

MAGGIE'S CROSS

February 2020



A Letter From The Rector

BY FATHER TODD R. DILL+

Come Worship in Lent

The season of Lent is almost upon us. February 26th is Ash Wednesday, and it is on this day that the church offers us again the imposition of ashes, in which each of us is reminded of our mortality; of our finiteness. The liturgy for this day calls us to a Holy Lent, specifically by instructing us to mark this season... by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. (BCP pg 265) I would like to suggest something even more fundamental for you and your family this season, but this action is so important that it believe it is desperately vital you and your family's spiritual lives.

Come to worship. It sounds so simple, but as our lives continue to get busier and busier, sometimes it can become easy to take a week off every now and then. Then, one week absent becomes two, and two becomes three, and so on and so on and so on.

What I would like to encourage you to do along with your family is to recommit yourselves to regular worship at Saint Margaret's. Among all of the other activities of your life, I believe with all of my heart that the most important act you will ever do each week is your faithful act of worship, and yet it can be so easy to slip into business and complacency with our attendance. It was not so different for the early church. In part, the author of Hebrews encourages the early Christian community to continue in its gathering together, and not to lose heart or the practices of the faith; And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (10:24-25)

Worship allows us to see the beauty of God. Worship encourages us to surrender ourselves to Jesus. Worship helps us focus our lives on Him and not only ourselves. And more importantly, worship offers us an avenue to encounter Jesus in His Blessed Sacrament, in which we take Jesus to ourselves as we open our very being to His love, His grace and forgiveness, and His transforming presence in our lives. These are encounters that can only be fully known within the context of cor[orate] worship,

and I would like to suggest to you that it is not only necessary for you, but it is essential to you and your spiritual well-being. Our bodies cannot survive without food or water. Neither can our souls survive if we are cut off and famished for lack of spiritual nutrition; a nutrition and feeding that can only take place at the altar of our Lord.

"I would like to encourage you then, as you observe a holy Lent, to come to worship. There is no other action more vital to your spiritual health."

As your pastor, my hope for each of you is that you will continue to draw closer to Jesus as you learn more deeply what it means to be loved by Him. You will experience His love in worship.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. **And by coming to worship.** Amen.

- Fr. Todd+
dill@saintmargarets.net



God's discipline



BY FATHER LITO SANTOS+
santos@saintmargarets.net

**"every branch that does bear fruit he prunes,
that it may bear more fruit."**

John 15:2

God loves us, so he disciplines us. He molds and shapes us into His children ready and equipped for life in Him. His discipline is always intended to lead us to abundant life. Let us allow his love to open our heart and lead us into the process of pruning intended solely to refine, help, and produce fruit in us.

God's plan is to prune, heal and transform us into children who live in the world but are not of it (John 17:14-19). He longs to tear down the strongholds of pride and sin that keep us from experiencing the fullness of his love, presence and promises. God's discipline is all rooted in his unconditional love for us. We need to spend intimate time with the all-loving heart of our heavenly Father. His discipline is solely for our benefit. We need to remain focused on his love for us and choose his ways over the ways of the world. God will lead us to a lifestyle of loving than getting all we can out of others. And He will most certainly lead all of us to a life of relationship with him as our highest priority over the opinions and friendship of others.

Every piece of the pruning process is difficult, or even painful. But, every time you agree with and follow the Holy Spirit through this process you will come out more satisfied, joyful, free, and fruitful than you were before. Hebrews 12:11 says, "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

Engage with your loving heavenly Father in the process of pruning. Open your heart and allow him to tear down the walls that keep you from experiencing the flood of love, life and works he has planned for you. See his love and respond to it by sacrificing your preferred ways of thinking and living. He has plans to heal, transform, and free you today if you will simply follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit through this pruning process.

- Fr. Lito+

Questions of Faith



BY FATHER ERIC GRUBB
grubb@saintmargarets.net

**How does religion and God help
us tough times?**

**What about when we are
stressed?**

**"The church, like
Jesus' disciples,
gives us a
community that
we can share with
and can help us
carry the burden
of our stress."**

We all will have moments in our life that are difficult, painful, and stressful. When we are in the midst of one of these moments, we may wonder where God is or why God would allow this to happen. Sometimes in these situations, we may pray and ask God to take away the painful experience we are having, but nothing seems to change. So how do God and our faith help us through these moments?

