



*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.



September 2022

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



### Mosaic In Action

St. Mary's is excited to announce that we are partnering with Mosaic in Action to support their work in the West Columbia area. Mosaic in Action's primary focus is disaster relief and recovery within Brazoria County. The non-profit organization was founded in 2014 by the Rev. Jim Liberatore and Debbie Allensworth, both of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Pearland. In the ensuing years, Mosaic in Action has repaired over 400 homes damaged by hurricanes, tropical storms, major wind events, seasonal flooding, and even a winter storm. St. Mary's has committed to help support that work in West Columbia - both financially and with volunteers! We will keep you posted on ongoing projects in our area, and hopefully each of us will be moved to do what we can to help our neighbors in need.

Learn more about Mosaic in Action at their website: <https://www.mosaicinaction.org>



### Walk the Block - Trunk or Treat

Even though Halloween is two months away, it is time to start thinking about Trunk or Treat. Once again, St. Mary's will participate with the Methodist Church and possibly the Baptist Church in "Walk the Block". Last year, our church had 11 cars participating, so get your ideas flowing for decorations (Google if necessary) and mark your calendars for Monday, October 31st from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Let's plan on beating last year's number. More details will be coming in the October newsletter.



## Blessing of the Animals

The Blessing of the Animals will be Sunday, October 2nd at 4:00 p.m.. The Schills will be heading up this special event but need the entire congregation to help. Last year we had 25 or more parishioners participating.

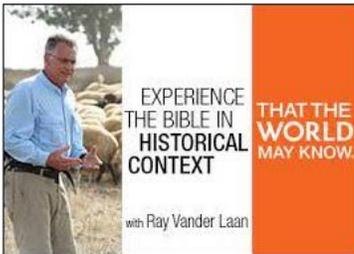


If you want to help in any way with the preparations, planning, or the day of the event please contact Jennifer Schill or the office. We need everyone for this to be as spectacular as it has in the past.



## School Drive Was a Success

Our annual school supply drive benefiting West Columbia Elementary was again a success thanks to the generosity of our parishioners. Thank you to all who donated supplies or money.



## Sunday School (6<sup>th</sup> 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-worshipping 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. A sign-up sheet with ways to help will be in the Narthex and Parish Hall. You can also contact Dani or Shyanne directly if you would like to volunteer your time and talent to this important ministry.



## **Parish Dinners are Back!**

Wednesday, September 21st, is our Regathering Dinner! Serving will start at 5:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. White Apron will be catering our meal. The menu will include Salisbury Steak and Southwest Chicken Breast, buttered potatoes, broccoli w/cheese, rolls, tossed salad, dessert, and tea.

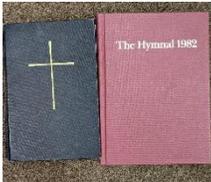
We need an estimated headcount, so please let the office know by Sunday, September 11th. There are also sign-up sheets in the Narthex and Parish Hall. Even if you do not get to sign up, you can attend as extras will be ordered.

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

## New Worship Leaders

Two more parishioners have joined our group of worship leaders and two current leaders have expanded their duties. Hannah Hussey will be joining the altar guild and Justin Hussey will be an usher. Shyanne Roddy and AJ Mikel will both be Lay Eucharistic Ministers. All four will start with the next rotation in October.

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 Eucharistic 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.

## Message from Marvin Miller

### Grieving after Husband's Death

During my husband's four-year battle with cancer, our golden retriever, Friday, laid beside his bed, provided support when my husband walked, and never left his side. He obviously knew something was wrong and was devoted to his master.

Before my husband was ill, he was a senior sports-and-news cameraman for a major TV station. Owing to the nature of his assignments, my husband's work hours were unpredictable. Regardless of the hour, Friday always knew when my husband was headed home and ran to the front door, wagging his tail and sitting patiently until my husband's car pulled into the driveway.

After my husband's death away at a hospital, Friday sat at the front door all day, every day, whining and waiting for my husband's return. He stopped eating and wouldn't leave the front hallway. He refused to play with our children whom he loved because "guard duty" was his only purpose. He left his post each day only quickly to go to the back yard, and then would return. My heart was breaking for this dog.

After one week of watching Friday's vigil, I decided to help him understand what happened. Hesitantly, Friday left his post and got into the car with me. His car behavior was unusual: He paced from window to window, looking everywhere for my husband.

I drove to the cemetery, and we walked together toward my husband's gravesite. As we got closer, Friday pulled away from me and ran directly to my husband's grave. He lay down on the grave, closed his eyes, and just stayed there, quietly.

I didn't try to talk to Friday or to disturb him — he needed to grieve, too. After an hour, Friday got up and walked over to me, using his mouth to hand me his leash. He was ready to go home.

On the way back home, Friday laid down quietly in the backseat.

After we arrived home, he kept kissing my hands as if to say "thank you" and never again sat by the front door waiting for my husband to return home. He now understood.

His behavior returned to normal around the children and he began eating again. In time, he healed as we did.

~ The author is L.B.J. from Lake Worth, Florida.

# 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.

A new Photo Gallery has been added and will continually be updated with the latest pictures. Check out what has been going on since the beginning of Advent 2021.

