

Saint Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church

February 2026 Newsletter

A message from our vicar:

Dear family,

We can learn a lot from the weather. January was no exception.

Mid-month I traveled to Massachusetts to assist with the funeral for a friend of mine. She died too young, my age, and the world feels diminished by the loss of her in it. I was blessed to be the recipient of her good, kind nature, and of her strength when she walked with me through some hard times.

As the weekend of sadness, reunion and storytelling ended, the prettiest, gentlest of snow draped the town we had lived in. It was a quintessential postcard picture of stone walls, saltwater marshes and tall trees blanketed in white. A feeling of brokenness was soothed by nature's beauty, which can only be the work of the Creator. Nature's gentleness stood in tandem with aching hearts.

Then a week later, we here in NC got another weather lesson, but this time it was reversed. The harshness of ice was soothed by a time of quiet with no schedules and people I love. My daughter Adrienne and her partner Ridge stayed with me and Todd. Their dog Jasper was along to keep our dog Clifford company. We cooked, played games, talked about the past and future. While the weather outside was harsh, inside our souls were gentle.

Life is always a little of everything, isn't it? Sometimes gently falling snowflakes, other times frozen walkways. Yet we take comfort that God is with us either way.

In Ephesians 3: 16-19 we're reminded: ... *he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

Remembering that we have the fullness of God within us gives us strength, whatever the storm, whatever the weather.

A community like ours makes a difference, in our personal lives and in the wider world because it insists on hope. (See poem later in this newsletter.) News around us is hard, storms arrive, grief and sorrow are real. Yet we are steadfast that the love of God is stronger than anything.

Whatever your storm, God's got ya!
Peace and love,

Rev. Colette

FEBRUARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb. 1 -Sunday Brunch at Seven Lakes Country Club (rescheduled)

Feb. 10 and 24 - 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month – Healing & Intercessory Prayer, 11:00 a.m.

Feb. 15 and 22 -Lenten Bible Study led by Rev. Colette

Feb. 18 – Ash Wednesday Service 4:00 p.m. & 5:30 p.m.

Feb. 25 - Vestry Meeting, 5:30 p.m. – *All Are Welcome!*

Feb. 27 – *Articles for March Newsletter are due. Contact Phyllis Olson or Sherol Grigerick*

LOOKING AHEAD

Ash Wednesday 2026

"I invite you therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a Holy Lent ..." BCP page 265

A service for Ash Wednesday with Holy Communion will be held Wednesday, February 18th at **4:00 PM**.

For those unable to attend at that time, a **5:30 PM blessing and prayer**, with the imposition of ashes, will be offered. Those who would like to receive ashes at home, please leave a message at the church office. Rev. Colette will be available to visit you in your home.

Lenten Bible Study Continues – March 1st and 22



February Birthdays

19 Vicki Derka

25 - Jackie Wells

25 - Rev. Colette Bachand



February Anniversaries

6 Alice and Bishop Bane

19 Sherol and Jim Grigerick

OUTREACH PROJECT

St.MM parishioners are once again extending generous outreach to the fifty residents of Seven Lakes Assisted Living. Members are asked to bring wrapped candy and place it in the Valentine basket on the round table in the Narthex by Sunday, February 8th. The outreach committee, led by Linda Sapp and Sherol Grigerick, will prepare treat bags containing candy along with Valentine cards to be delivered for Valentine's Day.

FYI: The outreach page on the St.MM website has been revised and there is a current list of outreach fund recipients.

ST. MM OUTREACH EXPANDS TO CAREGIVERS

This spring, our church will begin hosting a twice a month support group for people who are in caregiving roles. Across the county, more and more people are finding themselves caring for a friend, spouse, parent or child with chronic conditions and often caregiving leaves people feeling isolated and overwhelmed.

The twice a month group will reach out to folks from surrounding towns welcoming them to a safe space for healing, conversations and resources. It will begin on **April 12th** and held the **second and fourth Sundays** of the month from 1:00 - 2:00 (except for Mother's Day.)

If you or anyone you know could benefit from this group, please feel free to invite them. Rev. Colette is happy to answer any questions about it.

Letter from Emanda, Our 8-year Old Compassion Child in Ethiopia

Dear Sponsor Friends,
How are you doing? Thank God all my family and I are doing well. I attended my education activity and I completed the examination last time. I am happy with my schooling. Now I am on vacation. I attend an education given in the compassion project nicely. Please pray to God about my education and my

family. Dear Sponsor, thank you very much for sponsoring me. Until the next letter, stay safe. Blessings!