There is a compelling story in Matthew 26:36-46, commonly referred to as Jesus' agony in the garden. Just before Jesus is arrested and taken to be crucified, he and his disciples stop in the Garden of Gethsemane so that he could pray. Jesus knows what is about to happen to him, so he takes three of his disciples with him to pray because he was "grieved and agitated." The church, like Jesus' disciples, gives us a community that we can share with and can help us carry the burden of our stress. The disciples, however, were not perfect, they kept falling asleep, and so while community is important, it is not the only thing that can help us in times of trouble.

Jesus prays the same prayer three times, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." He prays that God would remove the trial before him altogether; ultimately, Jesus offers to God whatever is about to happen. As the story unfolds, Jesus' prayer does not change his circumstance; he is still arrested and still unjustly killed on the cross. However, in offering his anxiety to God in prayer, Jesus receives strength and guidance to face what lies ahead. So it is with us when prayer does not completely alter our circumstances but in casting our worries on God, he will give us the strength and guidance we need to face whatever lies ahead of us. In this way, like Jesus, we find that our whole lives, both the good and the bad are an offering to God.

So, how does God and our faith help us through tough times? By giving us a community in the church for support and comfort and by giving us strength and guidance to get through our challenging and stressful moments.

- Father Eric+

BEHIND THE SCENES



Just in case you need a refresher on the faces that work behind the scenes in the office at StM...**here's a glimpse of who does what in the parish.**

Rector

The Reverend Fr. Todd R. Dill, ext. 110

dill@saintmargarets.net

cell: 704-254-9542

Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday

Assistant to the Rector

The Reverend Fr. Lito Santos, ext. 333

santos@saintmargarets.net

cell: 919-888-8809

direct desk phone line: 704-269-5724

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday

Assistant to the Rector

The Reverend Fr. Eric Grubb, ext. 222

grubb@saintmargarets.net

cell: 336-549-0470

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday

Director of Music & Organist

Mara DeLuca

music@saintmargarets.net

Executive Assistant to the Rector

Joanie A. Cameron

parishadmin@saintmargarets.net

MAIN OFFICE LINE: 704-243-3523

Office Hours: M - Th 9-4, F 9- 12 noon

Church Office Direct Line:

704-243-3523

Asst. to the Rector for Youth Ministries

Elizabeth Pfeifer, ext. 444

pfeifer@saintmargarets.net

cell: 704-451-2968

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday

Asst. to the Rector for Preschool Ministries

Dana Plate', ext. 555

preschool@saintmargarets.net

direct desk phone line: 704-288-3430

Asst. to the Rector for Finance & Accounting

Denise Kiliniski, ext. 7

finance@saintmargarets.net

direct desk phone line: 704-288-1804

Office Hours: Monday & Thursday

Asst. to the Rector for Children's Ministries

Catherine Chintala, ext. 888

childrensministry@saintmargarets.net

Office Hours: Tuesday & Friday

Asst. to the Rector for Newcomers & Parish Life

Traci Scott, ext. 777

connection@saintmargarets.net

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday & Friday

We're here for you!



Pictured below at a recent staff lunch out are:

top row L-R: Father Eric, Father Todd, Catherine Chintala, Mara DeLuca, Father Lito & Joanie Cameron

bottom row L-R: Dana Plate', Denise Kiliniski, Traci Scott & Elizabeth Pfeifer

Youth Spotlight



BY ELIZABETH PFEIFER
ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR
FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

Questions Answered

Reminders:

- EYC will not meet on Feb 2nd due to the Super Bowl.
- EYC will meet Feb 9th, 16th and 23rd from 5-6:30 pm with dinner 6:30-7:00 pm. All 6th-12th graders and their friends are welcome! We hope you'll join for games, fun and fellowship.

Mark your calendars:

We hope that you will mark your calendars and plan to join us at the following overnights!

May 15-17:

EYC Beach Retreat
for 6th-12th grade.

Sun, June 28-

Fri, July 3:

Mission Trip

for current 8th-12th grade.

*We're headed to Virginia Beach, VA
for a week of home repair. More info out soon!*

We are currently in the midst of a series based on questions teens submitted about things they do not understand about their faith but want to.

Youth have submitted questions such as:

- *how do I believe in God when everything about God seems so surreal ?*
- *are all sins equal?*
- *why do bad things happen to good people?*
- *why is there suffering?*
- *why couldn't Jesus have stayed alive for our sins?*

These questions do not have simple answers (or, concrete answers at all!) but we are engaging in our faith, hearing what others in our group think about these topics, and what the Episcopal Church believes.