Our website is [stmaryswestcolumbia.com](http://stmaryswestcolumbia.com). You can access it using the link below or at the top of the newsletter.



## Community Assistance

During August, the committee approved funds to help 3 families or individuals with partial rent, one night hotel stay, and 2 nights in a healthcare facility.

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.

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

## August

Abigail Roddy competed in the 2022 Texas State Twirling Championship and received 1st in Presentation, 2nd in Military Marching, 2nd in Two Baton, and 5th in Show Twirl.

Kendy Hankins made the 8th grade Lady Panthers volleyball team at Bay City Junior High.

Madeline Roddy competed in the 2022 Texas State Twirling Championship and received 2nd in Show Twirl, 3rd in Basic Strut, and 3rd in Military Marching.

Trace Roddy competed in jui jitsu at the Summer Grappling Games and earned first in no-Gi and second in Gi for his division.



## 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, Shyanne Roddy, Gwynne Olson, Jackie Walker, Colleen Matocha, Dani Mikel, AJ Mikel, Dan Roddy, Marvin Miller, Abigail Roddy, Trace Roddy, Haley Cantrell, Reesie Cantrell, Wendy Hankins, Kendy Hankins, Jasey Hussey, Jay Wiggins, Brayze Schill, Jennifer Schill, and Braylee Schill for serving as Worship Leaders in August.
- Amber Prater for setting up the Livestreaming on our Facebook site, monitoring the feed during the service, and responding to those viewing on-line.
- Gwynne and Bill Olson, Dan and Donna Roddy and the Brotherhood for providing treats for our August Hospitality and Fellowship.
- Theata Miller for stapling the service bulletins.
- the Reverend Nan Doerr for being our celebrant for the Back to School Service.
- all who donated supplies or money for our School Supply Drive.
- Jackie Walker for serving as chairperson of the rector search committee.
- Bill Olson, Shyanne Roddy, Colleen Matocha, AJ Mikel, Jennifer Schill, and Tracy Lane for serving on the rector search committee.

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



## Camp Allen Events

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

**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.**

**Gramps Camp - November 4-5 - Spend quality time with your grandchildren at this two day, one night retreat. Activities include canoeing, hiking, giant swing, swimming, archery, orienteering, fishing, pond studies, a campfire, and stargazing.**

**Birds and Blooms - November 11-13 - Enjoy camp's 1,100 acres, attend expert led workshops and hike scenic trails with experienced guides. Presentations include: wildlife photography, Audubon presenters, live owl and hawk demos, birding identification and more.**

**Holiday in the Pines - December 9-11 - This family Christmas weekend includes activities such as sledding, rock climbing, giant swing, zip line, massages, horseback rides, Discovery Dome theatre, campfire, Holiday tea, photos with Santa, family movie night, live bird & reptile classes, hiking, fishing, hayrides, moon jump, archery, gingerbread houses, and arts & crafts.**

# Thank You Cards

Dear People of St. Mary's Church,

Thank you for the money to send me to Camp Allen this year and the prayer book! I took it to camp with me.

From,  
Travis Prater

Thank you! For helping me go to church camp. I had a blast! We played so many games. Again thank you so much.

Taylor

## Women's Mini Retreat - Desire, Mystery, and Belonging

Saturday, September 10th  
8:30 a.m. – 1.30 p.m.

St. Christopher Episcopal Church- League City and St. Thomas The Apostle Episcopal Church-Nassau Bay invite you to our upcoming Women's Mini Retreat entitled Desire, Mystery, and Belonging. We are blessed to have Dr. Sarah Flick author of Desire, Mystery, and Belonging as our guest speaker.

This mini retreat will be a time for spiritual enrichment, prayer, reflection, connection, and fun. The cost is \$10 per person with continental breakfast and lunch provided.

Register today by mail or online at [www.stchrischurch.org](http://www.stchrischurch.org).

If you need additional information, contact the office.



## 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.

## September Birthdays

Jason Davidson - Sept. 6

Marvin Miller - Sept. 28

Piper Roddy - Sept. 29

## Sept. Anniversaries

The Rev. Paul and Sherry Wehner  
Sept. 6

Justin and Hannah Hussey - Sept. 14

## Dates to Remember

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

September 2 - Sunday Service - Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)  
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner

September 11 - Brotherhood (7:30 a.m.)

September 11 - Sunday Service - Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)  
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner  
Children's Sunday School

September 11- Youth and Adult Sunday School and children activities  
(10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)

September 18 - Sunday Service - Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00a.m.)  
celebrant - the Reverend Paul Wehner  
Children's Sunday School

September 18 - Youth and Adult Sunday School and children activities  
(10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)

September 18 - Vestry Meeting (11:15 - 1:15 a.m.)

September 21 - Parish Dinner (5:30 p.m.)

September 25 - Brotherhood (7:30 a.m.)

September 25 - Sunday Service - Holy Eucharist: Rite II (9:00 a.m.)  
celebrant - the Reverend Nan Doerr  
Children's Sunday School

September 25 - Youth and Adult Sunday School and children activities  
(10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)

## St. Mary's Leadership

### Vestry

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

New email address for St. Mary's - [stmaryswestcolumbia@gmail.com](mailto:stmaryswestcolumbia@gmail.com)

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