

# THE ANNUNCIATION

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*Making unleavened bread in Sunday school*



**Welcome!**



It's timely, really, that I was asked to write this reflection. I have been doing a lot of just that, reflecting on a season of struggle that has left me forever changed.

The Bible is full of suffering. I have often found comfort in the Psalms, reading the words of the psalmists asking for help during times of great struggle and heartache. Even Jesus himself cried out to God in the Garden of Gethsemane, "he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me." Matthew 26:39

In July of 2022, I began experiencing a slew of health issues, the most persistent being daily, unexplained dizziness. After an exhausting year and a half of doctor's appointments, running tests, seeing specialists, and following specific diets with no relief, I stopped trying to figure it out. Instead, I opened my control-hungry hands and released it to the Lord. I was quite literally taken to my knees, needing God more than ever before.

Here I sit on the other side of suffering, healed and healthy, and I have felt a real pull to reflect on that season of my life - to mark it in some significant way. While I am of course relieved to see that chapter pass, a part of me wants to hold on to

*Weekly reflection continues...*

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!

## TODAY'S SCHEDULE

**9 a.m.** Holy Eucharist in Little St. Mary's

**10 a.m.** Adult Forum in the Parish Hall

**10 a.m.** Sunday School in the Block Room

**11 a.m.** Holy Eucharist in New St. Mary's

**12 p.m.** Cookies and coffee in the Parish Hall

**5 p.m.** Worship with Stations of the Cross and Potluck Supper in New St. Mary's & the Parish Hall

it. I never want to forget how, in the depths of fear and suffering, God was there. He heard my cries, he gave me hope, and he ignited a deep faith that had laid dormant for years. Suddenly, a weekly bible study was on my calendar and a small prayer group had formed. My days began with quiet times and ended with prayer - lots of it. I found myself, finally, in church. I sat in nearly every pew in Richmond looking for a place that felt right. One summer Sunday morning, leaving St. Mary's, I knew the search was over. It felt familiar and easy, and laid back in all the best ways. Out of desperation, I turned to God, and though healing took time, the blessings that came while waiting healed me in ways I hadn't even known to ask for.

What I have found while reflecting on perhaps the most challenging chapter of my life is the abundant blessings that are woven into the hardest seasons. It is there, on your knees, that the Lord reveals himself in ways you may miss during the day-to-day coasting of uncomplicated life. Suffering changes us, it stays with us. Even Jesus still wears wounds on his hands.

It's hard to believe I would ever be thankful for a time I prayed desperately to end, but I am, believe it or not, grateful for the suffering. For the places and people it led me to, for how it forever shaped my faith, and for how it will impact every chapter to come. Seasons change, suffering ends, but the blessings knit throughout the struggle remain. May this be a reminder that whatever you are going through, he hears you, he is working, and this won't last forever. The blessings, however - they will.

Stephie Meadows

## ONE SMALL STEP NOW REGISTERING

St. Mary's and StoryCorps invite you to participate in a 40-minute facilitated conversation with a stranger who holds different political views. The purpose of the One Small Step conversation is not to debate politics, but to share experiences, learn more about who we are as people and recognize our common humanity. It is an opportunity to live out Jesus's call to love our neighbors and begin to heal our nation's divisions. St. Mary's is proud to be one of the first faith communities in Richmond to host a One Small Step event, which will be open to parishioners and the surrounding community.

**ONE  
small  
STEP  
Richmond**

Please take five minutes to complete your registration by scanning the QR code below. Your registration must be completed by Sunday, March 24. StoryCorps staff will match you with a conversation partner and will contact you to schedule your conversation during a convenient time on April 25, 26, or 27. The conversations are recorded, and if both participants agree, the material will be archived at the Library of Congress. Contact Allison Dunaway at [allison.dunaway@gmail.com](mailto:allison.dunaway@gmail.com) with questions.



## Ministry Highlight

### PALM CROSS FOLDING

Everyone can be a part of our worship ministry this season! Join us this Friday, March 22, to fold palm crosses for the Palm Sunday service. No experience needed; it's an easy skill to learn! We will be at it beginning at 10 a.m. until about noon, so drop in as you are able and enjoy chatting with others while you work.

## HOLY WEEK AT ST. MARY'S

March 28 - 6 p.m.  
Maundy Thursday service

March 29 - 12 & 6 p.m.  
Good Friday service

March 30 - 7 p.m.  
Holy Saturday Easter Vigil

March 31 - 9 & 11 a.m.  
Easter Eucharist & Baptisms





**ADULT FORUM TODAY**

Today at 10 a.m. in the Parish Hall

David May will speak to the parish this morning, rather than Elnora Allen as previously scheduled.

**EVENING WORSHIP AND POTLUCK SUPPER**

Today at 5 p.m. in New St. Mary's and the Parish Hall

Join us this afternoon for a Stations of the Cross service led by our youth, followed by a St. Patrick's Day-themed potluck featuring baked potatoes. (It's earlier this month due to Holy Week.)

**THIS WEEK: LUNCH & LEARN**

Thursday, March 21, 12 p.m. in the Parish Hall

Do you have a child or grandchild in college? Are you interested in hearing about spiritual life on campuses these days? Join us at our next Lunch & Learn on Thursday, March 21, at noon in the parish hall.

David May will interview the Rev. Dr. Craig Kocher, university chaplain and Jessie Ball duPont Chair of the Chaplaincy at the University of Richmond. They will discuss the current climate of religious life on campus, the challenges young people face in today's world, and the spiritual support systems in place to help navigate these challenges.



On the UR staff since 2009, Dr. Kocher also teaches in the Jepson School of Leadership Studies. He previously held similar positions at Duke University and Davidson College.