Interested in going to the Bishop's Ball?

All youth (6th-12th grade) are invited to an upcoming event sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina! Bishop's Ball is Fri-Sun, 2/28-3/1. This event is sponsored through the NC Diocese. It is a great weekend for all youth to meet other Episcopalian youth from around the Diocese and spend time with our bishops at Camp Walter Johnson (about 1.5 hours away) Cost is \$120 (scholarships available). Contact Elizabeth for more info and to register. Registration closes Tues, Feb 18th.





CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



BY CATHERINE CHINTALA

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR FOR CHILDRENS MINISTRY

Children's Ministry is off to a great start in 2020! Thank you to everyone who participated in our annual Children's Epiphany Pageant on January 5th. The kids did a wonderful job telling the story of the Nativity of our Lord! *Special thanks to Mara DeLuca, Michelle Stephens, Amy Weaver, and Linda Martus for their help in making this performance a success!*

On January 26th we had a wonderful Family Teach Day where we learned all about **Canine Companions for Independence** and the amazing work they do around our country. We also learned that as followers of Jesus, we are all called to use our talent to serve others. Special thanks to Catherine Polka and Amy & Aiden Gorman for sharing their time and experiences with us as CCI Trainers! We learned so much and had a great time interacting with Jerry, Bauer, Flora, and Yahini.

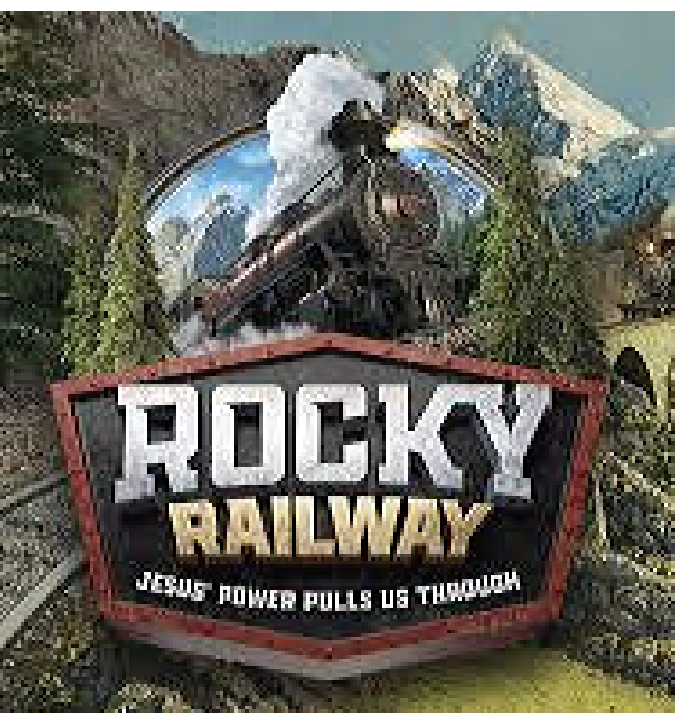


In Sunday School we are continuing our New Testament journey through well-known stories such as The Good Samaritan and Jesus Feeds 5,000. Our students are not only learning the Bible stories, but how they can apply them to their lives! We are exploring ideas such as loving your neighbor, trusting in Jesus, and knowing that God will provide us with fulfillment. In the coming weeks we will continue to learn more stories of the life of Jesus through discussion, games, music, and crafts.

Holy Communion Class registration is now open! We are offering two sessions of Holy Communion Class: one for children age 7 and up (grades 1-4), and one for youth grades 5-12. Classes will be held on April 26, May 3, and May 10 during the Christian Education hour. Space is limited, so please register today!

Mark your calendars for Vacation Bible School!

We will hold VBS from **June 22-26** from 9am to 12pm each day. This year's exciting theme is **Rocky Railway**, and kids will learn that Jesus' power pulls us through! It will take many hands to make this event a success – please be on the lookout for more information about registration and volunteer opportunities for adults and youth! **MORE DETAILS TO COME...**



Questions? Please contact Catherine at childrensministry@saintmargarets.net

Welcome!



BY TRACI SCOTT

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR
FOR NEWCOMERS & PARISH LIFE

Being a Welcoming Church

All of us have a role to play in making newcomers feel welcome at St Margaret's. We all get into our habits when we come to a worship service – sitting in the same pew, talking with the same people. But visitors and others who are new to St Margaret's can feel left out.

