

MAGGIE'S CROSS



A Letter from our Rector

BY FATHER TODD R. DILL+

It's Time to Gather Together for Sunday Mass

To be a community of people who follow Jesus is to be a people who gather for Mass. Our corporate worship of the Risen Lord provides us strength, encouragement, instruction, and the very presence of our Lord in the Eucharist, so that we might be nourished by His grace and be strengthened for the ministry entrusted to us. To be filled by the Son with His Body and Blood is to be transformed more into His likeness, that we might then go boldly into the world to proclaim His resurrection, serve others in His name, and live a transformed life of Jesus Christ.

That is one reason why, for me, these past fourteen months have been so heartbreaking. First and foremost, the loss of all of the dear souls to this disease has been devastating, and the disruption to our everyday lives of work, fellowship and play have been traumatic for so many. But we have also been prevented from worship, and while we need to be aware and

respectful of the potential harm of this virus to us physically, we must also be cognizant of the perils this year of isolation has presented to our spiritual health. Jesus gathers His people, connects His people, and builds a kingdom by bringing people together for worship, fellowship, prayer and service. From our earliest Scriptures, the people of God have always been called to honor the sabbath and keep it holy. For Christians that practice has always been to gather weekly for Mass. It is what we do, who we are, and it is vital for our spiritual, mental, and yes, physical well-being.

So I encourage you to come back to Mass. We have instituted a plethora protocols which I believe offer us the safest way possible to gather for worship. Masks are required, physical distancing is practiced, the use of the common cup has been suspended, the exchange of the peace has been altered, and all congregational singing has been eliminated for the time being. The staff and vestry also have been cleaning and sanitizing our worship space in between liturgies in order to keep clean our high contact areas, and new filters for our ventilation system have been installed in order to offer us a higher level of protection in our nave. If you are at high risk for this disease, or have complicating issues, please stay home and keep yourself safe until you feel more comfortable joining us. We will continue to offer our live stream of the 8:45 service so that

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you can continue to connect with us. But for the rest of us, I encourage you to come back.

Jesus makes Himself know to us in the breaking of the bread. He offers His very Self to those who gather together in His Name. There is no substitute for the giving of this divine gift that God offers us at His holy altar, and we need this ongoing protection against sin and Satan in order to thrive. So wear your masks, keep your physical distance, wash your hands, and if you so choose, get vaccinated.

But most importantly, come back to Mass!

Your priest,

-Fr. Todd+

dill@saintmargarets.net





Thoughts from Rev. Sarah

Rev. Sarah Hollar+

hollar@saintmargarets.net

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9 am - 4 pm

704-243-3523, ext. 222

HOLY CRYING

It's spring, trees are budding, grass is coming in lush, the golden dusting of pollen has arrived. It's spring and signs of new life are all around us and signs of good news seem promising. We can visit with our families after long separations. We can think of possible vacations, the return of baseball, in person church and maybe even pared down versions of springtime rituals like proms and graduations. Vaccines are available, area job postings are growing, these are all signs of, and reasons to, hope.

We should be relieved, elated, refreshed, maybe even euphoric seeing these signs after the long hard season of Covidtide we've endured. We're still here, better is coming. And yet.... There is a vague often unspoken feeling. There is a sense running counter to optimism. There is a weariness still draping itself over so many of us.

Even as we lean into the positive movement forward, we carry some skepticism. What comes next will not be a return to what was. What comes next will be a transition period, a time of figuring out the new normal. Transitions by definition mean change, and change, even positive change bring stress. Stress at a time when we've already stretched our bandwidth, our reserves in handling the new, the unknown, the unpredictable is not welcomed.

In addition to our caution in embracing this transition and navigating the new normal, we have all experienced real loss these past 14 months. There are family interactions we will never recover. There are memorable events which will remain uncelebrated. These months aged people we love at an accelerated rate. We all know someone who lost someone too soon. The literal and figurative lock down frayed some unraveling relationships past the point of holding. We've been living in crisis mode and the trauma is real.

Pandemic pain is not the only wound. Concurrently, we've dealt with the growing awareness that our nation is not in a golden age. We're seeing cracks and rot of deferred maintenance left too long unattended. As an industrious moral people, it's disheartening that civil discourse and compromise for the common good is so elusive at this time. And so, on any given day we can find ourselves bone weary, soul tired. On any given day, we can feel badly that we aren't more effusive or grateful. We can fall into the trap of comparative grief. Well, so many have it worse than me, I shouldn't complain or bemoan. We feel the feels and they are unpleasant! What is our answer and where is our help?

