

MAGGIE'S CROSS

March 2020



A Letter From The Rector

BY FATHER TODD R. DILL+

What to do for Lent

I thought that I had figured out my spiritual disciplines for Lent this year. The Church calls us to honor the season of Lent by...self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. So along with deeper study and more prayer, I decided that I would abstain from coffee again this year as my discipline of self-denial. Sure, I had done this before, but I do really love coffee, and giving this up would involve some significant sacrifice on my part. But as I passed through Ash Wednesday and into the weekend, I began to feel that I was missing the mark somehow. Nothing prevents me from changing my disciplines for the season, so I began to contemplate more intentionally what I might be missing, and what I might be called to do differently to mark this season of Lent.

To start, I asked myself this question; "What things in my life distract me from God?" As I contemplated this question and went about my normal routine on my day off, the Lord began to show me very quickly the answer. I soon noticed that no matter what I did, there was always some sort of background noise going on. When I walked with Cooper for an hour, I was listening to

a sports radio show on my phone. As I worked around the house, the television was on, despite the fact that I was rarely watching it. As I drove around town to do errands and go to appointments, the car radio was on even though I wasn't paying any particular attention to it. My day was filled with overwhelming noise and distractions; things that I wasn't really concentrating on but that were diverting some of my attention away from the experience at hand.

"So for Lent, I'm giving up the noise. I'm giving up the constant need to have things on in the background.

I'm giving up being distracted, of multi-tasking, and I am embracing focusing on the single thing before me, whatever that thing or person is."

Whether that is God, my spouse, my family, or countless other things, I am endeavoring to focus on that one thing alone, with no distractions. After just a few days, I have quickly realized that this is going to be very difficult for me indeed. This will be a tough habit to break. I instinctively want to turn on the

radio when I am in the car. When I go into my living room, I am drawn to turn the TV on. This is going to be a very interesting Lent indeed!

What distracts you in your daily life? What gets in the way of your relationship with God or with each other? Where is the noise in your life that fills a space that might just cover up the whispers of Jesus calling out to you? As you contemplate the disciplines that you might take on this season, look at the things that distract you, tire you out, and inhibit your relationship with Jesus, and consider giving those things up. Give up the busyness, the need to be productive, and take some intentional time a live in the moment. You might just find out that God has been waiting for you, right there, in those unnoticed sacred spaces.

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.

Know that I am praying for you and your family during this Holy season of Lent!

- Fr. Todd+

dill@saintmargarets.net



Father Todd will hear **confessions** during Lent, on Tuesdays from 1:30 - 2:30 or by individual appointments. Starting 3/25 **FREE PRAYER** at *Sweetwaters* every Wednesday from 1:30 - 2:30.

God's discipline



BY FATHER LITO SANTOS+

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We begin the season of Holy Lent as we celebrate Ash Wednesday. What an awesome period in our spiritual life. It guides us to concentrate on three important things: *Prayer, Penitence and Participation.*

Prayer is the foundational activity and practice that we are invited to faithfully do each day. It gives us intimate and direct moments of trusting conversation with our Father in heaven. We allow our heart and soul to lift and elevate our daily needs and yearnings. We pray to be with the main source of our being.

Penitence is the necessary element of our Lenten discipline. We allow ourselves to be most conscious of the weakness and failures of our daily lives. Let not your day end without making a conscious act of penance and let your soul be cleansed and nourished as you draw your day to a close. You will reap the serene and healthy gift of peace in your life.

Prayer and Penitence should naturally lead us to **participation** and involvement. We need to actively get involved in the life of our family and community. We cannot be isolated, aloof and remain an island in all the happenings in our life. Jesus remained connected and involved in the lives of the people around him. He invites us to do the same. Let your life be most productive as you engage in your surroundings each day.

I read an internet invite that encourages and sustains the spirit: If you are concerned about the Coronavirus or just trying to stay healthy, then boosting your immune system is a good idea. The season of Lent is a time to boost our spiritual life so that we maintain our soul for our eternal well-being.

Have a blessed and healthy season of Lent. - Fr. Lito+

Questions of Faith



BY FATHER ERIC GRUBB

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We are well into our 40-day journey of Lent. This season began for us with Ash Wednesday, a time when Christians gather for Eucharist and for the imposition of ashes on the forehead in the sign of the cross. As each person receives the ashes, the priest says, ***“Remember that you are dust and to dust, you shall return.”*** This line comes directly from scripture in Genesis 3:19. So the short answer to our question is that we use ashes as a symbol and reminder of our own mortality.

This, however, should not be seen as a morbid task. The point of reflecting on our own mortality is to help us see that life, in view of death, becomes all the more precious and imperative.

After taking this seriously, we can truly enter into the season of Lent that is a kind of spring cleaning of the soul. During Lent, we are to take on practices like prayer, fasting, acts of charity because they help us to live more intentionally with the God who made us and to whom we will return.