Our Greeters and Ushers do a wonderful job at being the first friendly faces newcomers see at our church so, let's carry that forward.

When you come to church each week, make it a point to speak to one person you don't normally speak to. Something as simple as, *"I don't think I've met you yet. My name is Traci."* You never know how you might impact someone's day!



Interested in learning more about StM?

A new session of 101 is starting in February to learn more about this special place.

Class runs for three Sundays: 2/9, 2/16 & 2/23 at 10:15 am in the Connector Hall.

We'll take a tour, hear the history, learn about ministries and Episcopal traditions.

All are welcome!

RSVP to Traci:
connectionesaintmargarets.net.



"All of us have a role to play in making newcomers feel welcome..."



To order a custom StM name tag to wear at church, please use this link to order yours today:

<https://stm.breezechms.com/form/nametag>



DOK members pictured above at Father Eric's Ordination Reception are:
L-R are: Jaci Buswell, Paula Holbein, Kathyann Dugan, Linda Jenkins and Shirley Dromms

MINISTRY MINUTE: DOK

THE ORDER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

The Daughters of the King is an Order for women who are communicants of the Episcopal Church, churches in communion with it, or churches in the historic episcopate but not in communion with it. All Daughters undertake a Rule of Life. **Our Rule of Life incorporates a Rule of Prayer and a Rule of Service.**

We fulfill these vows by praying daily for unity in Christ's Church, the spread of Christ's Kingdom and for our St. Margaret's clergy, staff and all of our parish family. We also pray for those who have asked for our prayers.

Our Rule of Service encompasses participating in worship and study and assisting the clergy in the outreach and work of the church.

At St Margaret's, the Daughters hostess most of the funeral receptions that are held at the church. Our members help with the set up, hostessing and clean up and sometimes provide food.

St. Margaret's Daughters can be found participating in virtually every ministry at St Margaret's. **There are 40 members in our St. Margaret's Chapter.**

Our chapter members also contribute items to the hygiene pantry (Hagar's Basket), that is sponsored by our sister chapter at St John's in, Charlotte. The emblem of our Order is a modified Greek Fleury cross which all members wear either as a pin or around their necks on a chain. This cross is an outward and visible sign that reminds us of our commitment to Christ and His Church.

We welcome questions and interest in our Order and look forward to those who may be called to become a Daughter of the King.

- Kathyann Dugan



**St. Margaret's
Daughters can be
found participating in
virtually every ministry
at St Margaret's.
There are 40 members
in our St. Margaret's
Chapter.**

For more information:

please contact
Chapter President,
Shirley Dromms at:
sdromms@gmail.com

Did you know?



ECW CIRCLE TIME

Loving our neighbors

The **Wednesday ECW Lunch Circle** was hosted by Gen Koch in January. Ladies gathered for a delicious lunch, fellowship, and an outreach project. They used their time together to make backpack snack packages for students at South Providence school in Waxhaw.



WINTER HARVEST

A Garden that gives

Did you know St. Margaret's is growing Winter vegetables? Collards, Broccoli, Peas, Cabbage, Carrots, and Brussel Sprouts!

If you are looking for a new way to SERVE at St. Margaret's, and help our greater food-insecure community, give this Ministry a try. We plant 2-3 times a year, do a lot of weeding and watering, as well as harvesting. We also need drivers to deliver our harvests to Common Heart in Monroe, each week, during season.

And a huge thank you to our 2019 volunteers - what an AMAZING transformation you have done, and kept up, for the Garden. We hope you are all on board for 2020, along with some new volunteers as well. Thank you.

If you have an interest or questions, contact Amy Gorman at waxhawamy@gmail.com.