Beloved, there is the LAMENT. The Lament is God's gift to his beloved. It has been said to cry is human, to lament is faithful. Through Holy Scripture in both the first and second testaments, people of God have raised their voices in anguish and frustration, irritation and grief. They've poured out the truth of their hearts which includes their anger and confusion. They've railed to God, where are you? Why oh God, why? When will this end? How could you? When will you come back to me? Jonah, Job, the Book of Psalms, Jesus in his way in the Garden of Gethsemane, Thomas in the upper room all experienced the power and healing effects of Lament.

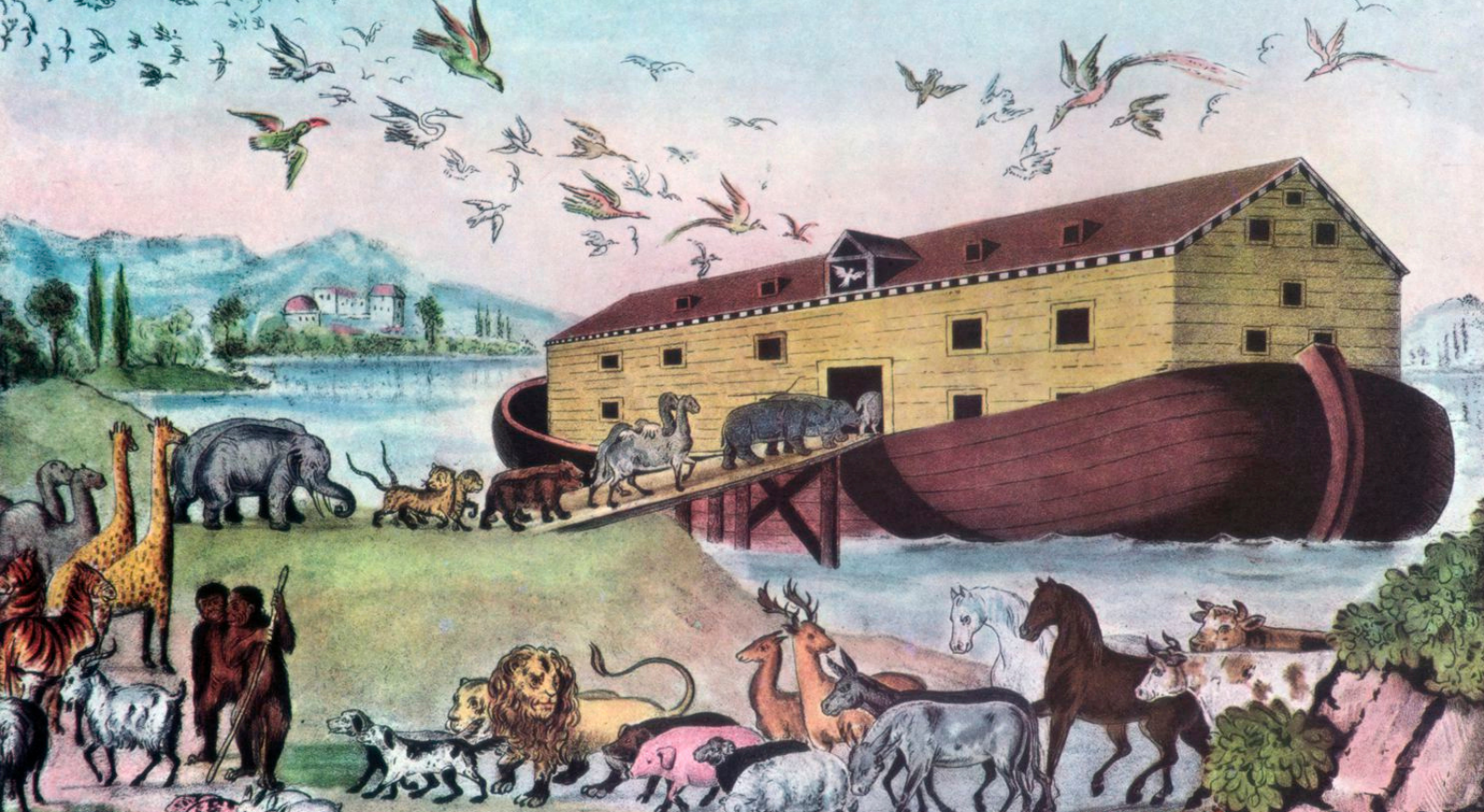
The Lament is curative in two parts. It begins by asserting that pain is real. Trauma is real. Our reactions are legitimate. We are sane to feel overwhelmed. The Lament asserts God is real. God is present. God is strong enough to hold our discomfort and not be bowed under it. God is also gracious enough to not begrudge our rant, and more importantly our inability to handle the hardships that sometimes befall us. The Lament then moves on to the acknowledgement that God has heard our distress and is attentive to our plea. There is a breath, a pause, a settling. In that space, we rest. We come to ourselves once again. We reconnect with our truth, our faith. God has us. Even in this, God is somehow, somewhere working good and we shall not be abandoned.

