

The Bells of St. Mary's



St. Mary's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
The Mustard Seed Church

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



Time. The commodity most of us wished we had more of! More time to get the items on our “To-Do” list done each day. More time to be with our children before they grow up and out of our houses. More time for travel. More time to just relax and be.

Time is on my mind as we begin the final quarter of 2019, the final months of the decade of the “Twenty Teens.” We begin our five-week stewardship season on October 13th, a time where we step aside from our busy schedules to reflect on God’s work in our lives and prayerfully consider how we can be a part of St. Mary’s more deeply in the year ahead in gratitude for what God has done for us, what God has given us. As we look to begin a new decade in January, the 2020s will be St. Mary’s eighth decade in existence. What will that decade hold in store for St. Mary’s?

We have been talking a lot about stories at St. Mary’s lately, recognizing that we all have stories to tell of God’s faithfulness in our lives, of the abundant blessings we have received from God. This summer I had the opportunity to visit with a man who grew up in the 1950s and 1960s at St. Mary’s and, boy, what stories I heard from him! This parish has a rich history...and that’s something that should be shared and celebrated, especially as we begin to look ahead and to continue to envision our future.

In mid-October, a timeline will be hung on the walls of the Parish Hall surrounding the stained-glass window. The timeline will be divided into decades, beginning with the 1950s and will go through the 2010s. We will have big Post-It notes and Sharpies in the Parish Hall and invite all of you to share your stories about St. Mary’s. If you want to grab a few Post-It notes and take them home to work on, feel free! Jot down memories or stories you have been told or people you remember who were significant to you. Post them under the appropriate decade of the timeline. Let’s share with one another the blessing St. Mary’s has been, the saints who went before us, or the significant events that shaped this parish. Let’s share these stories with one another as we continue to look toward our future, seeking God’s continued guidance and grace!

Blessings,

Invite, Welcome, Connect

What does a welcoming church look like?

It wasn't too long ago that we had guests visit us from Colorado. We spent days preparing for the visit by deep cleaning, planning meals and snacks and trying to anticipate the needs of our out of state guests. In short, we wanted to open our home and focus our complete attention to our visitors and do everything we could to make them feel at home and welcome.

Welcoming guests into our church should look similar. We want our visitors to feel at home and leave feeling welcomed.

- Make eye contact and SMILE.

A smile can go a long way in making someone feel welcome. You may not be sitting near a guest, but you can offer a smile even if it's an aisle away.

- Don't forget our guests when it's time to "Pass the Peace"

The last thing a guest wants is to feel like they don't belong. Make sure you include the guests sitting around you when we share God's peace.

- Introduce yourself to newcomers and make them feel like an honored guest.

Be intentional in seeking out guests after the service. Introduce yourself and invite them to the parish hall for coffee and conversation.

- Never, ever, let an honored guest sit alone during our hospitality gathering.

Pull up a chair, engage in conversation, offer to refill their coffee cup, and by all means, make it a priority to offer hospitality to our guests.

Blessings,

Karen

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

Blessing of the Animals

St. Mary's will honor the feast day of Francis of Assisi on Sunday, October 6th, at 4:30 pm, with a Blessing of the Animals. The service will begin with a short liturgy near the Prayer Garden, followed by the individual blessing of each animal by Rev. Sharron.

A lemonade stand, pet adoption information by Pet Tribe, Dr. Huebner with the Brazoria and West Columbia Veterinarian Clinics, free hot dogs, and a photo area will be available.

Volunteers are needed to set up and help with these activities. Please let the office know how you would like to help.

Bring your pets and invite your friends and neighbors to this annual event for the community



Parish Dinners

Our first Parish Dinner after the summer break was a delight despite the impending weather from Tropical Storm Imelda. Thank you to all who came.

Because of the Blessing of the Animals in October, our next Parish Dinner will be November 20th. This is the week before Thanksgiving, so we have the opportunity to gather and give thanks for our friendship and parish life together. Charlotte Blount will be providing one turkey. Please let the office know if you can supply an additional cooked turkey.

