

Saint Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church

December 2023 Newsletter



MERRY MARKET EARNS MONEY FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Merry Market, our annual fundraiser for community outreach, was held November 18, in our tradition, the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Once again, Julia Poisson served as Chairperson, and once again did a spectacular job. Thank you, Julia.

Twelve vendors participated, with St. MM gleaning funds from the table rentals. Parishioners provided an array of arts, crafts, and baked goods and shoppers responded well. We were blessed with beautiful fall weather on market day.

Putting this event on is no small task. Ask Julia. She can tell you it doesn't just happen. It takes lots of work. We thank those who participated in advertising and promotion, those who worked hard to prepare the sanctuary for the vendors, and at the end put everything back in place. We owe thanks to those who provided sale items and those who showed up to shop.

The money earned, around \$900.00, will be thoughtfully designated by the vestry for community outreach.

Merry Market pictures - Page 3

207th Annual Convention of Episcopal Diocese of NC Held in Winston-Salem

The Annual Diocesan Convention took place Nov. 18-19, at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem. Laura and Jim Douglass served as our delegates and we thank them. Fr. Stephen also attended.

DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec. 3 - Annual Church meeting following worship service

Dec. 12 - Healing & Intercessory Prayer, 11:00 a.m. (One meeting in Dec. due to the Christmas schedule)

Dec. 17 - Church Greening following the worship service - Please plan to stay and be a helper.

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Service (No Sunday morning service)

Dec. 27- Articles for January Newsletter are due. Contact Phyllis Olson or Sherol Grigerick.

Annual Church Meeting

ST. MM Annual Meeting will be Sunday, December 3, after the service. New Vestry Members will be accepted and installed. The 2024 budget will be presented to the congregation for approval. Please plan to attend.

Church Greening

We will decorate the church for Christmas on December 17, following the service. Please plan to remain after coffee hour to adorn the church for Christmastide.

The Samaritan Fund

The Samaritan Fund continues. There are families in our community in need. These monetary gifts will be made available as needed at the discretion of the Vestry. When giving, please indicate Samaritan Fund in the memo line of your check.



STEWARDSHIP BRUNCH - NOV. 12



Lloyd, Julia & Linda



Sherol Grigerick and Bill Lindner



Kensley.



Laura

OUTREACH

St. MM will sponsor three families for Christmas this year. Linda and Bill Lindner, Sherol Grigerick, and Julia Poisson as a team have organized the list of items needed for each family. Parishioners have picked up many of the angel tags and are buying the indicated gifts. All unwrapped gifts for family #1 should be placed in their box by December 3. Gifts for families #2 and #3 should be placed in their boxes by December 10. All angel tags should be attached to the appropriate gifts.

Our church will also be donating small gifts to the residents at Seven Lakes Assisted Living. Their staff is requesting gloves, mittens, socks, toiletries, and wrapped Christmas candy. These gifts, along

with Christmas cards, may be placed in the box labeled for Seven Lakes Assisted Living. This year, they are also requesting donations of new or gently used medium or large size nightgowns, pajamas, sweaters, and sweatshirts.



As always, there is a need for food at Moore County Coalition. You are asked to bring food items and place them in the basket in the narthex. Pete will deliver them each Monday.



December Birthdays

- 3 Jane Fisher
- 6 Stephen Becker
- 7 Kade Phillips
- 15 Dale Schmidt
- 20 Fr. Fred Thompson
- 21. Kensley Wahl



December Anniversaries

- 8 Linda and Bob Rinaldi
- 29 Maureen and Bob Miller



Men's Breakfast

Men's Breakfast group will not meet in December. A new study will begin in January using a series by The Reverend Tony Evans. Watch for the date.

Christmas Bazaar

MERRY MARKET PHOTOS



Linda and Granddaughter Ella enjoy shopping for holiday treasures



Linda Lindner tends the till, and John purchases a piece of Bishop Bane's wood art.



End of the day workers, Steve, Peggy, Julia and Sherol

**Also present for the clean-up/reassemble detail --
Bill Linder, Jim Grigerick, David Poisson
and Pete and Phyllis Olson**



Vicar's Corner: *My Word for Advent*

My word to meditate upon during Advent is "Glory." One opening sentence in the Office of Morning Prayer selected for the season of Advent comes from the prophet Isaiah. It reads, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."ⁱ In its context, that verse follows Isaiah's exhortation to "prepare the way of the Lord."ⁱⁱ Both passages focus our attention on Advent themes that clear the way for us to see "the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."ⁱⁱⁱ God's glory was revealed in human flesh, and we can see that glory in the face of Jesus Christ, who fully expressed God's compassion towards us. In him, we can see God's personal revelation in ways we can comprehend and understand. But that glory, which was revealed, doesn't stop there. We are meant to see glimpses of that glorious mystery in one another because, as Paul declared, it is "Christ in you, the hope of glory."^{iv} That glory may be hidden in jars of clay, but if we let it, it will shine forth. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen

Stephen

ⁱ Isaiah 40:5

ⁱⁱ Isaiah 40:3

ⁱⁱⁱ John 1:14

^{iv} Colossians 1:27

Advent Word: An Invitation to Reflect By Vicki Bozzola Derka



AdventWord is an annual opportunity for reflection that publisher Forward Movement describes as "an inspirational online Advent calendar featuring a

daily prompt word selected from the Sunday Lectionary readings.” Advent has represented for me a season of personal renewal since I first found my home in the Anglican Communion on Advent I in 1996, so I had been writing about that first season of the liturgical calendar long before I heard of AdventWord, but I readily embraced the opportunity when I learned of it in 2017.

