



THE ANNUNCIATION ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Second Sunday in Advent

December 4, 2016

A Weekly Reflection

Slow Down! I say it a lot. My daughter, Lulu, talks so fast, half the time I can't understand what she is saying. Hunter runs inside, down the hall and out of sight before I can even utter this short phrase. I even shout it at the cars traveling too fast on my street. What is the purpose? I say it to aid in communication. I say it to keep my children safe. I say it to calm an upset child. Sometimes, I am given the quick "alright, alright," or blown off with a sigh of total annoyance. Sometimes, I am completely ignored; however, sometimes it works. A deep breath, a moment of stillness in my arms, even a smile can take an end-of-the-world moment and make it calm, more focused.

This time of year, as the days grow shorter, the air cooler and the outside gets ready to hibernate, I find myself wanting to slow down as well. Warm blankets, fires, and hot tea are the tools I use to help me step away from Amazon, Pinterest, and Facebook and into conversation with God. Some days are busy. That is life. When there is the moment to slow down, I embrace it. I am trying to focus on the season of Advent and not the four weeks before Christmas. I will most definitely partake in the holiday season. I am just trying to make it a little less crazy with a little more intention.

I think traditions are important. As a family, we will still go see Santa, make cookies, drive around looking at lights as we celebrate the season with friends and family. Maybe just not as much this year. Maybe this year we pick and choose more wisely to help us not lose sight of the moment. This Christmas I would like to introduce some new traditions - an advent wreath and an intentions calendar - that center around getting ready for the birth of Jesus. Over the next four weeks, we will use the following words as guides: hope, peace, joy, and love. From learning the spelling, to understanding the meaning, it will be nice to share each word with those we know as well as those we don't know.

I hope my family follows my lead. If one or two nights a week the dinner conversation is about giving and doing for others and not about the Elf or a new addition to a wish-list, I will call it a success. Baby steps ...

Rebecca Johnson

Nursery

We have nursery available for **infants through 4-year-olds** from 8:30 a.m. until 12 p.m. The nursery is located in the Preschool and Sunday School Building. Our nursery leader, Meg Zehmer, and Melissa Alicea will be happy to help you get your child settled into the nursery.

Worship bags

We provide worship bags that contain a coloring page based on the Gospel reading of the day. It also has a wonderful parent-focused message on the back to help you talk about the day's reading with your child. Worship bags are located in wood bins near the entrances to the church.

Sermons available

Find past sermons available in hard copy in the narthex of New St. Mary's, or visit stmarysgoochland.org/sermons to hear audio and download print versions.

Connect with us

We would love to learn more about you! If you are a visitor, please pick up a **welcome packet** from one of our ushers.

Would you like to write for us? Contact Ashley Cameron at acameron@stmarysgoochland.org to learn more.

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite One, *Little St. Mary's*

10 a.m. Sunday School, Confirmation Class and Adult Education, Sunday School and Education Buildings and New Parish Hall

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite Two, *New St. Mary's*

Noon Cookies and Coffee, *Café and New Parish Hall*

4 p.m. Middle School Youth Group, *AMF Shrader Lanes*

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www.stmarysgoochland.org

WELCOME! Whether it is your first Sunday at St. Mary's, or your 401st, we're glad that you're with us. Please feel free to introduce yourself to a greeter, usher, or a clergy member, and consider filling out an information form. We invite you to join us on future **Sundays** at 9 a.m. for Eucharist or 11 a.m. for Eucharist or Morning Prayer, on Wednesdays for **Noonday Prayer** at 12 p.m. in beautiful and quaint Little St. Mary's, for a **class** or **Bible study**, or for many of our other **fellowship** and **outreach** offerings. **Little St. Mary's** is also **open** Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. and available to you for prayer and reflection. See the back page to get a sense of what we have going on around St. Mary's.

HOLIDAY OUTREACH

St. Mary's has opportunities for you to be involved in giving back to our local community this Advent season. One is **the Giving Tree** which gives St. Mary's the opportunity to **provide Christmas for three families**, who range from a young couple with a baby, a mother and daughter, and an elderly women who lives alone, through Goochland Christmas Mother. **Please take one or more of the ornaments with the gift needs on them.** The gifts will be collected by **Sunday, December 11.** Another is the **Clothes Closet Drive for Goochland Free Clinic and Family Services.** St. Mary's is collecting gently used clothing items for infants through adults. A list of needed items is in the New Parish Hall and Café area and can be downloaded from the website. **The collection boxes will be set up in the New Parish Hall through Sunday, December 18.** For further information, or if you have questions, contact Ashley Cameron at acameron@stmarysgoochland.org.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT ST. MARY'S

Advent is the first season of the new church year, when we prepare for Christmas, the coming of the incarnate Christ into the world. Because this is a **special season of waiting and watching**, you will notice different hymns and prayers in our Sunday services, and we will celebrate Holy Eucharist at both services throughout Advent and Christmas. Some other highlights of Advent and Christmas at St. Mary's include:

