his followers will not incur hardship and tragedy, but like the house built on rock, he will be with us through those difficult times to sustain us and to provide comfort and peace of mind when storms occur.

I find those to be particularly encouraging words as we look back on a very difficult year. We began 2021 with the hope that the newly approved vaccines would mark the beginning of the end of the Covid pandemic. And while they offered some protection against severe illness, the pandemic itself was barely slowed. And our year turned out to be a series of brief periods of light and optimism, that were always followed by more disappointment and hurt. I imagine that every one of us lost an acquaintance or family member in 2021. Like the house in a storm, the strong winds of disease and doubt battered our minds and spirits over and over again. These days, I find it harder and harder to be my best self, and I hear from many others that they have similar experiences. We are all simply worn out by the constant negative news of COVID and weary of the incessant bickering between our leaders. All of which make it very difficult to laugh and smile and bring light and joy to others.

Therefore, it is exactly in times like this that we need to look to God, because it is only by standing on the firm foundation of our faith that we can respond to this angry world with love and civility and caring. It is only by surrendering to the everlasting love of Christ, that we can

be loving and caring to others. It is only through Christ's light that we can be lights of reason, acceptance, and peace in a dark world.

Our life together at St. Mary's is vitally important, because not only does it offer us comfort in the storm, but it also reminds us that our life in Christ can withstand any trepidation that the world can offer. It is only through our hope in Christ that we can be the smiling encouragers that our family and friends need us to be.

My prayer for us this year is that we will each resolve to have a regular Sunday practice of tuning in or showing up in person – we have plenty of room for you to be as close or as far apart as you need. It is vital for us to stay rooted to our foundation in Christ and to stay connected to each other. We are blessed with bountiful resources and are charged to use them for the betterment of our community. Please pray about how you can help your church leaders in that effort. The world out there needs us and needs to hear about our God!

Thank you for inviting my family and me to be part of the church family of St. Mary's. We so appreciate the warm welcome you have given us, and we love the spirit of this place. I absolutely believe that St. Mary's can and will make a difference for good in the world. I close with Paul's parting words in his second letter to the church in Thessalonica: Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right." (2 Thessalonians. 3.13)

May God bless you and keep you always.



Fr. Paul Wehner+

Message from Gwynne Olson, Senior Warden

I want to extend a warm welcome to Jackie Walker, our newest vestry member. Jackie has been on the vestry at St. Mary's before, so we welcome her knowledge and appreciate her willingness to serve. Jackie joins Dan Roddy, Colleen Matocha, and myself to extend the vestry membership from 3 people to 4. Feel free to reach out to any of us with any concerns or suggestions. We look forward to seeing how God uses St. Mary's in 2022.

God's peace,
Gwynne Olson
Sr. Warden



Burying the Alleluia

Since during Lent we do not say Alleluia, it is our custom here at St. Mary's to Bury the Alleluia at the end of our service the Sunday before Lent. This year that Sunday is February 26th. This part of the service is traditionally conducted by the children and youth.

The Mustard Seed Church

Sowing Seeds in the Community...

*Shrove Tuesday
Pancake Dinner*



Pancake Supper

The annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be Tuesday, March 1st, in the Parish Hall from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. or until the food runs out. The Brotherhood will be preparing the food, but they need help with setup, cooking, serving, and cleanup. Let Dani or one of the members of the Brotherhood know how you can help.

The meal is free to the public, so invite your family, friends, and neighbors. What a great time to celebrate the day before Lent.



Ashes to Go

Ash Wednesday

March 2, 2021

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

On Clay Street (between cones and sidewalk)

3:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Ash Wednesday Combined Service with the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches

It has been several years since we had a combined Ash Wednesday Service with Columbia United Methodist Church (CUMC) and Bethel Presbyterian Church. We are doing it again on Wednesday, March 2nd. The evening will begin with a dinner provided by CUMC at 5:30 p.m. in their fellowship hall. The service will begin at 6:00 p.m. at Columbia United Methodist Church. Come join us as we prepare for Lent.

Service Project During Lent

Beginning Sunday, March 6, and running through Sunday, April 3rd, St. Mary's will be collecting canned goods and non-perishable items including toilet paper, paper towels, and diapers, to benefit the Food Pantry at Columbia United Methodist Church. When out shopping, pick up a few extra items and drop them on Sunday in the basket in the Narthex. Let us share with others who have so little.

Lent

Lent, the 40 days before Easter excluding Sundays, is the time Christians spend in penitence, prayer, and preparation for the celebration of the glorious resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lenten Season will begin with the Ash Wednesday service at Columbia United Methodist Church on Wednesday, March 2, at 6:00 p.m.

Because of the somberness of the season of Lent, there will be some notable differences in the Sunday service. The Lenten services will use the Penitential Order and the Decalogue, plus Eucharistic Prayer C and other changes. "Alleluia" will be omitted. 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!

