

The Bells of St. Mary's

September Edition



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.



When I was young, how we learned about God was attending Sunday School, classes before, during, or after church services that taught us about God, Jesus, and how to be a good Christian. Sounds simple, right? Attend classes and check off the box that we learned. Or, maybe the Church just simplified matters, not recognizing or admitting that learning about God, about Jesus, and how to be a good Christian is (darn it!) a life-long process.

That's why I like how contemporary Christian educators refer to learning about God as "Christian Formation," rather than "Sunday School," acknowledging that learning about God and how to live as followers of Jesus is living a life of being formed more and more into the people of God. And that's the life of a disciple. Being a disciple is a life-long pursuit of learning more about what the scriptures reveal to us about God and about how we are to live as followers of Jesus. The job description of a disciple really hasn't changed since the earliest Christian disciples who "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." (Acts 2:42, NRSV)

As St. Mary's moved forward in calling a new rector over two years ago, overwhelmingly there was a call for Christian formation and spiritual formation. This is a congregation who wants to grow! In response, a few volunteers began to hold children and youth formation on Wednesday nights two years ago. Last year, St. Mary's reinstated formation opportunities on Sunday mornings. This year, beginning on September 11th, we are expanding offerings on Wednesday evening by splitting up the youngest of our children and our older elementary school children into separate classes. Our youth will delay the beginning of our weekday programming until after football season, as we begin the steps of implementing the "Reboot Program," a grant received from the Perkins School of Theology at SMU (see *article below in this month's newsletter about this grant*). On Sunday mornings beginning September 8th, we will continue providing "Godly Play" for our children. Classes will be held in the Parish Hall for all other ages (12 years and up!) after an abbreviated time for hospitality. This fall we will be using a video series

that provides background information on the Bible and the culture in which it was written to aid in interpreting what we read. These videos are animated in the style of a graphic novel, appealing to all ages of disciples. There will be brief group discussion that follows each 5-7 minute video.

St. Mary's is still very much the "Mustard Seed Church." We are few in number attempting to do great things for the glory of God. Volunteers are still very much needed to support this programming this fall and to comply with Safeguarding requirements. Please consider donating your time once or twice a month to serve as an aide or teacher or snack-provider!

Gratefully,



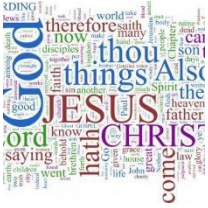
We Were Chosen!!

It was a long shot! Sixty-two (62!) churches applied for a Reboot grant announced early this summer by the Perkins School of Theology at SMU. The Perkins School received funding from a major national philanthropic organization, the Lilly Endowment, to fund projects in churches that are too small to hire a paid youth director. These churches had to be within 300 miles of SMU and be ready to be innovative after receiving training from mentors, training retreats, and financial support. Grant applications were submitted by July 10th. Only eighteen (18!) parishes were going to be selected...and St. Mary's was chosen!

The scrappy Mustard Seed Church, 297 miles from SMU, will be part of the initial co-hort of parishes to receive hands-on training, funding, and mentoring. Over the next six months, a newly constituted Youth Board consisting of youth, adults, and clergy will meet, discern, and vision a new approach to youth ministry here in West Columbia. Then in March 2020 with this new vision, we will have the opportunity to submit a second grant application for additional funding and a year-long mentorship by the experts at the Perkins School of Youth Ministry.

As part of our innovative approach, St. Mary's is taking a leaf out of our past by collaborating with our neighboring church, Columbia United Methodist Church (CUMC). St. Mary's has a rich history of ecumenical youth programming and services. So, as part of our "Rebooted" vision, we will be working with CUMC throughout these months of planning.

The leaders of the Reboot grant point out that in small churches everyone needs to be involved in the youth ministry. We welcome all parishioners' involvement, big or small, in the work of this grant and in support of our youth ministry. Please speak with the Rector if you are interested in supporting these efforts. To learn more about the Reboot grant, click [here](#) or go to www.rebootyouthministry.com/about/.



