

THE ANNUNCIATION

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A joyous re-telling of the Birth of Jesus at the Christmas Eve Pageant with over 70 kids participating!



*Mary had a baby (O Lord),
Mary had a baby (O My Lord), Mary had a baby (O Lord) The*

people keep coming but the train has gone. (Bruce Cockburn)

These are words of a classic spiritual. Historian John Lovell, Jr. states that “the genius of those who created over 6,000 existing African American spirituals was their ability to weave together complex ideas and make them appear simple.”

The questions and responses in this spiritual are certainly simple. Mary had a baby as the focal point is followed by the practicalities of: Where did she lay him? She laid him in a manger. What did she name

him? She named him King Jesus. Who came to see him? Shepherds came to see him.

The simple statement of the event masks the complexity of how the baby was conceived, of Joseph’s shame over Mary’s pregnancy, and of the danger surrounding Jesus’ birth in a barn and later by Herod’s threat to exterminate newborn baby boys causing Joseph and Mary to flee to Egypt.

The most complex issue of all has to be how this baby represented any hope among an impoverished and oppressed people during the 1800s. But it did. It can be heard in each refrain of “O My Lord” which represented a deep spiritual understanding of God with them in

Welcome!

Welcome to St. Mary’s Episcopal Church - we are so glad that you are here! Since the 1870s, God has gathered a beloved community of Jesus to worship and serve here, where all are welcomed. We are committed to provide a holy place for worship, Christian Formation for all ages that is compelling and life-giving, opportunities to reach out in love for those in need, and an enthusiastic hope that all who call St. Mary’s their spiritual home can participate in every area of our common life in Christ. The spirit of St. Mary’s is grounded in a deep sense of gratitude for God’s goodness and love. We give thanks for you and for your life, and we are grateful to God for the opportunity to welcome you!

Weekly reflection continues...

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist in New St. Mary's

11 a.m. Cookies and Coffee in the Cafe



This Week at St. Mary's

Sunday, December 29

Holy Eucharist, 10 a.m., *New St. Mary's*
Cookies and Coffee, 11 a.m., *Café*

Tuesday, December 31 - Wednesday, January 1

Church Office Closed

Thursday, January 2

Staff Meeting, 10 a.m., *Rector's Study*
Centering Prayer, 11 a.m., *Narthex*

Friday, January 3

Pastoral Care Team, 10 a.m., *Library*

Saturday, January 4

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

Sunday, January 5

Holy Eucharist, 9 a.m., *Little St. Mary's*
Bible Study: Gospel of Matthew, 10 a.m.,
Library

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

Tuesday, January 7

Men's Spiritual Practice, 7:30 a.m., *Parish Office*

Wednesday, January 8

Lectionary Bible Study, 10 a.m., *Library*
Holy Eucharist with Prayers for Healing, 12 p.m., *Little St. Mary's*

Thursday, January 9

Centering Prayer, 11 a.m., *Narthex*

Saturday, January 11

Enneagram Workshop with Mimi Weaver,
9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., *Parish Office*



Contact Us

New Here? Be sure to fill out a welcome card located in the pews and in the narthex. Place it in the offering plate or bring it to an usher or clergy to learn more about the life and ministry of St. Mary's.

Need to Reach Someone? Please call the Church Office at (804) 784-5678. Or visit www.stmarysgoochland.org/staff to find contact information.

Want to Learn More? Please visit St. Mary's website for the most up to date information: www.stmarysgoochland.org

Weekly reflection continued...

the midst of challenge and misery. It's a response of gratitude, reverence, and awe not only for the miracle of birth and for the eventual freedom for all people that this birth represented.

And what about that train that's mentioned so many times in the spiritual. What did that represent? During the 1800s, trains were emerging as a new method of transportation. For many people, trains represented a new way of connecting to people and places. For African Americans, they represented an eventual way out - to freedom. The train may have gone as the spiritual says, but what's understood is that because of the nature of trains, there'll be another one comin'.

Mary had a baby. The simplicity of the event was that it was like any other birth in changing the lives of Mary and Joseph. The complexity of it was that it was like no other birth in changing the lives of us all. MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Eleanor Wellford

REGISTER FOR YOUTH SKI TRIP

Friday, January 24 - Sunday, January 26, 2020

St. Mary's youth are taking a weekend ski trip to Massanutten! Whether you are an expert skier/snowboarder or you enjoy drinking hot chocolate in the ski lodge, we hope that you will join us for this weekend of fun. We will leave St. Mary's at 5 p.m. on Friday, January 24 and will return Sunday, January 26 at 1 p.m. Learn more and register today by emailing Emily Bruch at ebruch@stmarysgoochland.org.

BIBLE STUDY: GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Sunday, January 5, 2020, 10 a.m., Library

Now that we have started a new liturgical year, we will be hearing more and more from the Gospel of Matthew. So, have you ever been interested in diving deeper into Matthew's Gospel? Or wanted to have deeper understanding of the background, history, geography, and culture of the context in which the Gospel story takes place? Join Jim Evans for a 12-week Bible Study on Sundays at 10 a.m. beginning on Sunday, January 5. Pick up a copy of the "Life Application Bible Studies" in the Parish Office.

ENNEAGRAM WORKSHOP WITH MIMI WEAVER

Saturday, January 11, 2020, 9:30 a.m., Parish Hall

As part of our overarching theme of Connectedness, we are excited to offer a workshop exploring an awareness of self which will help us understand our connections to others and to God. The Enneagram is a model of the human psyche principally understood and taught as nine interconnected personality types. Identifying which personality type you are and what that means for the relationships in your life is a fascinating process of self-discovery that will lead to spiritual growth. Mimi Weaver is a seasoned retreat facilitator and spiritual director, and owns a life coaching practice. Join her at St. Mary's on Saturday, January 11 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. as she guides you through understanding who you really are, the gifts you have, and how to use those gifts in a life-giving manner. The cost is \$10 and please call the church office at (804) 784-5678 to reserve a space.



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ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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