- ❖ **Evening Prayer on Advent Wednesdays** (December 7, 14, and 21) at **5:45 p.m.** in Little St. Mary's.
- ❖ **Adult Forums on Advent Sundays in December** (December 4, 11, and 18) at 10 a.m. will focus on the **Advent gospels** and what they can reveal to us about the meaning of Christ coming into the world over 2,000 years ago – and now. Join Weezie Blanchard and Bob Hetherington for this opportunity to deepen your understanding of Advent and enrich your faith.
- ❖ **Mary at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.** Rector (and long ago VMFA docent) Weezie Blanchard continues **her seasonal series** of looking for the holy in the outstanding collections of the VMFA. This Advent, we'll focus on Mary and **how artists have evoked the presence of the holy through her.** We'll meet in the lobby on **Thursday, December 8 at 10 a.m.,** and an **optional lunch at the VMFA restaurant** Amuse will follow our tour. **To sign up,** please contact Lori Smiley at lsmiley@stmarysgoochland.org or 784-5678.
- ❖ **Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 18** at **5:30 p.m.** in New St. Mary's. Following in the footsteps of the successful spring and fall Evensongs, this year's Lessons and Carols will take place at 5:30 p.m. Listen to and sing along with St. Mary's Choir for a **festive introduction to the Christmas season** and its beautiful music.

Please note the changes in the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day schedule this year:

- ❖ **Christmas Eve services on Saturday, December 24,** will include **Children's Lessons and Carols at 4 p.m. in** New St. Mary's, **Holy Eucharist Rite Two with St. Mary's Choir at 7 p.m. in** New St. Mary's, and **Holy Eucharist Rite One with string quartet at 11 p.m. in** Little St. Mary's.
- ❖ The **Christmas Day** service will be **Holy Eucharist Rite One at 10 a.m. in** Little St. Mary's.

In addition to services and events at St. Mary's, we encourage you to incorporate daily and week spiritual practices at home during this season of Advent:

- ❖ **Purchase a book relating to Advent** for you and/or your children. Prices range from \$10-20. Please place cash or check made out to "St. Mary's Episcopal Church" in the mason jar.
- ❖ **Take time to explore resources on St. Mary's website, www.stmarysgoochland.org/advent-resources.** The list includes online devotionals, videos, crafts and much more.

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

Vision team to visit Quito, Ecuador! St. Mary's is looking for a few folks to visit an Episcopal missionary and an organization, Quito Quest, to explore mission opportunities and begin to develop a relationship with an Episcopal community in Ecuador. **Quito Quest is a short term ministry which exists to expose youth, adults and families to missions, ministry, and the world.** The dates are **February 14-20, 2017**. The cost is \$500 plus airfare. Please contact Ashley Cameron at acameron@stmarysgoochland.org if you are interested in delving deeper into mission. **The hope is to have a team of four to five adults committed by the middle of December.**

High School Summer Mission Trip: This summer from **July 15-22, 2017 high school students** from St. Mary's will be headed to the **Rosebud Sioux Reservation in south-central South Dakota**, the home of the Sicangu Lakota Oyate (The Burnt Thigh Nation). They will be doing a combination of work including **summer camp activities and service projects**. Leading up to trip, the **high school students will be doing fundraisers** and planning the details of our week there. If you would like more details, please contact Matt Rawls at mrawls@stmarysgoochland.org.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Middle School Bowling this afternoon! The Middle School Youth Group (grades 6-8) will be bowling on today from **4:00-5:30 p.m.!** We'll be **meeting at AMF Shrader Lanes**, with unlimited bowling for that hour and a half. **Cost is \$15 per person** (but don't let cost stop you from joining). Please let Matt Rawls at mrawls@stmarysgoochland.org know if you will be attending or if you have any questions.

The beloved St. Mary's tradition of **Children's Lessons and Carols** will take place at **4 p.m. on Saturday, December 24**. There will be a **rehearsal on Thursday, December 22 at 9:30 a.m.** for all children who are participating in the pageant. St. Mary's is looking for volunteers to lead and shepherd participants throughout the pageant. Please contact Amelia McDaniel at amcdaniel@stmarysgoochland.org to sign up.

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

Bake Sale today! Today, St. Mary's Episcopal School will host a **bake sale** between and after the 9 and 11 a.m. church services in **Dover Lounge**. Pick up some **cookies, pies, brownies, cakes, and breads** for your holiday needs. Please **pay by cash or check** made out to "St. Mary's Episcopal School".

VESTRY NOMINATIONS

Each year at our **Annual Meeting** on the last Sunday in January, four members of the Vestry complete their three-year terms of service on the 12-member Vestry, and **four new Vestry members are elected**. At St. Mary's, the **Vestry Nominating Committee**, which is appointed by the Vestry and includes the four outgoing Vestry members (Scott Barton, Jane duFrane, Steve Guza, and Brantley Holmes) and four at-large members, meets to consider and propose qualified nominees. This year's annual meeting will take place on January 29, 2017. **If you would like to nominate someone**, please contact Jane duFrane at jane.dufrane@highwoods.com.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Welcome special guests today! Today at the **11 a.m. service**, St. Mary's welcomes parishioners from **St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Church Hill**. Our guests will invite St. Mary's to **attend a community dinner** on Thursday, December 15 at 6:30 p.m. to learn more about St. Peter's neighborhood mission, as well as efforts to make St. Peter's more handicap accessible. **St. Mary's and St. Peter's share similar stories** because of their long histories as mission churches, and both parishes are now in a time of growth and transition. We look forward to continuing conversation.