- Father Eric+

Why do we use ashes on Ash Wednesday?

“...the short answer to our question is that we use ashes as a symbol and reminder of our own mortality.”

Youth Spotlight



BY ELIZABETH PFEIFER
ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR
FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

YOUTH in ACTION

EYC will meet every Sunday in March! Please make plans to join us as we have five weeks in a row of EYC meetings! Haven't been to a meeting in a bit (or ever)? You are always welcome! We meet in the second room on the left as you come in from Crane Rd- with the gigantic sofa. All 6th-12th graders and friends are welcome.

Make plans to join us for the most fun you can have at 6:30am on Saturday, April 4th! Our youth group will man water stations for the **Follow Your Heart 5K** in Monroe. This race, organized by Heart for Monroe, supports our local Title I schools along with formerly housing insecure families who receive beds and bedding through local agencies. This is an early morning race (8:00am start) and we will meet at church at 6:30am to head to Monroe and set up our stations. We will return to the church at 10:15am. To sign up, visit: <https://stm.breezechms.com/form/fyh5k>. All parishioners are welcome to participate in this amazing community event. For more information, visit: <https://heartformonroe.com/events/follow-your-heart-5k/>

EYC Summer Mission Trip to Virginia Beach,
Sun-Fri, June 28th-July 3rd:

Current 8th-12th graders are invited to join us as we travel to Virginia Beach, VA for a week of serving in a hands-on capacity through a variety of small home repair projects just inland from VA Beach. The cost is \$425 (financial assistance available); \$125 deposit due to reserve your spot. Registration is on a first come, first reserved basis and will close on Sunday, March 22nd. For more information and to register, visit: <https://stm.breezechms.com/form/eycmision20>.



Thank you to our volunteers Meghan, Annie & Briley who spent a Saturday morning at The Closet Ministry in Monroe to help get ready for the Annual Heart for Monroe Prom Dress event.



Shrove Tuesday brought out many pancake eaters and lots of youth helpers to make the annual event a success. Shown above are: Joseph Henry, Nathan, Madi & Dylan who learned quickly how much our parishioners like their bacon. Below are Marilyn & Claire. Special thanks to Erin Nelson for supervising!



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



BY CATHERINE CHINTALA

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR FOR CHILDRENS MINISTRY

Thank you for allowing the Sunday School Program to be part of your child's faith formation! It's been a wonderful Sunday School year filled with fun, learning, and growing together in our faith! The children have accomplished so much, including:

- Taking an exciting journey through the Bible that started with the story of David & Goliath and ended with the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead
- Learning through service projects to benefit Urban Ministry, Bright Blessings, and Canine Companions for Independence
- Digging into our church calendar and learning why we celebrate Advent, Epiphany, and Lent
- Creating beautiful artwork that answered the questions: "What would St. Margaret of Scotland see if she visited our church today?" and "What gifts will you bring Jesus during Epiphany?"

Introducing St. Margaret's Family Bingo!

St. Margaret's Family Bingo

Please make sure to pick up your bingo card and get ready to play! Each square features an easy family activity, such as visiting a park, sharing some screen-free time together, checking out a faith formation website, or baking cookies. All of the activities are a fun and flexible way to spend time together, and are even a great way to observe the Sabbath! Once all of the squares are completed, please email a picture of your completed card to childrensministry@saintmargarets.net.

Make a dozen cookies to support the Kairos Prison Ministry (due by Mar 10th)	Visit a park and enjoy God's creation	Check out the Faith at Home website (forms.churchfaithathome.org)	Enjoy a snack of pretzels-and go to bulldfaith.org to learn why they are a traditional snack during Lent
Say hello to someone new at church today	Download and color a Bible poster from bibleproject.org	Bring 3 non-perishable food items for the red wagon at church	Choose a prayer from the BCP (pp. 814-835) and recite it together
Participate in a Holy Week service such as Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, or Good Friday	Write & mail a note saying 'thank you' to someone who has made you smile	Read Matthew 26:26-30 as a reminder of why we have weekly Eucharist	Do a SCREEN FREE family night with games, art, baking, conversation, etc.
Go to saintmargarets.net and add a profile photo to your SSM Connect account	Look up 'Saint Margaret of Scotland' on Wikipedia and learn something new!	Go through your bookshelf: can you find any books you've outgrown to donate to Promising Pages?	Go to saintmargarets.net and read the latest copy of the parish newsletter

myfreebingocards.com

Our Sunday School program would not be possible without the dedication and commitment of our volunteer Sunday School teachers!