Lenten Devotional Books Available

On Sunday, February 20th, [A Season of Fresh Hope - Daily Reflections, Contemplations, and Prayers](#) will be available in the Narthex and Parish Hall. These booklets are made available by St. Mary's for those who would like to include a daily devotional during Lent.

Adult Sunday School: That the World May Know

DVD 4 -Death and Resurrection

This series of videos will take us through Lent, as we follow Jesus' life and ministry, death, and resurrection. We will visit places around the Sea of Galilee and contemplate some of his last teachings to his Disciples before he headed to Jerusalem for the Passover. We will be there with him and relive his arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection.

Sunday, February 13: *When Storms Come*

Today we take a cruise on the beautiful Sea of Galilee, the largest body of fresh water in Israel and therefore an important source of food and transportation. There is an ancient rabbinic saying that, "The Lord has created seven seas, but the Sea of Galilee is his delight." Because of its size and location, the Sea could also become very rough and stormy at times. The ancient Jews believed that evil forces caused the stormy seas, and that on 'God could calm the chaos of those stormy water caused by the Evil One.

Sunday, February 20: *Piercing the Darkness*

This teaching is set near the Sea of Galilee, at the main gate of the Decapolis (meaning 10 cities.) Although some Jews lived in the Decapolis, the region was so evil that religious Jews believed that Beelzebub himself lived there. Yet Jesus went there, and this session will focus on the significance of his intentionally confronting evil, rather than avoiding it. Wherever he went, Jesus – the light of the world – deliberately, righteously, and actively confronted spiritual darkness.

Sunday, February 27: *Gates of Hades*

Continuing with the theme of Jesus' penchant for confronting evil, we visit the "evil" city of Caesarea Philippi. But this was also a place to which Jesus deliberately led his disciples for one of his final teachings. This is where he tells Peter that he will be the rock on which Jesus will build his church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. In effect, Jesus is saying that his church will replace the very power and strength of the devil.

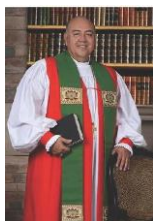


San Jacinto Festival

St. Mary's will once again be participating in the San Jacinto Festival held on April 22 and 23. We will be having a booth in the Kid'Zone. More information will be sent out closer to the date.

Right now a chairman is needed for our booth. The job is not difficult or time consuming. If you are willing to chair this event, please let Dani know. More than one person can fill this position.

This is a great way to serve our community and get the word out about St. Mary's.



Bishop Monterroso is Coming

Bishop Monterroso will be celebrating the Holy Eucharist at St. Mary's on Sunday, June 12, at 9:00 a.m. If you or anyone you know would like to be confirmed, received, or baptized during this service, please let Father Paul know.

Message from Marvin Miller

This was written by a Hospice of Metro Denver physician

I just had one of the most amazing experiences of my life, and wanted to share it with my family and dearest friends.

I was driving home from a meeting this evening about 5, stuck in traffic on Colorado Blvd., and the car started to choke and splutter and die - I barely managed to coast, cursing, into a gas station, glad only that I would not be blocking traffic and would have a somewhat warm spot to wait for the tow truck. It wouldn't even turn over.

Before I could make the call, I saw a woman walking out of the "quickie mart" building, and it looked like she slipped on some ice and fell into a gas pump, so I got out to see if she was okay.

When I got there, it looked more like she had been overcome by sobs than that she had fallen; she was a young woman who looked really haggard with dark circles under her eyes. She dropped something as I helped her up, and I picked it up to give it to her. It was a nickel.

At that moment, everything came into focus for me: the crying woman, the ancient Suburban crammed full of stuff with 3 kids in the back (1 in a car seat), and the gas pump reading \$4.95. I asked her if she was okay and if she needed help, and she just kept saying "I don't want my kids to see me crying," so we stood on the other side of the pump from her car. She said she was driving to California and that things were very hard for her right now.

So I asked, "And you were praying?" That made her back away from me a little but I assured her I was not a crazy person and said, "He heard you, and He sent me."

I took out my card and swiped it through the card reader on the pump so she could fill up her car completely, and while it was fueling walked to the next door McDonald's and bought 2 big bags of food, some gift certificates for more, and a big cup of coffee. She gave the food to the kids in the car who attacked it like wolves, and we stood by the pump eating fries and talking a little. She told me her name, and that she lived in Kansas City. Her boyfriend left 2 months ago and she had not been able to make ends meet. She knew she wouldn't have money to pay rent Jan 1, and finally in desperation had finally called her parents, with whom

she had not spoken in about 5 years. They lived in California and said she could come live with them and try to get on her feet there. So she packed up everything she owned in the car. She told the kids they were going to California for Christmas, but not that they were going to live there.

I gave her my gloves, a little hug and said a quick prayer with her for safety on the road. As I was walking over to my car, she said, "So, are you like an angel or something?" This definitely made me cry. I said, "Sweetie, at this time of year angels are really busy, so sometimes God uses regular people." It was so incredible to be a part of someone else's miracle. And of course, you guessed it, when I got in my car it started right away and got me home with no problem. I'll put it in the shop tomorrow to check, but I suspect the mechanic won't find anything wrong.

