



# THE ANNUNCIATION

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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**The Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**December 24, 2017**

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## 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 a welcome card**. 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, 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 is available to you for prayer and reflection. Flip the page over to get a sense of what we have going on around St. Mary's.

## Nursery

Our nursery is available for infants through 4-year-olds from 9:45 a.m. until 11:15 a.m. The nursery is located in the Sunday School Building. Nursery Director Meg Zehmer and Nursery Assistant Cassie Vestal 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. They are in the front of Little St. Mary's and in the wood bins near the entrances to New St. Mary's.

## Rector Search Committee

The Rector Search Committee (Chair Tracey Ragsdale, Brantley Holmes, Andy Howlett, Michelle Lewis, Kim O'Shea, Nancy Reed, Al Rider, Susie Salsitz, Carrie Schaeffer, Armistead Talman, Joan Wilkins, and Russell Wyatt) invites you to share comments, concerns, recommendations and questions. Please email [stms.rectorsearch@gmail.com](mailto:stms.rectorsearch@gmail.com).

## Connect with us

We would love to learn more about you! If you are a visitor, please pick up a **welcome card** from one of our ushers or in the back of a pew.

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*Would you like to write for us? Contact Ashley Cameron at [acameron@stmarysgoochland.org](mailto:acameron@stmarysgoochland.org)*

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## TODAY'S SCHEDULE

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

**11 a.m.** Cookies and Coffee, *Café and New Parish Hall*

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

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

**11 p.m.** Holy Eucharist Rite One, *Little St. Mary's*

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*Do you receive email from us?*

Visit [stmarysgoochland.org/communications](http://stmarysgoochland.org/communications) to sign up for weekly updates and news from us.

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## A WEEKLY REFLECTION

I love nativities. I love seeing how different sets depict the Christmas story in different ways. Setting up my nativities is my favorite part of decorating for the holidays. This year I put out three nativities at home.

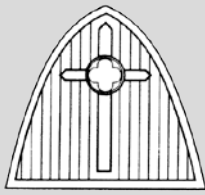
One is a traditional set that I got as a Christmas present a number of years ago. The ceramic figures are instantly recognizable. The second set is made of cut-out wooden figures with beautiful illustrations of the characters pasted on the front. It has a storybook quality to it that I love. The third set is entirely knitted. The characters have such a splendidly simple quality that appeals to me. The sight of each of my nativities goes a long way toward getting my heart ready for Christmas.

When I worked as a Children's Minister in Memphis we had an incredibly eclectic nativity set that we used in our Children's Chapel. There was an Episcopal bookshop in town that stocked nativities from around the world. And whenever sets would have damaged pieces, the manager would sell us the remaining pieces of the set at a heavy discount. So we had accumulated shepherds and angels and baby Jesuses from far-flung corners of the globe. None of them matched. But the kids didn't care. Each Sunday in the seasons of Advent and Christmas the children were invited to choose figures to populate our nativity. The result would be a mish-mash of size and style that was always perfect in its eccentricity.

Those mish-mash nativities remain my favorites. Because to me they represent what that gathering in the stable is all about. Teenage parents huddled in a barn, driven from their home by the ruling empire. Misfits and cast-offs, field laborers and the heavenly host, all drawn to the manger, hungering to bear witness to God in the world. A rag-tag collection of animals. It's a perfectly imperfect scene.

And it perfectly encapsulates Jesus' life and ministry. He gathers us around him in all our glorious imperfection and loves us perfectly, not in spite of our imperfections but because of them.

*Andrew Moore*



**ST. MARY'S**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

12291 River Road, Richmond, VA 23238  
(804) 784-5678  
[www.stmarysgoochland.org](http://www.stmarysgoochland.org)

| Growing in Faith |  
| Building Community |  
| Giving Joyfully |

**CLERGY, STAFF, AND VESTRY**

**Gersain Agudelo**, *Assistant Sexton*  
**Elizabeth Baker**, *Administrative Assistant*  
[ebaker@stmarysgoochland.org](mailto:ebaker@stmarysgoochland.org)  
**Adam Bailey**, *Children's Choir Director*  
**Louise Browner Blanchard**, *Rector*  
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**Clarence Dixon**, *Assistant Sexton*  
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**Deedi Trabosh**, *Accountant*  
**Cassie Vestal**, *Nursery Assistant*  
**Meg Zehmer**, *Nursery Director*  
**Susan Rawls**, *Director of St. Mary's Episcopal School*  
**Vestry Members:**  
**Al Rider**, *Senior Warden*  
**Tracey Ragsdale**, *Junior Warden*  
**Joe Cheely**, *Treasurer*  
**Charmaine Trice**, *Register*  
**Karen Huennekens, Fay Lohr, Kim O'Shea, Doug Pera, Betsy Rawles, Bruin Richardson, David Rose, Tom Slater, and Russell Wyatt**

**WORSHIP**

**Christmas Day service on Monday, December 25:**

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

**New Year's Eve service on Sunday, December 31:**

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

Save the date for **Rector Weezie Blanchard's last Sunday on January 7, 2018**. Join us for a **service of Holy Baptism and Holy Eucharist Rite Two at 10 a.m.** in New St. Mary's. Following the service, **come celebrate Weezie's ministry** and help send her off **with a reception in the New Parish Hall**.

**SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND ADULT EDUCATION**

Rector (and long ago VMFA docent) **Weezie Blanchard completes her seasonal series** of looking for the holy in the outstanding **collections of the VMFA**. On **Thursday, January 4, 2018 at 10 a.m.** we'll focus on Epiphany and how it is represented. **An optional lunch at the VMFA restaurant Amuse** will follow our tour. To sign up, please contact Elizabeth Baker at [ebaker@stmarysgoochland.org](mailto:ebaker@stmarysgoochland.org) or call (804) 784-5678.

**Spiritual practice for men resumes in 2018**. Join Bob Hetherington for one hour to deepen your faith in the Old Parish Hall beginning **Tuesday, January 9, 2018 at 7:30 a.m. and continuing through Lent**.

**This Week at St. Mary's**

**Monday, December 25, Christmas Day**

*Church Office Closed*

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

**Tuesday, December 26**

*Church Office Closed*

**Wednesday, December 27**

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

**Saturday, December 30**

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

**Sunday, December 31, First Sunday after Christmas**

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

**Coming Up**

**Monday, January 1**

*Church Office Closed*

**Wednesday, January 3**

St. Peter's Bible Study and Food Distribution, 8:30 a.m., *St. Peter's Episcopal Church*

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

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

**Thursday, January 4**

Epiphany at the VMFA, 10 a.m., *Virginia Museum of Fine Arts*

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

**Sunday, January 7, Rector Weezie Blanchard's Last Sunday**

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