A Word about the Safety of our Children

I cannot express to you how deeply angry and heartbroken I have been as I have read the most recent reports regarding the sexual abuse of children in the Church universal. It is a deep wound to the Body of Christ and is even more importantly a horrific tragedy to the victims of this abuse. The Church should be a place of safety for all who enter; anything less is an affront to the teachings of Jesus and is less than we are called to be.

In the midst of these public disclosures, I thought it important to write to you as your rector and assure you that your safety, and more importantly the safety of your children, is of paramount importance to me. As with all Episcopal parishes, the clergy, staff, and volunteers who are involved in our ministries with children are required to be trained in our Safe Church curriculum, and to adhere to the polices as set forth in that training. Before these latest revelations, Saint Margaret’s had already scheduled the latest on-site training to take place on September 6th from 9:30 to noon. I would encourage every parish member who is available to attend, as there is no cost, and this ministry of safety reaches well beyond just the members of our staff. It is a ministry in which we all share, and I encourage everyone who can to contact Elizabeth, let her know of your interest, and join us on September 6th.

Additionally, I ask for your further help in this area. One of the foundational principles of keeping our children and youth safe is the practice of never allowing children to be alone with an adult, or to be unattended on our campus. While I love the fact that our children feel safe in our building, and that they feel at home within her walls, the reality is that our building is open to all on Sunday mornings. Anyone can walk onto our campus at any time, and we do not at this time have a presence in the hallways during services. If you do find that your child needs to leave the service for any reason (as is the reality with children), please make sure that they have an adult with them. Personally, I become very worried when I see children exiting the worship space alone, and often my attention is diverted until they return. Perhaps it is from my training, from the recent headlines, or both, but my wish for all who are here is to be safe. If we all do our part, we can continue to worship in the comfort, beauty, and safety of this wonderful church.

While we cannot anticipate every situation, know that the clergy and staff at Saint Margaret’s constantly discuss ways to keep our community safe. Given the nature of this subject, I am encouraging all members of our parish to join with us to keep our church safe. The children that are with us our not ours, but they belong to God. He has but for a time given them to us to love, nurture, and protect. You have my word that I will do whatever is in my power to assure the safety of all who are in this place. I know that every member of the staff feels the same.

May the loving hand of Jesus continue to watch over this church and keep its members protected from all harm and injury, this day and forever more. Amen.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Todd

dill@saintmargarets.net

“...I am encouraging all members of our parish to join with us to keep our church safe. The children that are with us our not ours, but they belong to God. He has but for a time given them to us to love, nurture, and protect.”
Paul in his letter to the Romans provides the greatest solution to the growing needs of our world (sin) and points to the remedy to the greatest problem of our life (Jesus Christ). And this remedy is available to everyone 24/7.

Christians today wrestle with problems on all fronts: spiritual, physical, political, social, economic, and more. We are called to engage our world with faithful presence, representing Christ and the gospel with faithfulness, resolve and fortitude in all areas of life. In Romans we see an example of this in Paul’s admonition to the Roman believers to submit to the government that God has placed over them (Rom. 13:1–7). Our current culture advocates for rebellion and the fomenting of division, fear and destruction. We cannot ignore the growing rift in our hearts and minds. On our own we cannot muster enough resolve and strength to fend off the continued assault on human decency and freedom.

Romans addresses our human hearts and tells us that we all need salvation and justification through the power of the Son. We are encouraged to surrender our lives as living sacrifices in praise of God our Father (Romans 12:1). Through the coming weeks and months my Bible Study group will feed on the richness of the Book of Romans wishing to be enlightened even more on how to navigate through the challenges and difficulties we encounter in our times. I invite you to take the time to open, read and pray on the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans even in the privacy of your home any time, any day. I know you will find rich insights and blessings if you do.

In Him who is Lord,
CONNECTION

Jenny Marlier, Assistant to the Rector for Newcomers & Parish

A Note for Visitors and Newcomers: Making the decision to join a new church and engage in the life of a parish takes consideration. This fall I am offering visitors, new members, and current members seeking to deepen their involvement various opportunities to learn more.

During Education Hour (10:15-11:00) on September 23, I am hosting a New Member Meet and Greet. This is an informal gathering where we will introduce ourselves, take a brief tour of the church, and I can answer any questions you have. I will host these Meet and Greets on a regular basis.

A new session of Saint Margaret’s 101 will begin during education hour on October 21. The class will run for 4 weeks. Saint Margaret’s 101 provides an in-depth look at the history of Saint Margaret’s, how decisions are made in our church, how and why we worship the way we do, a Q&A with Father Todd, and much more.

A Note for Women in the Parish: I will be facilitating a women’s bible study, Mom Set Free, beginning Thursday, September 20 from 11:30-12:45 in the youth room. This 7-week study will be in a small group setting and follow a workbook by Jeannie Cunnion. We will talk about what it looks like to parent in the confidence of God’s grace and hopefully find relief from the pressure to get it all right! After reading the author’s book, I feel the content applies to moms parenting children from preschool through high school. Advance registration and payment of $15 (for the cost of the workbook) are required. https://stm.breezechms.com/form/momsetfree.