Watch Your Mail

In October, one very important envelope will arrive in your mailbox from St. Mary's. It will contain the 3rd Quarterly Report for pledge giving and other donations. There will also be a letter from our Senior Warden, Charlotte Blount, along with our annual giving card.



Our Children are Worship Leaders

The children and youth of St. Mary's are an integral part of our worship service. They serve as acolytes, Lay Eucharist Ministers, and children's lectors. But that is not all. After a meaningful lesson in Godly Play where those present learned the special gift of the bread and wine and why it is brought forward during the offertory, our children, with pride and reverence, bring the bread box up to the altar where it is blessed.



Adult Crucifers Needed

We are still in need of adults willing to be a crucifer. There is no training involved, no bells to ring, and Rev. Sharron will guide you through the service. You are not expected to do all that our talented youth crucifers do, but what you do will be a gift to God and our congregation. Please consider this very special ministry.



Trip to Brookwood

The Christmas poinsettias have been ordered, so it is time to plan our ladies' trip to Brookwood. We will leave on Friday, December 20th, with the time to be determined. This is a great opportunity for us to share a delicious meal in their elegant restaurant, pick up those last-minute gifts from their gift shop and garden center, and enjoy each other's company. Of course, we will also pick up the poinsettias. That's the whole purpose of the trip. Right?

If you have never gone to Brookwood, this will be a wonderful experience. Please let the office know you will be attending by the end of October. You are welcomed to invited friends and family members. The more the merrier.



News from the Vestry

Gwynne Olson, Clerk

The vestry met Monday, September 16, 2019.

Rector Report: The Reverend Sharron Cox

Rev. Sharron stated that the paperwork for the Youth Reboot Grant Award was submitted to SMU. She asked for prayer for the training retreat on September 27th-29th. She is grateful for this opportunity for St. Mary's Youth. Rev. Sharron also stated that she has explored some architects and will instead reach out to contractors regarding the renovation of the restrooms and Narthex. St. Mary's is preparing for Bill Hosford's funeral on October 5th.

Senior Warden's Report: Charlotte Blount

Charlotte stated that we are ahead of schedule for this year's Stewardship Campaign. The campaign letter is under review and the giving card has been reviewed and approved for print.

Junior Warden's Report: Andrea Anderson

Andrea stated that the air conditioning has been replaced for the church offices. The ARM is going to mulch the flowerbeds and clean the gutters. They are also doing a church inventory for insurance and for the disaster management plan.

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

Message from Marvin Miller

The Airline Captain's Report

(By Jim Gentil)

'Is there an escort?' I asked

'Yes, I've already assigned him a seat'.

'Would you please tell him to come to the Flight Deck. You can board him early," I said...

A short while later a young army sergeant entered the flight deck. He was the image of the perfectly dressed soldier. He introduced himself and I asked him about his soldier.

The escorts of these fallen soldiers talk about them as if they are still alive and still with us. 'My soldier is on his way back to Virginia,' he said. He proceeded to answer my questions, but offered no words.

I asked him if there was anything I could do for him and he said no. I told him that he had the toughest job in the military, and that I appreciated the work that he does for the families of our fallen soldiers. The first officer and I got up out of our seats to shake his hand. He left the Flight Deck to find his seat.

We completed our pre-flight checks, pushed back and performed an uneventful departure. About 30 minutes into our flight, I received a call from the lead flight attendant in the cabin.

'I just found out the family of the soldier we are carrying, is also on board', she said. She then proceeded to tell me that the father, mother, wife and 2-year old daughter were escorting their son, husband, and father home. The family was upset because they were unable to see the container that the soldier was in before we left.

We were on our way to a major hub at which the family was going to wait four hours for the connecting flight home to Virginia. The father of the soldier told the flight attendant that knowing his son was below him in the cargo compartment and being unable to see him was too much for him and the family to bear. He had asked the flight attendant if there was anything that could be done to allow them to see him upon our arrival. The family wanted to be outside by the cargo door to watch the soldier being taken off the airplane.

I could hear the desperation in the flight attendant's voice when she asked me if there was anything I could do. 'I'm on it', I said. I told her that I would get back to her.