The Lament is holy crying. Holy crying that washes our souls clean from doubt and burden and sets us right again ready to see the signs of God's grace in our lives and circumstance. In the coming weeks when the flowering world signals one message but your soul feels another, remember God's gift of the Lament and let your holy tears join the rain of the season. Both bring welcomed growth.

Blessings,

**"...let your holy tears join the
rain of the season."**





From the Deacon's Bench *Animals in the Bible*

Deacon Ludwig Wallner
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The Old and New Testament have many references to animals to make a point.

Have you ever thought about the many references to animals that appear in the Bible? The Old and New Testament have many references to animals to make a point. Genesis has God giving mankind dominion over all creatures that swim in the sea, fly in the air and walk on dry land. Then we have the stories of the serpent and Eve. In Exodus we have the story of the snakes in the desert.

We are told that God provided a Ram as a sacrifice in place of Isaac. In stories regarding temple sacrifices we are told about sheep, goats, doves and bulls. The story of the Passover speaks of a lamb or a goat.

In the New Testament, we have the story of Peter and the disciples fishing and catching nothing until Jesus tells them to put down their nets. Jesus tells the story of the Good Shephard leaving the 99 sheep to look for the one lost. The story of the Prodigal Son has the son feeding swine. Jesus drives the unclean spirits named Legions into a herd of swine. Just to name a few.

During Holy Week, we have Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a colt and during His trial there is a reference to Him being led away in silence like a lamb to the slaughter.

With all the different references to animals, which animal do you think is mentioned the most times in the Bible?

This animal is mentioned approximately 8 times in both the Hebrew Bible and the Christian Bible; except that in the Hebrew Bible its name is Re'em while in the Christian Bible the name is translated Oryx.

While there is no specific description of the animal, and modern Bible translations do change the creature, it is referenced in the King James Bible in Numbers 23:22, Numbers 24:8, Psalm 22:21, Job 39:9-12, Isaiah 34:7, Deuteronomy 33:17, Psalm 92:10 and Psalm 29:6.

The animal that is named the most in the Bible is the Unicorn.



Youth Spotlight

BY ELIZABETH PFEIFER

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

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Late in April of 2020 I wrote the following for the May newsletter:

“There are a few things that are mainstays, even in a pandemic: teenagers are incredibly resilient, teenagers are creative and will spend their “quarantine time” in ways that still make me laugh, procrastination still reigns and teenagers will wait and wait, and wait some more, to do their remote learning work... Our students have always amazed me with their ability to cope and make the best of any situation... They may be disappointed but they know the adults around them are doing the best they can and so they emulate that attitude.”

More than a year into constantly changing schedules, expectations, rules, and requirements, the above has never been more applicable.

As we wrap up our undeniably odd schoolyear, I again want to say thank you! Thank you to our students, parents and volunteers who have changed schedules, altered their expectations, and understood that rules and requirements differ from place to place. Although our gatherings looked (and felt!) different, we still had thoughtful conversations about seeking God in our daily lives, showing God’s love to the world, played games, and got to know each other better.

Our weekly youth group gatherings would not be possible without the support of our dedicated adult volunteers who give their time and energy to supporting this ministry and our students. Thank you to: Madison Dill, Erin Nelson, Matt Saunders, and Molly Scialabba!

Stay tuned for details on summer 2021 plans. Our weekly Sunday meetings will be on hiatus until August but we look forward to seeing our students for a variety of different activities such as service projects, fellowship time, maybe a trip to Carowinds and lots of snacks!



Are you signed up for EYC text messages?

We have a mass texting system we use to communicate with parents and students. **Text stmyouth1 to 43506** and reply "yes" if prompted with an opt-in text message. This is the best way to stay up to date with EYC times, weather updates, last minute gatherings & more.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



BY CATHERINE CHINTALA
ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR
FOR CHILDRENS MINISTRY

The return of spring and warmer weather is always welcome after winter...and I felt that even more this year! Beautiful springtime weather and our beautiful St. Margaret's campus have been true blessings this year. I am so thankful that we have been able to gather outside as a church family, and even return to worship! With COVID protocols and social distancing, my family and I have safely attended events at church and have been able to do a few more "normal" things this spring. If you haven't done so already, I encourage you to stop in! Whether it is coming to a church service or attending an event like Club 4/5 or EYC, it feels great to be back in person again. After being out of the Sunday routine for so long, it can feel daunting to try and get everyone ready and out the door, but I promise it's worth it!