LENTEN BOOKLET

Your Lenten Journey

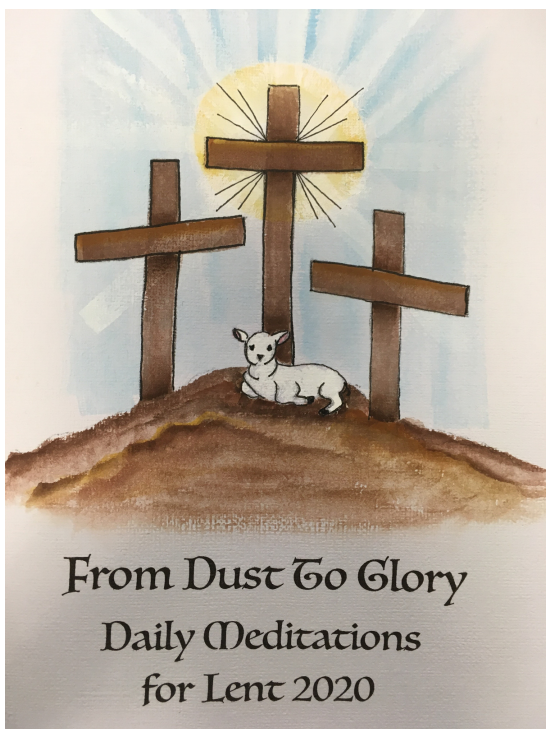
Our annual Lenten Devotional Booklet entitled *From Dust to Glory* will be ready for you on Sunday, 2/23.

This "in-house" publication is full of words of reflection to help guide your spiritual journey this Lent.

Meditations are written by members of our clergy, vestry, staff & fellow parishioners...and the finished product is sure to be a blessing to all who take the time to read it daily as we head towards Easter.

Please make sure you pick up a copy in the narthex or church office before Ash Wednesday.

Special thanks to Jan Sims and the entire "From Dust to Glory" committee and all our writers for their time and dedication to this special project.





February Calendar



- 2/2 Souper Bowl Sunday - annual canned food drive
- 2/4 Centering Prayer, 1:00 pm in the Prayer Room
- 2/5 Confirmation Class, 7:00 pm
- 2/8 DOK monthly meeting
- 2/9 NEW SESSION of St. Margaret's 101 begins
- 2/9 Club 4-5, 12:30-2:00 pm in the Parish Hall
- 2/12 SAGES lunch & learn, 12:00 noon in the Parish Hall
- 2/17 Church Office Closed for President's Day
- 2/18 Centering Prayer, 1:00 pm in the Prayer Room
- 2/18 Vestry Business Meeting, 7:00 pm
- 2/21 Lenten Booklet Distribution
- 2/24 The Feast Day of Saint Matthias the Apostle, service at 7:00 pm
- 2/25 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 5:30 start in the Parish Hall
- 2/26 Ash Wednesday, services at 12 noon & 7:00 pm

Special Activities to Engage Seniors:

SAGES LUNCH & LEARN is 2/12

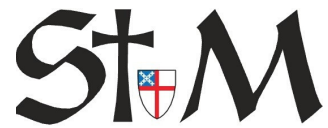
All senior adults in the parish are invited to learn how **Galilee Ministries of East Charlotte**, an Episcopal-sponsored ministry is helping immigrants & refugees make a new life. Group will meet in the Parish Hall at noon on Wednesday, 2/12. Lunch is \$10. RSVP by Monday, 2/10 at noon with this link: <https://stm.breezechms.com/form/SAGESfeb2020>

A look into Lent

Ash Wednesday is the first of the forty days of Lent, named for the custom of placing blessed ashes on the foreheads of worshipers. **The ashes are a sign of penitence and a reminder of mortality**, and may be imposed with the sign of the cross.



Ash Wednesday services at St. Margaret's will be held on Wednesday, 2/26 at 12:00 noon & 7:00 pm.



Rector

The Reverend Fr. Todd R. Dill+
dill@saintmargarets.net

Senior Assistant to the Rector for Pastoral Care

The Reverend Fr. Lito Santos+
santos@saintmargarets.net

Assistant to the Rector

The Reverend Fr. Eric Grubb+
grubb@saintmargarets.net

Director of Music & Organist

Mara DeLuca
music@saintmargarets.net

Executive Assistant to the Rector

Joanie Cameron
parishadmin@saintmargarets.net

Assistant to the Rector for Youth Ministries

Elizabeth Pfeifer
pfeifer@saintmargarets.net

Assistant to the Rector for Preschool Ministries

Dana Plate'
preschool@saintmargarets.net

Assistant to the Rector for Finance & Accounting

Denise Kiliniski
finance@saintmargarets.net

Assistant to the Rector for Children's Ministry

Catherine Chintala
childrensministry@saintmargarets.net

Assistant to the Rector for Newcomers & Parish Life

Traci Scott
connection@saintmargarets.net

2020 Vestry

Chris Cox, Senior Warden
Amy Gorman, Junior Warden

Julie Jenkins
Terry Anderson
Mike Murphy
Densel White
Jessica Parker
Chad Hinton
Brian Scott
Warren McDonald, Treasurer