Airborne communication with my company normally occurs in the form of e-mail like messages. I decided to bypass this system and contact my flight dispatcher directly on a secondary radio. There is a radio operator in the operations control center who connects you to the telephone of the dispatcher. I was in direct contact with the dispatcher. I explained the situation I had on board with the family and what it was the family wanted. He said he understood and that he would get back to me.

Two hours went by and I had not heard from the dispatcher. We were going to get busy soon and I needed to know what to tell the family. I sent a text message asking for an update. I saved the return message from the dispatcher and the following is the text:

'Captain, sorry it has taken so long to get back to you. There is policy on this now, and I had to check on a few things. Upon your arrival a dedicated escort team will meet the aircraft. The team will escort the family to the ramp and plane side. A van will be used to load the remains with a secondary van for the family.

The family will be taken to their departure area and escorted into the terminal, where the remains can be seen on the ramp. It is a private area for the family only. When the connecting aircraft arrives, the family will be escorted onto the ramp and plane side to watch the remains being loaded for the final leg home.

Captain, most of us here in flight control are veterans. Please pass our condolences on to the family. Thanks.

I sent a message back, telling flight control thanks for a good job. I printed out the message and gave it to the lead flight attendant to pass on to the father. The lead flight attendant was very thankful and told me, 'You have no idea how much this will mean to them.'

Things started getting busy for the descent, approach and landing. After landing, we cleared the runway and taxied to the ramp area. The ramp is huge with 15 gates on either side of the alleyway. It is always a busy area with aircraft maneuvering every which way to enter and exit. When we entered the ramp and checked in with the ramp controller, we were told that all traffic was being held for us

'There is a team in place to meet the aircraft', we were told. It looked like it was all coming together, then I realized that once we turned the seat belt sign off, everyone would stand up at once and delay the family from getting off the airplane. As we approached our gate, I asked the copilot to tell the ramp controller, we were going to stop short of the gate to make an announcement to the passengers He did that and the ramp controller said, 'Take your time.'

I stopped the aircraft and set the parking brake. I pushed the public address button and said: 'Ladies and gentlemen, this is your Captain speaking: I have stopped short of our gate to make a special announcement. We have a passenger on board who deserves our honor and respect. His name is Private XXXXXX, a soldier who recently lost his life. Private XXXXXX is under your feet in the cargo hold. Escorting him today is Army Sergeant XXXXXX. Also, on board are his father, mother, wife, and daughter. Your entire flight crew is asking for all passengers to remain in their seats to allow the family to exit the aircraft first. Thank you.'

We continued the turn to the gate, came to a stop and started our shutdown procedures. A couple of minutes later I opened the cockpit door. I found the two forward flight attendants crying, something you just do not see. I was told that after we came to a stop, every passenger on the aircraft stayed in their seats, waiting for the family to exit the aircraft.

When the family got up and gathered their things, a passenger slowly started to clap his hands. Moments later, more passengers joined in and soon the entire aircraft was clapping. Words of 'God Bless You', I'm sorry, thank you, be proud, and other kind words were uttered to the family as they made their way down the aisle and out of the airplane. They were escorted down to the ramp to finally be with their loved one.

Many of the passengers disembarking thanked me for the announcement I had made. They were just words, I told them, I could say them over and over again, but nothing I say will bring back that brave soldier.

I respectfully ask that all of you reflect on this event and the sacrifices that millions of our men and women have made to ensure our freedom and safety in these United States of AMERICA .

Honoring Our Military



There are only five Sundays left to donate toward the gift cards St. Mary's will send to the military personnel on our Prayer list. For those who were in the military or grew up in a military family, you know the dedication and sacrifice these men and their families make for our country. But who are these men?

Three of them, Hunter Weisinger, Luis Cassells, and Ricky Wallace, Jr., grew up in our church and served as acolytes. Hunter and Luis still have family members in our church, for Hunter is the son of Brandi and Roy Weisinger and the grandson of Charlotte and Mike Blount and Luis is the grandson of Marglet Arana. John Brockway is the nephew of AJ and Dani Mikel, Shane Case is the son-in-law of Mary Stewart, Brandon Davidson is a friend of Colleen Matocha who served with her husband, and Ryan Kellis is a friend of Dan and Donna Roddy. Kyle Ledlie is the son of long-time active member Ray Ledlie, Alex Molnar is the son of Kathy Molnar, and Brett Mathern is related to Susan Graham, our organist during May and June.