On March 27th we hosted an **outdoor Holy Week Gathering**, where parishioners of all ages came to the church campus for fellowship and learning. Stations of the Cross, beautifully created by our EYC students, were available for personal prayer and reflection. We also had many take-home resources to help prepare for Holy Week: palms, pop-up calendars, hot cross buns, formation materials, and "Holy Week in a Bag" kits. Our younger members got creative with cross crafts and an impromptu palm cross folding lesson.

We had our **annual Children's Easter Egg Hunt** on April 3rd. We were blessed with another beautiful (but chilly!) morning. Parish and preschool families were present to receive an Easter blessing and hunt for candy-filled eggs. Although the event looked a bit different that it has in the past, it was a wonderful opportunity to see friends in person and

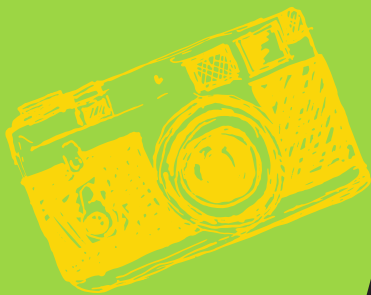


mark the coming joy of the Easter season! Special thanks to Michelle Stephens and Page Hinton for volunteering at this event.

Club 4/5 has continued to meet outdoors on a biweekly basis for activities, fellowship, and learning together. We have one more meeting scheduled on Sunday, May 2nd from 1:30-2:30pm. We have had so much fun with our 4th and 5th graders that we want to meet with our younger elementary students as well! On April 25th the 2nd and 3rd graders are meeting from 1:30-2:30pm for an Outdoor Fellowship Gathering. On May 16th we have a gathering for all Kindergarten and 1st grade students. These outdoor gatherings will be very informal, and will focus on fellowship and games, with a very short devotion. It will be a relaxed way for our students to see each other and have fun at church. [Click here](#) to register your 2nd/3rd grader and [click here](#) to register your K/1st grader. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at childrensministry@saintmargarets.net

I hope you enjoy the warm weather, the longer days, and the joy of this Easter season!

A SNAPSHOT OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Matthew 19:14
But Jesus said,
Suffer little
children, and
forbid them not,
to come unto
me: for of such
is the kingdom
of heaven.



3/27/21 Adalyn, Caitlin, and Emma Sepulveda
Holy Week Drop In



Club 4-5

Proverbs 8:32

Now therefore hearken
unto me, O ye children:
for blessed are they that
keep my ways.



4/13/21 Annual Easter Egg Hunt
The Dunand Family

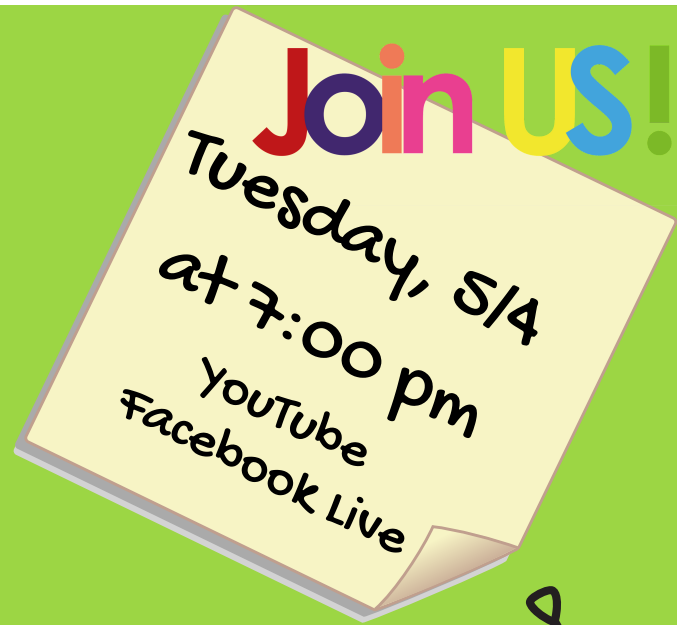
OUTREACH & PARISH CONNECTION



BY TRACI SCOTT

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR
FOR OUTREACH & PARISH
CONNECTION

connection@saintmargarets.net



5/4 Virtual conversation on WAYS TO HELP

Join us Tuesday, May 4 at 7pm to hear our Outreach coordinator, Traci Scott, discuss ways we can help locally with Kerry Guley, the Operations Director for Common Heart.