**PURCHASE WATER FILTERS FOR KENYA**

In conjunction with the St. Mary's children who are collecting money in their mite boxes for water filters to support Hope to Others, we wanted to give everyone the opportunity to help the community of Motoseit outside of Kitale, Kenya. When Education=Hope students and their families have clean water via home filters, they can attend school without their education being interrupted by water-borne illnesses such as dysentery, cholera, and typhoid.

One water filter costs \$50 and will last at least three years. Use this QR code or mail a check to the church office to ensure a family has clean water in their home, a luxury we are able to take for granted. Money collected from our Lenten supper and speaker series is also designated for this good work. Thank you!



**SUNDAYS AT ST. MARY'S**

**WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

- 9 a.m. Holy Eucharist in Little St. Mary's
- 10 a.m. Sunday School & Adult Forum
- 11 a.m. Holy Eucharist or Morning Prayer in New St. Mary's\*

\*We have first, third, and fifth Sunday Holy Eucharist at both services. Second and fourth Sundays will have Morning Prayer, except during Advent, Lent, and Easter.

**NURSERY**

Nursery is offered for infants to four-year-olds every Sunday from 8:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. As a part of nursery time, the toddlers will hear a Bible story, sing, and play games.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Sunday School is offered for four-year-olds to 5th graders at 10 a.m. Each week the children learn the stories of the Bible through singing and storytelling. Sunday School for 6th-12th graders meets in the youth lounge at 10 a.m.

**ADULT FORUM**

Adult Forum gathers on Sundays in the Parish Hall during the 10 o'clock hour. All adults are welcome!

**CHILDREN'S CHAPEL**

During the 11 a.m. service, children (age four to 5th grade) are invited to come forward during the Gospel hymn and go to the Block Room together. There, they hear the Gospel story, talk about it, and sing together. They return to the service during the passing of the peace.

**OCCURRING WEEKLY**

**MEN'S SPIRITUAL PRACTICE**

Tuesdays at 8 a.m. via Zoom

**LECTIONARY BIBLE STUDY**

Wednesdays at 10 a.m. in the Library and via Zoom

**HOLY EUCHARIST WITH PRAYERS FOR HEALING**

Wednesdays at 12 p.m. in Little St. Mary's

**CENTERING PRAYER**

Thursdays at 11 a.m. in the Narthex

**NEW BEGINNINGS**

Saturdays at 10 a.m. in the Education Building (open A.A. meeting)

\*Events are subject to change. Please visit [www.stmarysgoochland.org](http://www.stmarysgoochland.org) for updates.

Do you receive email from us?

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





## This Week at St. Mary's

### Sunday, March 17

Holy Eucharist, 9 a.m., *Little St. Mary's*  
 Adult Forum, 10 a.m., *Parish Hall*  
 Sunday School, 10 a.m., *Block Room*  
 Holy Eucharist, 11 a.m., *New St. Mary's*  
 Cookies and coffee, 12 p.m., *Parish Hall*  
 Worship with Stations of the Cross & Potluck  
 Supper, 5 p.m., *New St. Mary's and Parish Hall*

### Tuesday, March 19

Men's Spiritual Practice, 8 a.m., *via Zoom*  
 Staff meeting, 10 a.m., *Church office*  
 Book Group, 1:30 p.m., *Education Building*  
 Pastoral Care Team Leaders Meeting, 3 p.m.,  
*Library*

### Wednesday, March 20

Lectionary Bible Study, 10 a.m., *Library*  
 Holy Eucharist with Prayers for Healing, 12  
 p.m., *Little St. Mary's*  
 Pastoral Care Team #3, 5 p.m., *Library*

### Thursday, March 21

Centering Prayer, 11 a.m., *Narthex*  
 Lunch & Learn, 12 p.m., *Parish Hall*  
 Outreach committee, 4 p.m., *Church office*  
 Sacred Ground, 5:30 p.m., *Education Building*  
 Choir rehearsal, 7:30 p.m., *Choir Suite*

### Friday, March 22

Palm cross folding, 10 a.m., *Parish Hall*

### Saturday, March 23

New Beginnings AA, 8:30 a.m., *Education  
 Building*

### Sunday, March 24

#### *Palm Sunday*

Holy Eucharist, 9 a.m., *Little St. Mary's*  
 Sunday School, 10 a.m., *Block Room*  
 Holy Eucharist, 11 a.m., *New St. Mary's*  
 Cookies and coffee, 12 p.m., *Parish Hall*



## 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](http://www.stmarysgoochland.org/staff) to find contact information.

## A PART OF OUR STORY...



## NEW TO ST. MARY'S?



We're so glad you're here!  
**Scan the code** or visit [stmarysgoochland.org/welcome](http://stmarysgoochland.org/welcome)  
 to let us know you're here and help us stay in touch!



[facebook.com/St.MarysGoochland](https://facebook.com/St.MarysGoochland)



[@StMarysGoochland](https://www.instagram.com/StMarysGoochland)



**Online Offering**  
 Scan QR code to  
 make an online offering.

### CLERGY AND STAFF

Lauren Clay, *Office Administrator*  
 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, *Associate Rector*  
 Elizabeth Starling, *Executive Director, Church Operations*  
 Ryan Tibbetts, *Director of Music*  
 Maggi Tinsley, *Director of Communications*  
 Jacob Warren, *Director of Youth Ministries*  
 Tyrell Wilkins, *Assistant Sexton*

### VESTRY

Jeff Allende, *Senior Warden*; Barbara Tavenner, *Junior Warden*; Joe Cheely, *Treasurer*; Bill Gooch, *Register*;  
 Ros Bowers, *Henly Deutsch*, Andy Howlett, Linda Hyslop, Mary-Taliaferro Keeney, Sandy McDonald,  
 Meriwether Roberts, Geoff Simril, Celeste Stallings, and Frank Trice.



**ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

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