

THE ANNUNCIATION

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The Fellowship Committee was back in the kitchen last Wednesday cooking and packing up another delicious Take Home Supper.



I like looking at stars; I always have. When there is something really important that I need to talk to God about, I will go out at night and look

up at the stars and say what I have to say. It's just me and God. And I know God is everywhere and always available and speaks in many ways, especially at church when David, Eleanor, Amelia, or Kilpy are preaching and especially at communion. But there is something about looking up at the stars that brings me close to God, and it feels like God is close to me.

I think this goes back to an early childhood experience when my grandmother took me outside to sit in her lap one summer evening and look at the night sky full of stars. A great joy came over me and it seemed the stars were looking back at us, that they were alive, that the whole universe was alive and somehow personal, and that this person was good; really good and loving. I knew I was loved by this God

and safe in His presence. Looking back I believe a north star was planted in my young heart that night, a homing signal that has been unconsciously calling and guiding me ever since. This is what God feels like to me, and I move toward people and places that resonate with this feeling and away from what does not.

I don't know what the wise men saw in the night sky that made them ride across a desert to pay homage to a child born in a stable. But I get that God can speak through stars. Think of God calling Abraham out to look at the night sky and promising him that he would have descendants as numerous as those stars. Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:6). The beginning of the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic faiths can be traced back to that moment.

If you are reading this, I am pretty sure God has planted a homing signal in you, too. There is a star that is calling you. What is it? Where is it leading you?

Harrison Higgins

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 providing 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!



Coming Up at St. Mary's

Sunday, January 23

Holy Eucharist, 9 a.m., *New St. Mary's*
Morning Prayer, 11 a.m., *New St. Mary's*

Tuesday, January 25

Men's Spiritual Practice, 8 a.m., *via ZOOM*
Staff Meeting, 10 a.m., *Parish Offices*
Vestry Meeting, 5 p.m., *Parish Hall*

Wednesday, January 26

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

Thursday, January 20

Women's Spiritual Practice, 8 a.m., *via ZOOM*
Outreach Committee, 5:30 p.m., *TBA*
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m., *Choir Suite*

Sunday, January 30

Holy Eucharist, 9 a.m., *New St. Mary's*
Annual Parish Meeting, 10 a.m., *New St. Mary's*
Holy Eucharist, 11 a.m., *New St. Mary's*

CLERGY AND STAFF

Ashley Cameron, *Director of Communications and Parish Life*
Lauren Clay, *Office Administrator*
Harrison Higgins, *Deacon Associate*
David H. May, *Rector*
Amelia McDaniel, *Lay Associate for Christian Formation*
The Rev. John E. Miller, Ph.D., *Rector Emeritus*
Paul Pace, *Sexton*
Kilpy Singer, *Director of Youth Ministries*
Elizabeth Starling, *Executive Director, Church Operations*
Ryan Tibbetts, *Director of Music*
Eleanor Wellford, *Priest Associate*
Tyrell Wilkins, *Assistant Sexton*

VESTRY

Harry Baldwin, *Senior Warden*; Missy Roberts, *Junior Warden*; Joe Cheely, *Treasurer*; Fran Jones, *Register*; Jill Aveson, Ashley Barlow, Sam Bruce, Owen Conway, Wayne Dementi, Christy Gurkin, Robin Lind, Jesse McCoy, Ann Ramsey, and Danny Williams.



Contact Us

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

NEED YOU TO JOIN THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Sunday, January 30 at 10 a.m. in New St. Mary's

The Annual Parish Meeting and Vestry of St. Mary's Church, Dover Parish, will be held at 10 a.m. on Sunday, January 30, 2022 in New St. Mary's. We will livestream the meeting on Facebook. At the Annual Parish Meeting we will...

- Celebrate the mission and ministry of St. Mary's Church over this past year with a colorful printed report as we look ahead to the new year.
- Elect four new members to the parish Vestry (Jeff Allende, Ros Bowers, Linda Hyslop and Barbara Tavenner) and thank the outgoing Vestry class (Harry Baldwin, Christy Gurkin, Ann Ramsey and Danny Williams) for their faithful and fruitful ministry over these past three years.
- Hear reports from the Senior Warden (Harry Baldwin), our Parish Treasurer (Joe Cheely) and Rector.

Our Annual Parish Meeting requires a quorum of members to elect our new Vestry members; for us that is about 150 people. We want to encourage you to please plan to be there either in person or by joining us on-line. Your attendance (either in person or on-line) is a crucial part of moving ahead in this new year for the mission and ministry of Christ at St. Mary's Church! Regular services will continue at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. on Sunday, January 30.

INQUIRERS CLASS FOR INQUIRING PEOPLE

Are you interested? Please sign up soon.

David is inquiring about who would be interested in an Inquirers Class. This adult class offering is in anticipation of Bishop Jennifer Brooke-Davidson's visit to St. Mary's on Sunday, May 8. An Inquirers Class is especially appropriate if...

- ...you are new to the Episcopal Church
- ...you are new to St. Mary's Church
- ...you are newly back to church after some time away
- ...you are new to attending church period
- ...you aren't new to the Episcopal Church, St. Mary's, or church in general but would love to have the opportunity to ask questions about the Christian faith in general and the Episcopal Church in particular in the company of other inquirers.

The class will meet six times during the late winter and spring. Day and time to be determined by those who are interested. If you would like to participate, please sign up with David May via dmay@stmarysgoochland.org or call the Church Office.

UPDATES ON CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

We are encouraged to see the number of COVID cases are declining in our area, although the transmission rates remain high. During this time, we continue to pause Sunday School activities and nursery. But Children's Chapel continues during the 11 a.m. service and masks are required for all in attendance. Moving forward, our plan is to regather our Sunday School classes during Lent which begins on Wednesday, March 2. Our plan is to offer programming for children at the 10 a.m. hour on Sunday, March 6. If the temperature is above 55 degrees and the weather is clear we will hold Sunday School outdoors. If the weather is cold or rainy we will gather indoors wearing masks. We hold all our families close in prayer and look forward to gathering together again.



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ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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