



The Bells of St. Mary's March 2019 Edition



Ash Wednesday @ St. Mary's – March 6 @ 6:00 p.m.

Why ashes?

References to ashes seem to be all over the Bible, references that seem to indicate that “wearing” ashes was a sign of repentance, a sign of sorrow and regret. Ashes have been tied to the penitential season of Lent for more than a millennium as a sign of the reality that we are not perfect, we are not able to fully live into the love of God and of our neighbor. Lent is a call to renew this commitment to love, to reflect on how we are living our lives, and to put aside our focus on ourselves rather than God and our neighbor.

It is the custom of the Church to begin Lent by re-tracing the cross imbedded on our forehead in baptism...but re-tracing that invisible cross with ashes, rather than with water. In doing so, we commit to re-focus our attention on the way of Jesus rather than our way and the way of the world.

This is hard stuff. But this is a recognition that our conversion is an on-going, life-long transformation into the likeness of Christ. And Lent gives us the opportunity to re-start, renew our desire to follow Jesus through this season of self-examination, prayer, giving up behaviors or taking on new behaviors. There is resurrection...there is new life...at the end of these forty days...

Come...let us gather as a community of those who recognize we are incomplete on Ash Wednesday and begin our journey together, once again, the way of Jesus.

Blessings,

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

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.



Award-Winning Church

At the 170th Diocesan Council, St. Mary's received a very special recognition. During a segment of the meeting on Saturday, the Right Reverend Andy Doyle presented trophies and medals to churches for their contribution during the Episcopal General Convention held during July in Austin. Along with all the large churches honored, there was one small church who received a trophy. St. Mary's was recognized with the Spirit Award for Going Above and Beyond. Thank you to the Reverend Sharron Cox, Ed Logue, Karen Logue, David Mikel, Heather Mikel, and Dani Mikel for representing our church at the General Convention.



Parish Dinner

At our monthly Parish Dinners, the entree or main dish is provided by one family and the sides, desserts, and drinks are supplied by other parishioners. Right now we have no entree for our next dinner which is scheduled for 5:30 pm on Wednesday, March 20th. If you would like to provide the main dish for this dinner or any future dinners, please contact the church office. A sign-up sheet for sides, desserts, and drinks will be placed in the Parish Hall once the entree is determined.

INVITE WELCOME CONNECT

Karen Logue

While attending a local style show last weekend, our West Columbia mayor, Laurie Kincannon, couldn't wait to introduce her granddaughter to me. Why? Because her granddaughter had no idea that West Columbia had a church named St. Mary's and I was living proof that St. Mary's really existed. What she DID know was that St. Mary's had provided the WCE 5th grader an amazing week at Camp Allen that was thoroughly enjoyed.

As happy as I am that our West Columbia 5th graders had a fabulous time at the Discovery Program, I couldn't help but be a little sad to think that not everyone knows about our sweet church and I'm thinking we should change that.

As a congregation, would we be willing to spend a few moments each day in prayer and ask God to show us somebody who might be looking for a church home? When He shows us who that person is could we be courageous enough to invite them to be our guest at St. Mary's? If inviting somebody to our church service is a little too daunting, how about starting with an invitation to the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper? Who wouldn't enjoy a heaping stack of flapjacks topped with butter and syrup? But wait! It gets better. Imagine for a minute how honored your guests will feel as our parish family takes a moment to introduce themselves and intentionally welcome them to St. Mary's.

I would like to encourage all of us to accept this challenge of evangelism and transformation. We might just be surprised at who gets transformed! Let's envision a church filled with people who are bursting with love for God and each other and who feel compelled to invite others to share the same joy!

Here's a prayer to get us started.

**Dear Gracious Lord,
Thank you for St. Mary's. We ask for your guidance. Show us those in our community who need You. Give us courage and boldness to step out of our complacency and invite others to share in the peace, love and joy that only You can bring. Help us to see others with the same compassion and love that You see. Open our eyes and hearts in such a way that we may truly welcome others into our faith community and be living examples of Your grace and love. In Jesus name, Amen**

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.

Burying the Alleluia



St. Mary's tradition of Burying the Alleluia was carried out by the youth and children during the February 27th Wednesday Night Christian Formation. Brayze, Braylee, Haley, Reesie, Ross, Gavin, Emilee, Katie, and Avrey participated in the special service which ended with a prayer by Rev. Sharron. "Burying the Alleluia" is a symbolic reminder of the "ancient practice of fasting from singing or speaking alleluia through the forty days of Lent". Alleluia will be restored at the "great festive celebration of Easter". (Planning for Rites and Rituals)



Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!