Teachers and Aides Needed

Thank you to those who answered the call for teachers and aides for our Christian Formation children and youth groups. As Rev. Sharron stated in her message, we can still use more aides for either Sunday, Wednesday, or both.

If you are willing to serve as an aide to help guide our children and youth through their journey to learn about God's love, the meaning of being a Christian, and how to serve God, the church, and the community, please let Dani know. Remember the person who guided and influenced you. You can be that person in the life of our children and youth.



Snacks! Snacks! Snacks!

During the Wednesday evening Christian Formation, a small snack and drink will be available during the first 15 minutes while the children have fellowship together before going to their classes. Some suggested items are Goldfish crackers, chips, ice cream, fruit snacks, Rice Krispie Treats, crackers, popsicles, fruit, cookies, homemade items, fruit punch, juice, etc. If you would like to provide a snack or drink, you can bring it anytime and give it to Dani or place it in the Parish Hall indicating it is for Wednesday evening. Since it is only a snack, there will be no sign-up sheet. Thank you for your support of this important ministry.



Parish Dinners

Our first dinner will be Wednesday, September 18th, at 5:30 with Dan and Donna Roddy providing ham as the entree. A sign-up sheet for the side dishes and drinks is in the Parish Hall. What a great day to share stories about our summer, eat a wonderful meal together, and enjoy each other's company. Invite your friends and loved ones to "our" family gathering.



It's time to get our sing on!

St. Mary's Vocal Ensemble will begin rehearsing on Wednesday nights from 6:30-7:15 PM starting September 11th. On the 11th, we will preview songs that we are singing this fall. All are welcome.



You Too Can Be A Crucifer

Would you like to relive your glory days as an acolyte or were you never given the opportunity to serve as one but always wanted the chance? Now you can. Adults are needed to serve as the crucifer on the Sundays when our youth crucifers are not available. No training is necessary for Rev. Sharron will guide you during the service. Let Rev. Sharron or Dani know if you would like the honor of carrying the Processional Cross and assisting at the altar.



News from the Vestry

Gwynne Olson, Clerk

The vestry met Monday, August 19, 2019.

The vestry had an abbreviated meeting due to a two hour stewardship coaching session lead by Mandy Neal prior to the meeting. Mandy discussed the difference between faith and the alternative to faith. She said that we need to honor the moments when we see God. She suggested needs for the 2020 Stewardship Campaign.

During the vestry meeting, Rev. Sharron stated a second bid for stained glass repair was obtained and no repair is needed at this time. The air conditioning in the church offices is not cooling. We received a bid to repair the air conditioning and the repair cost is covered in the budget. Grace Culbreath begins her position as our permanent organist on August 25th. Rev. Sharron also gave updates on Christian Formation classes and the meetings for the KNG Ranch.

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

Message from Marvin Miller

WRITTEN IN SAND Vs WRITTEN IN STONE

By Jim Gentil

Two friends were walking though the desert.
During some point of the journey, they had an
argument and one friend tripped the other one.

The one who got tripped was hurt, but without
saying anything wrote in the sand...
Today my best friend tripped me.

They kept on walking, until they found an oasis,
where they decided to take a bath.
The one who had been tripped got stuck in the
mire and started drowning, but the friend saved him.

After he recovered from the near drowning,
he wrote on a stone:
"Today my best friend saved my life."

The friend who had tripped and saved his best
friend asked him, "After I hurt you, you wrote in the
sand and now, you write on a stone...why?"

The friend replied, "When someone hurts us we
should write it down in sand, where winds of
forgiveness can erase it away. But when someone
does something good for us, we must engrave it
in stone where no wind can ever erase it."

Learn to write your hurts in the sand and to carve your
benefits in stone.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Special thanks and gratitude to:

- all who provided food for the New Teacher's Luncheon at Columbia United Methodist Church.
- Karen Logue for volunteering at the New Teacher's Luncheon.
- all who donated school supplies and Treats for the Teachers.
- Jennifer Schill, Brayze Schill, Braylee Schill, Haley Cantrell, and Ressie Cantrell for delivering our donations to West Columbia Elementary.