This year, my hope was to include the entire St. Mary Magdalene family in this ministry by publishing a booklet featuring our shared daily meditations. This project had to be abandoned because of minimal response. However, because those who did participate deserve a forum, I have been invited to include their contributions in the newsletter. My own commitment will be to respond every day to the challenge of Advent Word 2023; if you are interested, you may find my daily meditations beginning on December 2 on my personal blog, [Just\(e\) Words](#).

Should you decide to share in this fulfilling time of quiet preparation for our annual celebration of the Incarnation, you can find all the daily words by clicking here: [AdventWord](#). Below are excerpts from the submissions I received, edited to fit the requirements of the newsletter:

December 5: *Presence* (by Paul Fruiesen)

The presence of God cannot be confined to any specific time or place. It’s everywhere, but we don’t notice it until our minds are relaxed and not concerned about a job we’re doing or a problem we’re trying to solve. It doesn’t need to be in the form of a religious icon. It can be as simple as watching a family of birds, waiting for their eggs to hatch. When they do, we see the little ones peeking out of their houses until one day they try their wings—and shortly after that, they fly away.

This is only one example of God’s presence. In this case, we see it; in other cases, we feel it. And feeling this presence is indescribable—the absolute best. During this season of Advent, may we all seek quiet times of reflection so that we may see and feel the presence of God wherever and whenever we need Him most. And then, like those baby birds, we can soar.

December 10: *Glory* (by Sherol Grigerick)

The word *glory* has many meanings, including “praise, honor, or distinction” (*Merriam-Webster*). However, in the Bible, *glory* is often used to describe “the manifestation of God as perceived by humans” (*Wikipedia*). As an Advent word, I relate more to this second meaning. To me, the term *glory* signifies a euphoric experience occurring as a result of something radiant, indescribable, or divine. The closest to a glorified experience for many of us was witnessing the amazing births of our children or grandchildren. If we experienced glory at the births of our precious loved ones, then just imagine the glory the shepherds, wise men, and parents of Jesus experienced at His miraculous birth! They gazed at the sky filled with angels praising God and singing, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men” (Luke 2:14). Therefore, during every day of Advent, may we look forward to the miraculous, awesome, and divine birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

December 15: *Hasten* (by Phyllis Olson)

Has the commercial world stolen Advent from us? To some of us, the weeks leading up to Christmas are sacred, precious and calming. However, when holiday noise begins at Halloween, gains speed and volume nearing Thanksgiving, then becomes a numbing cacophony right up to December 25, it takes resolve to remove oneself from the distraction and focus on what the season is all about. Advent sometimes gets lost.

During Advent, our church calls us to withdraw from the world, seek quietude, and be prayerful as we wait. Sometimes we sing, “Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free.” That’s when I pray, “Hasten, Lord Jesus, to set us free. Hasten to reside in our hearts. Hasten, Lord Jesus, to give us peace.”

As the world reaches a peak of holiday madness, I remind myself that God sent his only begotten Son to teach us, comfort us, and give us hope and peace. He is Emmanuel, God with us. I give thanks for the quiet of Advent.

December 20: *Dream* (by Paul Fruiesen)

Joan and I have been looking for something. There has been a void in our lives. We had been watching church services online, but we never felt fulfilled. But then Joan saw St. Mary Magdalene on her way to Food Lion. When we decided to give it a try, we were lovingly welcomed by the whole congregation, including Bishop David Bane, who gave us a copy of his excellent book, and the vicar, who is a wonderful young man and leader, always with a smile on his face. We were especially delighted to learn that we would be receiving Communion every week. All of our voids have been filled. We not only have a new church; we have a new family. And the “fireside chats” we have after the service are wonderful. We’ve found our dream.

This experience can be seen as the hope of Advent—seeking to fill a void in our lives and finding that dream fulfilled in the unlikelyst of places, a manger in Bethlehem.

December 21: *Laughter* (by Paul Fruiesen)

Our previous church had a lot of young families, and each week the youth minister gathered the children around the altar rail for a Bible lesson before the sermon. One Christmas, she was narrating the story of Jesus’s birth. When she got to the part about the Magi, she asked the children what gifts they brought. One little girl shouted, “Skittles!” Peals of laughter rang through the church as this innocent child reached inside us and touched our hearts.

**WE REMEMBER DODIE LYNN WITH JOY**

ST. MM was well represented as sixteen parishioners attended Dodie Lynn’s memorial service Nov. 4. Fr. Stephen officiated along with The Rev. Colette Bachand, Penick Village Chaplain.



Linda and Bob



Lucy Dunn, Fr. Fred, and Phyllis

**HEADS-UP RE: HOLIDAY SCAMS**

During this time of year, we often see a surge in impersonation scams. One such text was recently received by a parishioner from a suspicious phone number that impersonated our Vicar, asking for gift cards. Scammers change tactics quickly making them hard to detect. So please stay alert and informed, and don’t hesitate to call us if you have a question.

Yours,
Stephen



"Don't underestimate the value of Doing Nothing, of just going along, listening to all the things you can't hear, and not bothering." **Winnie the Pooh**

"Christmas: the only time of year you can sit in front of a dead tree eating candy out of socks." – **Unknown**

Attorney: What is your date of birth?

Witness: December 1st.

Attorney: What year?

Witness: Every year.

Joey: Do you know anything about angels?

Mary Sue: Not much, but I know one of them is named Harold.

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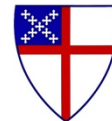
Bishop in Residence

Newsletter Editors:

Phyllis Olson and Sherol Grigerick



*A Mission of the Episcopal Diocese of North
Carolina*



Vestry Members

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Junior Warden – Sherol Grigerick
Linda Lindner, John Sapp, Steve Loomis and
Jim Douglass

Vestry Secretary – Sherol Grigerick
Treasurer- David Poisson