For any questions on new member programs, the Mom Set Free Bible Study or just how to get better connected within the life of our parish, please contact Jenny Marlier at: connection@saintmargarets.net

CHILDREN’S MINISTRY

Catherine Chintala, Assistant to the Rector for Children’s Ministry

Welcome to the new school year! Sunday School classes will be starting up on September 9th at 10:15am in the Rainy Day Room. Join us as we continue our journey through the Old Testament, starting with the building of the Tabernacle. All children ages 4 years to 5th grade are welcome! If you have not yet registered your child(ren), please do so as soon as possible, as this helps us form our classes and plan our activities and supplies. You can register online at: https://stm.breezechms.com/form/SundaySchoolRegistration2018

Please also stop by our bulletin board outside of the Sunday School classrooms… it will be updated periodically with information and upcoming events!

If you have any questions, please contact Catherine Chintala at childrensministry@saintmargarets.net.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR for September 16th will be Kick off Family Teach Day: Operation Sandwich

As families begin back to school sandwich making, let’s not forget those in need. We will be doing our first “hands on” project by making sandwiches for the homeless population served by Urban Ministry. The ministry serves 800 sandwiches per day at an average cost of $1.00 per sandwich.

We will purchase the supplies to make 400 sandwiches during our family teach day and welcome monetary donations to help offset the cost! Donations can be made via Cash or Check at the event or online at: https://stm.breezechms.com/form/OperationSandwich2018

VESTRY

This column has been requested by parishioners to inform the parish on votes taken at recent Vestry Business meetings.

• Net income favorable. Plate revenue, YTD over, as attendance is up for the year by +48 per week. Pledge flat to budget, but ahead YTD.
• Pastoral Care account balance of Deacon Susie, moved to Father Todd and Father Lito’s account.
• Father Todd shared gratitude for 10 yr. anniversary reception and gifts.
• September 29 will be last Saturday Mass. Will take time to review the status. Overall more ministry volunteers needed to make it work.
• 8/26 will be kick off Sunday, Oct. 14th: Stewardship Sunday
• Discussion on Advent looking different this year. Look at dates in your calendar and let’s not add to the burden. We should model our time after the liturgical calendar and center your life around it.
• Discussion of Vestry Roles. What should we spend our time doing?
• Discussion on modeling what a Christian household looks like.
• Conversation on Stewardship and desire to make regular attenders pledgers. Only 207 pledgers. Much larger capacity to give.

CHURCH家

END

YOUTH Spotlight

Elizabeth Pfeifer, Assistant to the Rector for Youth Ministries

EYC had their Fall 2018 Kick Off on August 26th. We introduced our 6th graders and new members to EYC and our love of silly games, icebreakers, God, and a decent amount of laughter and general noise. It was great to see so many new faces (and familiar ones). If your youth was not able to make it to our first meeting, we hope they will join us at one of our next gatherings.

EYC will meet on the following days in September: 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th. All 6th-12th graders (and friends) are invited to join us. EYC meets from 5-6:30 with a complimentary dinner provided from 6:30-7.

The high school fall retreat to Lake Lure is Oct 5-7 and the middle school overnight to Camp Canaan is Oct 20-21. More information out in mid-September on those events.

Sunday School Reminder

Our youth Sunday School class gathers in the Youth Room from 10:15-11:00am and is for all 6th-12th grade students. This semester we will follow the lectionary readings and dive into the Gospel of Mark along with a series on “Liking Jesus: Contentment in a Selfie Centered World.”
**SEPTEMBER Calendar**

9/4  Centering Prayer, 1:45 in the Prayer Room
9/5  *Sonrise Bible Study* with Father Paul begins, 6:45 am at Rush Cafe
9/5  First Day of Preschool
9/5  Children’s Choir starts back
9/5  Confirmation Class begins, 7:00 pm in the Parish Hall
9/6  Father Todd’s Thursday Evening Bible Study begins, 7:00 pm
9/7  Parish Fellowship Event, 7:00 pm Dream Chasers in Waxhaw
9/8  Men’s Monthly Fellowship Breakfast resumes, 8:30 am
9/8  DOK Monthly meeting, 9:30 am
9/9  Sunday School BEGINS, 10:15-11:00 am
9/9  Club 4-5, 12:30-2:00 pm in the Parish Hall
9/10 Monday Night Bible Study resumes, 6:30 pm
9/12  SAGES lunch & learn, 12:00 pm in the Parish Hall
9/15  Knots of Love monthly meeting
9/18  Vestry Business Meeting, 7:00 pm in the Choir Room
9/20  Thursday morning Bible Study begins, 11:30 am
9/22  ECW - Fall Charlotte Convocation @ St. Martin’s, 10:00 am
9/25  Union County Community Shelter Meal Prep & Serve Day

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**WE INVITE YOU**

to try one of our Bible studies this fall. Whoever is facilitating our studies understands that we are ALL still learning. Bible studies are mostly about fellowship where we together draw closer to God’s word. If you have never participated in a Bible study ours are none threatening. There is no Bible knowledge required to get started. There are no tests. We understand that people are busy – so we do not expect preparation ahead of time.

If you don’t have a Bible we’ll provide one. It is fine if you can only come from time to time.

**PLEASE, COME JOIN US!**