Please help with this worthy cause by placing your donation in the basket as you enter the church or in the collection plate. At the end of October, cards will be available to write a note to let these men and their family know they are in our prayers and to thank them for their service. Give what you can for those who give so much and continue to pray for them.



Thursday Evening Bible Study (TEBS)

The TEBS group has moved and now meets at the Senior Citizen Center on Thursdays from 6:00 to 7:00 pm. They are studying the Gospel According to Matthew.



Community Assistance

In September, there were one request for assistance. Funds were provided to help a family with their water bill.

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

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

Brayze Schill won Jr. Bareback at the Lester Meier's Rodeo and placed third in the Texas Region Jr. NRF/Junior World Finals Qualifier. With his third place finish, he qualified to compete in the Junior World Finals in Las Vegas.

Braylee Schill placed 5th at the Cross Country Meet at Surfside Beach. Her West Brazos Jr. High team placed first at the same meet.

Theata Miller, of Handmade Bags by Theata, will participate in her first craft show at Sweeny United Methodist Church on Saturday, October 5th.



Camp Allen Events

Camp Allen Thanksgiving (November 28) - Leave your aprons and dirty dishes behind and make reservations with your friends and family for Camp Allen's Thanksgiving Celebration! There will be a worship service in All Saints' Chapel followed by a Thanksgiving Buffet with roasted turkey, ham, and all the trimmings.

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.



Don't Forget

Bring your empty ink cartridges to the Parish Hall for recycling. Through Office Depot's Ink Cartridge Recycle Program, we can turn in up to 10 used cartridges each month for a credit of \$2 per cartridge. All brands and types are welcomed. This will help defray the cost of our office supplies.

The Hospitality calendar and other important information can be found on the table at the entrance to the Parish Hall.

The bulletin board in the Parish Hall contains information, cards, news clippings, etc. that are frequently updated.

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:

- Colleen Matocha, Brayze Schill, Braylee Schill, and the Reverend Sharron Cox for representing St. Mary's at the Reboot Retreat in Waxahachie.
- Colleen Matocha for cutting out the bookmarks that were given to the new teachers in CBISD and the teachers at West Columbia Elementary.
- Tracy Lane, Karen Logue, Charlotte Blount, and Dani Mikel for preparing the welcome bags that are given to those who visit St. Mary's.
- ARM (Army of Retired Men) for cleaning the gutters.
- Dan and Donna Roddy, Karen and Ed Logue, and Theata and Marvin Miller for providing snacks for our Wednesday evening Christian Formation.

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

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| October 3 - Yoga Class (10:00 am) | October 17 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Stewardship Cohort Call Meeting
(7:00 pm) |
| October 4 - set up for Bill Hosford's
funeral (9:00 am) | October 20 - Sunday Service (9:00)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am) |
| October 5 - Funeral service for Bill
Hosford (10:am)
Reception to meet the family (9:30 am)
Lunch following the service | October 21 - 23 - Rev. Sharron is at
Clergy Conference |
| October 6 - Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)
Blessing of the Animals (4:30 pm) | October 21 - Vestry Meeting (4:00 pm) |
| October 10 - Yoga class (10:00 am) | October 24 - 27 Rev. Sharron is on
vacation. |
| October 11- Letter from Senior Warden and
Giving Card are mailed. | October 24 - Yoga class (10:00 am) |
| October 12 - Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am) | October 27 - Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Sunday Service with the
Reverend Jim Morgan (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
No Christian Formation |
| | October 31 - Yoga class (10:00 am) |

St. Mary's Leadership
Rector

The Reverend Sharron Cox

Vestry

**Sr. Warden: Charlotte Blount
Jr. Warden: Andrea Anderson
Clerk: Gwynne Olson**

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.