These parishioners have been so generous with their time, and have played an active role in the faith formation of the children here at St. Margaret's:

- Rebecca Bednar
- Keri Collins
- Laurie Cramer
- Dawn Fell
- Amy Gorman
- Page Hinton
- Philip Huff
- Jenny Marlier
- Aaron Parker
- Jamie Peters
- Terri Rudy
- Michelle Stephens
- Sarah Whalen
- Christine Wilkins

Thank you

SAVE THE DATE: VBS will be **June 22-26** this summer.

Questions? Please email childrensministry@saintmargarets.net



Parish Partners



BY TRACI SCOTT

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR
FOR NEWCOMERS & PARISH LIFE

Our newest members will be paired up in our **“Parish Partners”** program, with veteran St. Margaret’s parishioners. This will provide a way to begin connecting with others here to begin making this their church home.

All parishioners are invited to come meet our newcomers during a **“parish life coffee hour”** on Sunday, March 8, from 10:15-11:00 am in the Parish Hall.

Also..to **better connect**, our church office is on a mission to have a profile picture of everyone in our online membership directory that we call StM Connect! If you have never uploaded a picture of yourself to the directory, please email one to Traci Scott at connection@saintmargarets.net and she’ll do it for you. This really helps us all put faces with names and get to know each other better.

Calling all friendly faces! We need more volunteers for our Greeter Ministry. It’s a simple job....just arrive about 15-20 minutes ahead of the worship service to open the door for parishioners and welcome them in. It’s a simple act, but it makes a big impact on visitors and members alike. If you would like to be added to our Greeter list, please contact Traci Scott at connection@saintmargarets.net

Our **next session of StM 101 Class** is scheduled for April 19, 26 & May 3.

WELCOME

***We officially welcome
the following new faces
to our parish***

- **Clyde & Sandra Chapman**
- **Ben Sellers**
- **Jason & Jean Wilson**
- **Raoul & Patty de Rohan**
- **Lynda Kohn**
- **Flynt Kohn**



**Interested in being part of a future
“Parish Partner” program?**

Please email Traci at connection@saintmargarets.net

Interested in ordering a custom nametag?

Please use this link to order yours today:

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

St. Margaret's is currently looking for a part- time Bookkeeper to join our ministry team

Denise Kilinski, our staff member who has overseen the finances of the parish for over 6 years, has decided to step down from her ministry to spend more time with her family and open up the opportunity for more time to travel. Denise has been an important part of Saint Margaret's and has brought skill and dedication to her work. In this time of transition, we ask the parish to keep Denise and the entire Kilinski family in your prayers as they begin a new chapter in their lives.

We also pray that this job opening will create an opportunity for the right and qualified person to help our parish as we continue to grow. Our hopes are to have a replacement by the end of March. ***For those interested in learning more about this position, please email parishadmin@saintmargarets.net.***



***For a detailed job
description,
please click this
link:***

CLICK HERE





MINISTRY MINUTE: *WORSHIP & MUSIC SNAPSHOT*

During the season of Lent, you will notice many changes at St. Margaret's worship services. These variations remind us of the solemn nature of this season. Our liturgy is wonderful and mysterious, but these changes can be confusing! At times, I find myself frantically flipping through my Book of Common Prayer for the correct responses.

Do you ever wish you had a better understanding of the "why" behind our rituals? If so, I invite you to take seriously Fr. Todd's call to us—come to worship regularly this Lent. In addition to worshipping regularly, I would encourage you to consider serving others through St. Margaret's Worship and Music Ministries, as a Lenten discipline. I feel by regularly serving during worship we can deepen our faith.

Our Worship and Music Ministry is composed of many dynamic groups, led by some wonderful volunteers. If you enjoy connecting with and guiding newcomers and parishioners, being a Greeter or Usher might be right for you. If you feel drawn to reading the Lessons and Prayers of the People, we have a need for Lectors. Children and teens (grades 4 and above) are welcome to serve as Torch Bearers, and later as Crucifers and Priest Cross Bearers. Confirmed Episcopalians can assist in administration of the sacrament as Lay Eucharistic Ministers. Vergers are critical volunteers who oversee many of the behind the scenes details of our services, but also serve as visible procession leaders. If you would enjoy helping in an important, but not as visible role, we are in need of support running our Sound Board during services. Additionally, the Altar Guild and the Guild of Joseph of Arimathea serve to ready our church for worship by the reverent care and preparation of the sanctuary. The Guild of Joseph of Arimathea serves a special function to prepare for the sanctuary for funeral services and support the families of the departed.

Training is provided in all ministries, and you can choose to serve at a frequency that makes sense to you. Schedules are set up quarterly through an online system, based on preferences (service time and frequency), and we ask volunteers update their availability prior to the schedule finalizing. Consider serving in a ministry as a family – children as torch or priest cross bearers, while a parent serves as an usher or lay eucharistic minister.