St. Mary Magdalene Lenten Soup and Study

“Give Us This Day: Lenten Reflections on Baking Bread and Discipleship”



Sundays 11:45 – 1:00 PM
Soup, bread, conversation, and fellowship
Feb. 15, Feb 22, March 1 & March 22

PLEASE SIGN-UP IF YOU ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE SOUP OR CAN BRING BREAD!

Description of book from Amazon website:

“Bread speaks to us of our daily reliance upon a Maker, writes Christopher Levan. Perhaps more than any other food it brings us close to our roots as fellow creatures of God’s creation. Bread is an apt metaphor for the spiritual journey. Give Us This Day offers meditations for every day in Lent, inviting us to connect faith, ‘our daily bread,’ and the world in which we live, along with recipes that range from Shrove Tuesday ‘No-Fret Pancakes’ to Easter Challah bread. Each of the 40 meditations begins with a scripture verse and a prayer.”

Please use sign-up sheet or let Rev. Colette know if you would like a copy of the book, \$15

Saint Mary Magdalene Church Featured in Local Newspaper

The January issue of *The Seven Lakes Insider* featured a lengthy interview with our Vicar, Rev. Colette Bachand. The interviewer, journalist Maggie Beamguard, *maggie @the pilot.com*, presented a thoughtful autobiographical account of Rev. Colette’s professional journey that led her to St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church. Colette began as a journalist, but never gave up an early calling to be a priest.

At age 42, determined to become a priest, Colette enrolled at Episcopal Divinity School, in Cambridge, Mass. She first served in a parish then became a hospice chaplain, which eventually led her to Penick Village. From there, she discovered St. MM which she describes as “a little Cheers” where everyone knows each other and there is a sense of belonging. “Love one another, and the rest will take care of itself,” she said. “If we don’t start there, we won’t go anywhere. We just take a hand and walk together.”

Rev. Colette is a certified dementia care trainer and the author of *Do This in Remembrance of Me: Spiritual Care of those with Alzheimer’s and Dementia*.



Josie



Lindsay and Jackie



Jim and Pete



Robbie and Lydia



Vicki and Laura



COFFEE HOUR PHOTOS



Doug Caskey visits the library



Kensley offers support as Grandmother Peggy reads the Scripture

Hope like snowflakes falling

It has felt like the end of harvest season,
The dried up fruit,
The withered branches,
The broken bark,
The backyard remnants of happy times
A swing left swaying,
a rake left in the grass
The over turned lawn chair.

*And a darkness that came early
And seemed to never go away*

Until one day the snow falls
Each flake a complicated, intricate design
A beautiful masterpiece of lines and twists and turns
That tell the story of your journey with grief

And soon the snow covers what autumn left behind
Showering the darkness
With softness, gentleness and Light
Soon the gray is a new blanket of white love
That holds all that *was* alongside all that *will be*
And wraps it with courage, strength and faith.

Hope like snowflakes falling
Whispers in the silence
What your heart longs to hear.

The Rev. Colette Bachand



***Food for thought:
ATTITUDE IS A CHOICE.
HAPPINESS IS A CHOICE.
OPTIMISM IS A CHOICE
KINDNESS IS A CHOICE.
RESPECT IS A CHOICE.
WHATEVER CHOICE YOU MAKE,
MAKES YOU. CHOOSE WISELY.***

Roy T. Bennett



Sam Levenson said, "Lead us not into temptation. Just tell us where it is; we'll find it."



The Food Bank always needs donations.

Suggestions:

Spaghetti, Pasta, Cereal, Canned Stew,
Macaroni & Cheese, Instant Mashed Potatoes,
Powdered Milk, Canned Juice, Canned Fruit,
Canned Vegetables, Peanut Butter & Jelly, 1 lb.
packages of Rice (Hand soap also needed).
Thank you, Pete, for delivering the donations each
Monday morning.

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Thank you, Linda Sapp, Sherol Grigerick and
committee members for leading us in meaningful
outreach projects.

Thank you, Jim Douglass, for tending our website.

Thank you to all who work to make St. MM a
blessed and wonderful place.



All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

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The Rev. Colette Bachand, Vicar

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