Calling all vocalists! There is interest in putting together a small vocal ensemble to sing an anthem at the Easter service on April 21st. If you are interested in participating, please contact Gwynne Olson at either gwynneolson@gmail.com or 303-915-8487. It is anticipated that one or two rehearsals might be necessary. All ages and abilities are welcome!

Wednesday Night Christian Formation

Our children's and youth groups that meet on Wednesday night for Christian Formation continue to grow, sometimes reaching as many as 16. St. Mary's is so thankful for the leadership of Shyanne Roddy and Colleen Matocha in this important ministry.

New Bishop

At the 170th Diocesan Council held in the Woodlands, the Rev. Canon Kathryn "Kai" Ryan was elected Bishop Suffragan for the West Region. She received the majority of the votes on the first ballot from both the lay order and clergy order. Following the announcement of the election, the Right Reverend Andy Doyle called for a second unanimous vote for Canon Ryan to show unity in the Diocese of Texas. Bishop-Elect Ryan will be consecrated as the next Bishop Suffragan on June 1, 2019.

St. Mary's was fortunate to have the Rev. Canon Kai Ryan celebrate the Eucharist with us on June 11, 2017.

For more information on the Diocesan Council and Bishop-Elect Kai Ryan you can go to the following websites.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8hohbDWWCg>

<https://www.epicenter.org/170th-council-wrap-up/>

<https://www.epicenter.org/article/kathryn-ryan-elected-new-bishop-suffragan/>



News from the Vestry

Gwynne Olson, Clerk

The vestry met Monday, February 19, 2019.

Rector Report: The Reverend Sharron Cox

Rev. Sharron discussed the Annual Meeting held last month. Overall feedback is that it was successful with the Program Directors giving program reports. Rev. Sharron said that it is important that all ages be present for the March 3rd's Vision & Mission Exercise with Mary MacGregor. Discussion was held regarding an invitation to a workshop on church security hosted by Gulf Coast Christian Center.

Senior Warden's Report: Charlotte Blount

Charlotte stated that she is looking forward the March 3rd program. She and Rev. Sharron will attend a Best Practices for Stewardship meeting with the Diocese

Junior Warden's Report: Andrea Anderson

Andrea was not present. Discussions with painters regarding the painting of the narthex are in process. A bid is being obtained for the paving of the side and front parking spaces.

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

Message from Marvin Miller

Installing a new program – LOVE

From the book "Positive Spiritual Living"

Tech Support: Yes, ... how can I help you?

Customer: Well, after much consideration, I've decided to install Love. Can you guide me through the process?

Tech Support: Yes. I can help you. Are you ready to proceed?

Customer: Well, I'm not very technical, but I think I'm ready. What do I do first?

Tech Support: The first step is to open your Heart. Have you located your Heart?

Customer: Yes, but there are several other programs running now. Is it okay to install Love while they are running?

Tech Support: What programs are running?

Customer: Let's see, I have Past Hurt, Low Self-Esteem, Grudge and resentment running right now.

Tech Support: No problem, Love will gradually delete Past Hurt from your current operating system. It may remain in your permanent memory, but it will no longer disrupt other programs. Love will eventually override Low Self-Esteem with a module of its own called High Self-Esteem. However, you have to completely turn off Grudge and Resentment. Those programs prevent Love from being properly installed. Can you turn those off?

Customer: I don't know how to turn them off. Can you tell me how?

Tech Support: With pleasure. Go to your Start menu and invoke Forgiveness. Do this as many times as necessary until Grudge and Resentment have been completely deleted.

Customer: Okay, done! Love has started installing itself. Is that normal?

Tech Support: Yes, but remember that you have only the base program. You need to begin connecting to other Hearts in order to get the upgrades.

Customer: Oops! I have an error message already. It says, "Error - Program not run on external components". What should I do?

Tech Support: Don't worry. It means that the Love program is set up to run on Internal Hearts, but has not yet been run on your Heart. In non-technical terms, it simply means you have to Love yourself before you can Love others.

Customer: So, what should I do?

Tech Support: Pull down Self-Acceptance; then click on the following files: Forgive-Self; Realize Your Worth; and Acknowledge Your Limitations.

Customer: Okay, done.

Tech Support: Now, copy them to the "My Heart" directory. The system will overwrite any conflicting files and begin patching faulty programming. Also, you need to delete Verbose Self-Criticism from all directories and empty your Recycle Bin to make sure it is completely gone and never comes back.

Customer: Got it. Hey! My Heart is filling up with new files. Smile is playing on my monitor and Peace and Contentment are copying themselves all over my Heart. Is this normal?