Additionally, we have a thriving music program at St. Margaret's, with an adult choir of about eighteen members, and children's choir, under the direction of Mara DeLuca. Both choirs always welcome new members. It's a great way to grow as a musician and make new friends! Our adult choir practices Wednesday evenings from 7:30-9:00 PM and sings at the 11:15 Sunday service. Children's choir practices Wednesday afternoons: junior singers (ages 4 -1st grade) practice from 4:00-4:30, and older children (2nd – 8th grade) practice from 4:30-5:30. The children's choir sings at one 9:00 Sunday service a month. Children in the parish will have an opportunity to participate in Music Camp this summer from July 13-17 for 1st graders- rising 8th graders – mark your calendars!

Feel free to contact me if you have questions about any ministry, and I am happy to provide you with more information. Additionally, you may contact Janet Mills (janet@mills-mills.com), our executive verger, for any guidance.

-Jessica Parker

*Ministries under the
Worship & Music
umbrella are:*

CHOIR/MUSIC

ALTAR GUILD

ACOLYTES

CHALICE BEARERS

EUCCHARISTIC VISITORS

LECTORS

USHERS

GREETERS

VERGERS

***For more information on
getting involved in any
of these ministry
opportunities,
please contact:***

Jessica Parker,
Vestry Oversight
jessica.cole.parker@gmail.com

Did you know?



LADIES RETREAT

Lenten retreat in the mountains

Thirty women in the parish are headed to Blowing Rock Conference Center 3/13 - 3/15 for what is sure to be a refreshing retreat in the mountains. Please pray for their safety as they travel and for the Holy Spirit to guide them in growing in faith and friendships.

ROOF REPAIRS

Under Construction

Have you noticed all the shingles missing on our roof?

Well...please note we are literally on top of it! Repairs should be complete by the end of March. This crazy, windy and rainy winter has taken a toll on us being the "highest point" in Union County. Please know we are in regular communication with our insurance company on this topic and things will be looking better soon.



COOKIES PLEASE!

Kairos Prison Ministry 

The Kairos Prison Ministry team is heading to Kershaw Correctional Institution March 12-15 to bring the light of Jesus to a very dark place. Part of the program is delivering homemade cookies to 1,400 inmates at the facility. The parishioners of St. M, along with several other churches, are asked to bake cookies for this effort. Our goal is 200 dozen cookies.

Please see the board next to the Outreach table and take as many tags as you are able to bake. Return them to the church on or before Tuesday, March 10. Please package cookies in quart size bags with 12 cookies in each bag. If you have questions contact Sarah Whalen sarahkbwhalen@gmail.com or Jennifer Jenkins at jenannjenkins@gmail.com.



LENTEN SERIES

Tuesday Nights in Lent



Lenten Nights-Signs of Life: Why Church Matters

Join us on Tuesdays during Lent (3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/31) from 7:00- 8:20 PM for a time of worship followed dinner and conversation. We will start with Holy Eucharist in the Nave then move to the parish hall for a simple dinner and conversation. Our conversations will explore "Signs of Life: Why Church Matters," a series made by the Episcopal Monks of the Society of St. John the Evangelist that explores significant symbols in the Christian life: light, water, food, shelter, and community.

To help plan for dinner, please RSVP to Fr. Eric at grubb@saintmargarets.net.

Please note:

this series is not continuous, so please feel free to attend one or all of these evenings as your schedule allows.



March Calendar

THE SEASON OF LENT

- 3/1 Sunday School Teacher Recognition
- 3/3 Centering Prayer Time, 1:00 pm in the Prayer Room
- 3/3 Lenten Series with Father Eric: 7:00 pm *every Tuesday in March
- 3/8 Daylight Savings: SPRING AHEAD
- 3/8 Parish Life coffee hour, 10:15 in the Parish Hall
- 3/11 SAGES, lunch & learn at Galilee Ministries of East Charlotte
- 3/13-3/15 Women's Retreat in Blowing Rock, NC
- 3/15 Club 4-5, 12:30-2:00 pm in the Parish Hall
- 3/17 Centering Prayer Time, 1:00 pm in the Prayer Room
- 3/28 Men's Monthly Fellowship Breakfast, 8:00 am in the Parish Hall
- 3/29 Fixing it for Christ information session, 10:15 - 11:00 in the Parish Hall



Can you fit a little gardening into your March calendar?

We have some clean up that needs to be done in our *Giving Garden* before planting begins. No experience is necessary (everyone can pull out weeds) and there are no age requirements. We are flexible with schedules and time availability. If your student is in need of service hours, this might be a great possibility! **For more information, please contact Ian Caterina at: ian.caterina@hotmail.com.**



A prayer request from Bishop Curry

As the season of Lent is here, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry invites Episcopalians and people of faith to turn and pray on behalf of our nation:

We humbly pray that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of your favor and glad to do your will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in your Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to your law, we may show forth your praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in you to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Rector

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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