

Saint Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church

December 2025 Newsletter

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY



St.MM is sponsoring eight children from four families for Christmas this year. The list of needed items and the angel tags for each family have been prepared and parishioners may choose one or more angel tags and buy the indicated gifts for the children. Members may also contribute to the Food Lion gift cards that each family will receive. The gifts should be brought to church unwrapped, and placed in the appropriate family box by Sunday, December 7th. The angel tags should be attached to the appropriate gifts.

St. MM will also be donating small gifts to the residents of Seven Lakes Assisted Living. Gifts of gloves, mittens, non-slip socks, toiletries (deodorant, shampoo, body wash, etc.) and wrapped candy are requested. These gifts, along with Christmas cards, may be placed in the box labeled for Seven Lakes Assisted Living. Please bring all donated gifts by Sunday, December 14.



Advent begins November 30, marking a time of preparation and anticipation leading up to Christmas, marking the four Sundays before December 25th. Each week of Advent emphasizes a theme such as **hope, peace, joy, and love**, helping us prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of Christmas.

DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec. 7 - Annual Meeting following service. New Vestry members will be voted in at that time.

Dec. 9 and 30--Prayer/Healing Service at 11:00 a.m.

Dec. 10 - Vestry meeting, 5:30 p.m.

Dec. 12 - Christmas party at Lloyd Brewer's house, 5:00 p.m. 133 Fawnwood Drive, Seven Lakes West

Dec. 14 – Greening of the church after coffee hour

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Service - 5:00 p.m.

Dec.28 - Lessons and Carols will be celebrated at Morning Worship

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



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

3 Jane Fisher

7 Kade Phillips

15 Dale Schmidt

21. Kensley Wahl



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

8 Linda and Bob Rinaldi

29 Maureen and Bob Miller



A word from our Vicar:

Looking for light

You know how sometimes you begin singing a hymn and suddenly your throat tightens and eyes well with tears ... you can barely get the words out? That happens to me every time we sing “Silent Night.” It’s one of the most sacred moments in the liturgical year, when we quiet our souls and can *feel* how something is different, how something is shifting. That shifting, I think, is the coming of light. Our collect for the first Sunday of Advent, November 30th, shares these words: *Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light.*

That is a big prayer, a big task; for how do we cast away darkness and put on light? How do we let the season of Advent, with its promises of hope and peace, how do we let it feel real when the world around us swirls with dark places, seemingly hopeless situations and challenges we worry we aren’t up for. Each year, we invite children to believe. But what if believing is hard to come by?

I think of Jesus’ mother Mary on the night he was born. It’s ironic we sing about a “silent night” because I can only imagine for her, it was anything but silent. The birthing process is not calm and bright, but rather quite tumultuous. Yet in her heart she trusted so completely that what was happening was going to change the world.

As we embark on our new life together, our new season as the Church of Mary Magdalene in Seven Lakes, I invite you to seek the light. Find the light in each other, in morning coffee with your spouse or

faithful dog; find the light in the card from a friend, phone call from a grandchild or the donation you make to your favorite charity. Let us find the light that our church will be in our little part of the world each day as we counter the messages of society that are often dark, with our message of good news and God’s love.

I think I choke up on Christmas Eve because something in my heart knows that light *is* coming, that the love being born that day is for all people for all time, including me and you. In this holiest of seasons, seek the light, know you are blessed and be a blessing to those you meet and those you love. Thank you for being on the Advent journey with me.

Peace and love,
Rev. Colette

*Nov. 9th we held a joyful reception
for our new Vicar,
Rev. Colette Bachand.*

~ We love smiling faces!



Josie



Lloyd & Rev. Colette



Laura and Julia



Todd,
Rev. Colette’s husband



St. MM bakers show off a bit. Front row, a tray of "Church Mice" baked by Lloyd Brewer



Lloyd's brother, Bishop Bane, enjoys them greatly!



Rev. Colette's daughter Adrienne, Adrienne's partner, Ridge, and John Sapp amused by Bishop Bane's antics



Coffee drinkers enjoy a chat



Rev. Colette, her mother, Barbara, and daughter, Adrienne



OUTREACH



**Outreach Committee,
Sherol, Brenda, and Josie**

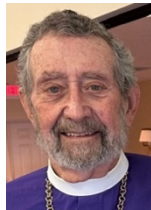
Thanks to the hard work of our Outreach Committee, St. MM will assist four local families with Christmas gifts for the children plus Food Lion gift cards for the families. We thank Sherol, Brenda, Josie, and Crystal Emery for lovingly leading us in this ministry. There is still time to make a contribution. Contact Sherol. 910-773-9152

We thank Donna McClung for representing St. MM at Emmanuel Thrift Shop where she serves on the board and works with sorting and pricing. Julia Poisson and Peggy Loomis volunteer in the shop on sales days and we thank them for representing St. MM.

Pete Olson delivers Meals on Wheels and has done so for almost twenty years. It's his mission of love. He also volunteers as a First Health Hospice courier two mornings a week. Thank you, Pete.

Twice a week, Sherol tutors immigrant children and adults in ESL. Thank you, Sherol.

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" Matt. 25:40



THE POWER OF THE PAST

I can be happily walking down the street, enjoying a beautiful day, feeling pretty good about life. But then, out of the corner of my eye, across the street, I see the guy that really did me wrong last year. My blood pressure goes up, my stomach tightens, my enjoyment fades away as I relive that wrong done to me. What has really changed? That guy does not even know I'm there. The day is still beautiful, but for me the day is ruined, and I am unhappy. Why do we do this to ourselves? Why do we so often allow the past to come crashing into the present? Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still and know that I am God." In other words, live wholly in the present moment, and contemplate the reality that "I am always with you." In the Great Commandment, Jesus encourages us to love God as our neighbor. We can do a lot of things, but we cannot love anyone in the past or in the future. We can only love right now. The reason it is the most important commandment is that it reminds us to live

our lives in the present so that our days do not slip away as we focus on what is no longer real. To learn how to be completely aware of what we are experiencing right now adds meaningful enjoyment to each day. In the final analysis, it is also all that really matters in life, the now.

Bishop David Bane



Parishioners gather at Emmanuel Church's garden for Christa's interment



Actual announcements in church bulletins:

- >Next Sunday is the family hayride and bonfire at the Fowlers' farm. Bring your own hot dogs and guns. Friends are welcome! Join us for a fun time.
- >The class on prophecy has been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.



"In order to maintain a well- balanced perspective, the person who has a dog to worship him should also have a cat to ignore him." — Canada Peterborough Examiner.

Vestry Members

Senior Warden – Julia Poisson
Junior Warden – Sherol Grigerick
Steve Loomis, Lloyd Brewer,
Jim Douglass and Linda Sapp

Vestry Secretary – Sherol Grigerick
Treasurer- David Poisson
Webmaster – Jim Douglass

St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church

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Phyllis Olson and Sherol Grigerick

*A Mission of the Episcopal Diocese of
North Carolina*



*"No one has ever seen God; but
if we love each other, God lives in us!"
1 John 4:12*