Sometimes the angels fly close enough to you that you can hear the flutter of their wings...

Changes in the Newsletter

Beginning with this edition of The Bells of St. Mary's, the newsletter will go out in the middle of each month. There are several reports that need to be completed by the church office at the beginning and end of each month, which make getting the newsletter out by the first of each month difficult. If you have an article for the newsletter, please submit it to the office by the 7th of each month.

In addition, reminders will be sent out about important events during the week of the event. Please open these reminders, so the office knows you received them.



Community Assistance

During January and the first week of February, the committee approved funds for 4 families' electric bills, 2 families' rent, 1 family's water bill, gasoline for 1 person, and laundry and food for another person.

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.

In January

Brayze Schill was selected to be on the Texas High School Rodeos Cinch Team. He was also chosen to be on the 2022 Priefert Junior Elite Team. Brayze made the varsity powerlifting team at Columbia High School.

Madeline Roddy received a 1st in Military March, 2nd in Basic Strut, 3rd in Show Twirl, and 4th in Solo at the Twirl in the Woods event.

Haley Cantrell was selected to be part of the WIT program at Columbia High School.

Braylee Schill made all As for the second 9 weeks at Columbia High School. She is also on the soccer team and track team at the high school.

Abigail Roddy received a 1st in Two Baton, 2nd in Military Strut, 3rd in Show Twirl, 5th in Solo, and 6th overall for Basic Skills at the Twirl in the Woods event.

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.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Special thanks and gratitude to

- Theata Miller, Sherry Wehner, Braylee Schill, Shyanne Roddy, Kendy Hankins, Travis Prater, Tracy Lane, Gwynne Olson, Jackie Walker, Colleen Matocha, Dani Mikel, Adam Schill, Bill Olson, Jennifer Schill, AJ Mikel, Dan Roddy, Marvin Miller, and Brayze Schill for serving as Worship Leaders during the month of January.
- Amber Prater for setting up the Livestreaming on our Facebook site, monitoring the feed during the service, and responding to those viewing on-line.
- Dan and Donna Roddy and Wendy Hankins for providing treats for our January Hospitality and Fellowship.
- Gwynne Olson, Dan Roddy, Colleen Matocha, and Jackie Walker for serving as our 2022 vestry.
- Gwynne and Bill Olson for serving as delegates to the 2022 Diocesan Council.
- all who contributed to the valentine boxes for our college students.
- Theata Miller for helping fold and staple the Sunday bulletins.

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.

February and March Birthdays

Mike Blount - February 4
Quinten Culbreath - February 9
Brian Lane - February 13
Bonnie Cole - February 16
Dick McGuire - February 19
Dan Roddy - February 27
Marglet Arana - March 5
Kurt Hankins - March 12

Jackie Walker - March 17
Doris Grosvenor - March 20
Tommy Cantrell - March 22
Theata Miller - March 24
Braylee Schill - March 28
Maddie Lane - March 30

February and March Anniversaries

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

St. Mary's Leadership

Vestry

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

St. May's Episcopal Church, corner of 16th and
Clay Street, West Columbia
PO Box 786, West Columbia, Texas 77486
979-345-3456 stmaryswc@centurylink.net

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.

Dates to Remember

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

February 13 - Brotherhood (7:30 a.m.)

February 13 - Sunday Service
Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner
Children's Sunday School

February 13 - Youth & Adult
Sunday School (10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)

February 13 - Vestry Meeting (11:00 a.m.)

February 14 - 17
Strengthen with Prayer
Exercise Program (8:00 - 9:00 a.m.)

February 20 - Sunday Service
Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Nan Doerr
Children's Sunday School

February 20 - Youth and Adult
Sunday School (10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)

February 21 - 24
Strengthen with Prayer
Exercise Program (8:00 - 9:00 a.m.)

February 27 - Brotherhood (7:30 a.m.)

February 27 - Sunday Service
Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner
Burying the Alleluia
Children's Sunday School

February 27 - Youth and Adult
Sunday School (10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)

February 28 - March 3
Strengthen with Prayer
Exercise Program (8:00 - 9:00 a.m.)

March 1 - Pancake Supper
(5:00 - 7:00 p.m.)

March 2 - Ashes to Go (3:00 - 5:00 p.m.)

March 2 - Church Dinner
Columbia United Methodist (5:30 p.m.)

March 2 - Joint Ash Wednesday Service
Columbia United Methodist (6:00 p.m.)

March 6 - Sunday Service
Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner
Children's Sunday School

March 6 - Youth & Adult
Sunday School (10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)

March 6 - April 3 - Food Drive

March 7 - 10
Strengthen with Prayer
Exercise Program (8:00 - 9:00 a.m.)

March 13 - Brotherhood (7:30 a.m.)

March 13 - Sunday Service
Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)
Children's Sunday School

March 13 - Youth & Adult
Sunday School (10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)