This Week at St. Mary's

Sunday, December 4, Second Sunday of Advent

Holy Eucharist Rite One, 9 a.m., *Little St. Mary's*
Sunday School, Confirmation Class and Adult
Education, 10 a.m., *Sunday School and Education*
Buildings and New Parish Hall

Holy Eucharist Rite Two, 11 a.m., *New St. Mary's*
Cake and Coffee, 12 p.m., *Café and New Parish Hall*

Middle School Youth Group, 4 p.m., Bowling

Monday, December 5

Pastoral Care Team 1, 10 a.m., *Rector's Study*

Tuesday, December 6

Fellowship Committee, 9 a.m., *Old Parish Hall*

Staff Meeting, 2 p.m., *Rector's Study*

Wednesday, December 7

Lectionary Bible Study, 10 a.m., *Education Building*
Library

Noonday Prayer, 12 p.m., *Little St. Mary's*

Children's Choir, 5 p.m., *Choir Suite*

Evening Prayer, 5:45 p.m., *Little St. Mary's*

Thursday, December 8

Outreach Committee, 9 a.m., *Old Parish Hall*

Mary at the VMFA with Weezie, 10 a.m. at *Virginia*
Museum of Fine Arts

Adult Choir, 7:30 p.m., *Choir Suite*

Saturday, December 10

A.A., 10 a.m., *Education Building Classroom*

Sunday, December 11, Third Sunday of Advent

Holy Eucharist Rite One, 9 a.m., *Little St. Mary's*

Parish Breakfast, 9:30 a.m., *New Parish Hall*

Sunday School, Confirmation Class and Adult
Education, 10 a.m., *Sunday School and Education*
Buildings and New Parish Hall

Holy Eucharist Rite Two, 11 a.m., *New St. Mary's*

Cookies and Coffee, 12 p.m., *Café and New Parish Hall*

High School Youth Group

Coming Up

Tuesday, December 13

Middle School Girls' Cooking Class, 4:30 p.m., *Kitchen*

Wednesday, December 14

Seniors Lunch, 12:15 p.m., *New Parish Hall*

Parish Supper, 5:30 p.m., *New Parish Hall*

Evening Prayer, 5:45 p.m., *Little St. Mary's*

Sunday, December 18, Fourth Sunday in Advent

Lessons and Carols, 5:30 p.m., *New St. Mary's*

Coming Soon

Thursday, December 22

Children's Lessons and Carols Rehearsal, 9:30 a.m.,
New St. Mary's

CLERGY, STAFF, AND VESTRY

Gersain Agudelo, *Assistant Sexton*

Gina Alexander, *Parish Administrator*

galexander@stmarysgoochland.org

Melissa Alicea, *Nursery Assistant*

Adam Bailey, *Children's Choir Director*

Louise Browner Blanchard, *Rector*

wblanchard@stmarysgoochland.org

Ashley Cameron, *Director of Communications and Parish Life*

acameron@stmarysgoochland.org

Tammy Click, *Accountant*

W. Dwight Graham, *Organist and Choirmaster*

Robert G. Hetherington, *Priest Associate*

Amelia McDaniel, *Director of Children's Ministries*

amcdaniel@stmarysgoochland.org

Paul Pace, *Sexton*

Matt Rawls, *Director of Youth Ministries*

mrawls@stmarysgoochland.org

Lori Smiley, *Assistant to the Clergy*

lsmiley@stmarysgoochland.org

Meg Zehmer, *Nursery Director*

Susan Rawls, *Director of St. Mary's Episcopal School*

Vestry Members:

Al Rider, *Senior Warden*

Jane duFrane, *Junior Warden*

Bill Gooch, *Treasurer*

Charmaine Trice, *Register*

Scott Barton, Steve Guza, Brantley Holmes, Fay Lohr,

Tracey Ragsdale, Betsy Rawles, Bruin Richardson,

David Rose, and Tom Slater

Saturday, December 24, Christmas Eve

Children's Lessons and Carols, 4 p.m., *New St. Mary's*

Holy Eucharist Rite Two, 7 p.m., *New St. Mary's with*
St. Mary's Choir

Holy Eucharist Rite One with string quartet, 11 p.m.,
Little St. Mary's

Sunday, December 25, Christmas Day

Holy Eucharist Rite One, 10 a.m., *Little St. Mary's*

Sunday, January 1, New Year's Day

Holy Eucharist Rite Two, 10 a.m. *New St. Mary's*

ADVENT PRAYER FOR ST. MARY'S

Dear God, as we start another Advent season, a season of new beginnings, help us to be open to your spirit in ways we can only imagine. Empower us to be a strong community of faith so we may be witnesses of your love to each other and the world. Prepare us for the great things which lie ahead. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.