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

Honoring Our Military



Every Sunday, for many years, we have included special prayers for military personnel who either grew up in our church or are connected to someone in our congregation. When we first started this practice, it was not meant to be permanent, but we have come to realize the sacrifices these men and women and their families make on a daily basis and the need they have for our continued prayers.

On Veteran's Day, Saint Mary's goes beyond prayer to let the 10 men on our prayer list and their families know we care. We send a gift card and notes to each one. Donations have been accepted since the first Sunday after July 4th, Independence Day, and will continue until November 3rd. That is exactly 10 more Sundays. That seems like a lot, but it really isn't. Please help with this worthy cause by placing your donation in the basket as you enter the church. Give what you can for those who give so much and continue to pray for them.

Kaylea Lorene Anderson was born August 21, 2019 to Brooke Wilson and Ben Anderson. Her grandmother is Andrea Anderson and her great grandparents are Dan and Donna Roddy.

Braylee Schill placed second at GRIT Games sponsored by Grit Fitness in West Columbia.

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

Haley Cantrell participated in the Junior Olympics for Twirling placing first in Trio, first in Group Routine with the Sr. Gems, 4th in Multiple Batons, and 5th in Show Twirl.

Luke Davidson was accepted into the Dual Language program at Westside Elementary in Angleton.

Theata Miller has started her own business. Check out her beautiful handbags and more on Facebook at "Handmade Bags by Theata".

Kendy Hankins as Little Miss Southern States participated in the Regency International Pageant in Las Vegas placing 2nd Runner-up Little Miss. She also received a gold in Charity Award, silver in Volunteer Award, and gold in Academic Award.

Brayze Schill won the Cannon Youth Roughstock in Waller, Texas with 80 points.



Community Assistance

In August, there were three requests for assistance. Funds were provided to help one family with their water bill, one family with rent and their water bill, and one family with groceries. Funds were also used to purchase 10 lice kits for West Columbia Elementary.

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



Camp Allen Events

Gramps Camp (September 20-21) is a chance to spend quality time with your grandchildren in the Piney Woods at a two day one night retreat. Activities include canoeing, guided hikes, giant swing, swimming, orienteering, archery, campfire, fishing, pond studies, and stargazing.

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

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.

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

September 1 - Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)

September 4 - "Imaginative Prayer"
instructor training (1:00 pm)

September 5 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study: The Gospel According to
Matthew Chapter 18 (6:00 pm)

September 8 - Sunday Service with
Commissioning of Worship Leaders
(9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

September 9 - DOK (4:15)

September 11 - Christian Formation
for children (5:15 - 6:30 pm)
Vocal Ensemble Practice
(6:30 - 7:15 pm)

September 12 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study: The Gospel According to
Matthew Chapter 19 (6:00 pm)

September 15 - Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

September 16 - Vestry meeting (4 pm)

September 18 - Parish Dinner (5:30)

September 19 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study: The Gospel According to
Matthew Chapter 20 (6:00 pm)

September 22 - Sunday Service (9:00)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

September 23 - 26 - Rev. Sharron is on
vacation

September 25 - Christian Formation
for children (5:15 - 6:30 pm)

September 26 - Yoga class (10:00 am)
Bible Study: The Gospel According to
Matthew Chapter 21 (6:00 pm)

September 27 - 29 - Reboot Grant
Meeting in Dallas

September 29 - Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Sunday Service with the
Reverend Jim Morgan (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)

September 29 - 30 - Small Church
Network at Camp Allen

September Birthdays

Jason Davidson - Sept. 6
Marvin Miller - Sept. 28
Piper Roddy - Sept. 29

September Anniversaries

Karen & Ed Logue - Sept. 13
Hannah & Justin Hussey - Sept. 14
Brandi & Roy Weisinger - Sept. 28

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.