Tech Support: Sometimes. For others, it takes a while, but eventually gets it at the proper time. So, Love is installed and running. One more thing before we hang up. Love is Freeware. Be sure to give it and its various components to everyone you meet. They will in turn, share it with others and return some cool components back to you.

Customer: Thank you, God.

-- Author Unknown

Important Changes in our Schedule

The Sunday Christian Formation classes will not meet on March 10th because of Spring Break.

The Wednesday Night Christian Formation classes will not meet again until March 27th because of the Ash Wednesday Service (March 6th), Spring Break (March 13th), and Parish Dinner (March 20th).



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.



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.

Andrea Anderson welcomed her new grandson, Sterling Daniel Schuelke, born February 18th. He is the son of Tori and Jarrod Schuelke, the brother of Easton Schuelke, and the great grandson of Donna and Dan Roddy.

Abigail Roddy placed 3rd in Basic Strut and 2nd in Show Twirl at the twirling competition held in Needville.

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

Brayze Schill won Champion Bareback Steer Riding, Reserve Champion Saddle Bronc Steers, and 7th in Chute Dogging in the year-long Region 7 competition. He qualified for the state finals in all three events.

Ally Lane won third place in golf representing Columbia High School. Her golf team has won first place in three tournaments and 2nd place in one tournament.

Haley Cantrell placed 1st in One Baton, 1st in Two Baton, 2nd in Military, and 6th in Basic strut at the twirling competition held in Needville.

Kendy Hankins received the Wildcatter Award for 0 conduct marks, the M & M Award, and the Honesty Award at West Columbia Elementary. She also made the A Honor Roll.



Community Assistance

In January, two households were helped. The first one was given groceries and aide in connecting the water at their residence. The second one was given help with rent.

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

Celebration of a New Ministry

After experiencing Rev. Sharron's Celebration of a New Ministry in January, St. Mary's has the opportunity to welcome our new neighbor. St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Bay City will celebrate the ministry of their new rector, the Rev. Jack Myers, on Saturday, March 30th, from 5-7:00 p.m. Please notify St. Mark's at saintmarks@sbcglobal.net if you plan to attend!



Camp Allen Events

Family Campout (April 26-27) is a one night family retreat full of Piney Woods, starry skies, and wilderness fun! Packages include equipment for tent setup, outdoor cooking skills for three classic campout meals, outdoor living skills workshop, guided hiking, kayaking and a nostalgic campfire with skits and smores.

Birds & Blooms (April 26-28) is for all nature and bird lovers! Enjoy the camp's 1,100 forested acres, attend expert led workshops and hike scenic trails with experienced guides. Presentations include: wildlife photography, Audubon presentations, life owl and hawk demonstrations, birding identifications, sunrise bird watching, and more.

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.

Summer Camp is filling up fast. If your child is planning on attending Camp Allen this summer, please register ASAP and let Dani know.



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.

- **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:

- **Marvin, Theata, and Jackie for providing the barbecue for our Parish Dinner.**
- **everyone who provided the side dishes, desserts, and drinks for the Parish Dinner.**
- **Marvin and Theata, Jennifer and Adam, and Jackie for providing meals for the Wednesday Christian Formation classes.**
- **Lou for folding the service bulletins.**
- **Colleen for providing canvas folding chairs for the youth room.**
- **Rev. Sharron, Jennifer B., AJ, and Dani for representing St. Mary's at the Diocesan Council.**
- **Karen for serving as Senior Warden and Marvin for serving as Clerk of the 2018 Vestry.**
- **Charlotte for serving as Senior Warden, Andrea for continuing to serve as Jr. Warden, and Gwynne for serving as Clerk of the 2019 Vestry.**

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

Dates to Remember

March 3 - Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Morning Prayer (9:00)
Vision and Mission Workshop
(9:30 am)

March 3 - 4 - Rev. Sharron is at
Camp Allen.

March 5 - DOK Meeting (9:30)

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

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

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

March 10 - Sunday Service - (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)

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

March 17 -Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

March 18 - Vestry meeting (4:00 pm)

March 20 - Parish Dinner (5:30 pm)

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

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

March 27 - Christian Formation (5:15)

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

March 31 - Brotherhood (7:30 am)
Sunday Service (9:00 am)
Hospitality (10:00 am)
Christian Formation (10:20 am)

March Birthdays

Marglet Arana - March 6

Ed Logue - March 9

Jackie Walker - March 17

Doris Grosvenor - March 20

Tommy Cantrell - March 22

Theata Miller - March 24

Braylee Schill - March 28

Maddie Lane - March 30

R.M. Blount - March 31

February Anniversaries

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.

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