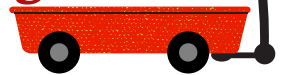
Common Heart distributed food to over 17,700 people in Union County last year while food insecurity was on the rise due to the pandemic (nearly a 50% increase).

They operate 4 traditional pantries in our area, along with a strong home delivery network. In addition, they offer educational and training programs to help people climb out of poverty.

You can read more about Common Heart [HERE](#) and learn about specific ways to help on May 4. Please plan to join us live on You Tube channel or Facebook page.

Ongoing Outreach

Fill our Red Wagon!



We invite weekly donations of canned goods or other non-perishables to our on-going outreach to Loaves & Fishes of Union County.

Donations may be left in the labeled bin at the back door by the playground or brought inside the back door and left in the hall for pick up. We have dedicated volunteers that deliver the food weekly. You may also shop our [Amazon Wish List](#) and have it shipped directly to the church.



**COMMON
HEART**

a small revolution of kindness

OUTREACH & PARISH CONNECTION

CON'T



- **Welcome to these parishioners who recently joined St. Margaret's:**
 - *James & Karen Smith*
 - *Jason, Jean & Julianne Wilson*
 - *Art Elsey*
- Join your fellow St. Margaret's friends this May at Common Heart in Indian Trail to work in their food pantry and help prepare for upcoming food distribution events. We'll sort food, stock their shelves and prepare boxes to be delivered in our community. (I'm waiting to hear back with confirmation on the actual dates)
- Community Worker "Snack Attacks" are such a fun way to spread love in our little part of the world! In February, we started taking treats to local workers to show them our appreciation for all that they do. We visited the Atrium Emergency Room in Waxhaw, the Waxhaw Police Department and the Wesley Chapel Fire Department and also added them to our prayer list. We now need more volunteers to continue this effort throughout the summer. **Please let Traci know if you can help. StM Outreach will reimburse you for the cost.**

THANK YOU!

A **HUGE thank you** to parishioner Ian Caterina for getting the St. Margaret's **Giving Garden** ready for the growing season and doing all of the planting.

From May to September, we will need weekly volunteers to drive the beautiful produce over to Common Heart in Indian Trail where they will distribute it to those in need in our community.

If you are interested in helping with those deliveries or garden maintenance, please contact Traci.





QUARANTINE Q & A:

A GET TO KNOW WITH DAVID & JODI ROURKE

We've been married 35 years, no children. Our dog, Enzo, is our baby! Jodi was raised in the Episcopal Church- David, well, let's say there have been a few religious experiences growing up! We both grew up in Florida- Jodi in Ft. Lauderdale and David in the Jacksonville area. Jodi attended FSU (Go Noles!) and David spent time in the US Air Force after school ultimately completing undergraduate studies at UNC Charlotte. He is currently enrolled in a Masters program at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

How long have you been at St. Margaret's and how did you find us?

Since 2006. Jodi found St. Margaret's as part of a weekend women's seminar in 2005. We moved from S. Charlotte to Marvin in late 2005 and later made the transition from Holy Comforter in Charlotte.

What's one thing you have learned about yourself over the past year?

It is hard to narrow to one. David had spinal decompression surgery in late 2019, we entered the COVID world in 2020... We had to adjust, as did everyone, to what became a change in daily life. We found that little things, like a walk in a different neighborhood can be as refreshing as a visit to a new city! Pay attention to the little things. Listen for God's whispers.

What does a typical Saturday night look like for you?

With the stay at home orders, it became pretty much like Sunday-Friday! We do like to have a 'movie night' usually of the Hallmark Channel variety but tend to do that Friday. Since we moved Jodi's mom from an Assisted Living Facility to a private home, we usually spend Sat afternoon and early evening with her then may get carry out (curbside delivery only!) and a quiet evening at home.

Would your best friend call you an introvert or extrovert? Why?

Jodi- extrovert. Not shy at all. David- moved from introverted to more of an extrovert. I still like my alone time and quiet walks/runs but, I like talking to anyone especially if they are out with their children and pets!

What's your favorite comfort food?

Jodi- Mac-n-Cheese! David - Ben and Jerry's Chubby Hubby! (Is that a food?)

What are you watching right now on TV or what was your favorite show during the past year?

We don't watch a lot based on our schedules. Typically DVR then catch up. The Hallmark Season specials are usually a part of the mix. Recently, we watched the All American and Virgin River series. David is watching The Chosen-the series about Jesus life.

What's one thing you can't wait to do when Covid is over (besides come back to church!)?

Visit family and friends!





QUARANTINE Q & A:

A GET TO KNOW WITH ASHLEY CASPERS & FAMILY

We have 2 kids, Ainsley, a freshman at Cuthbertson and Brady, a 3rd grader at Kensington. We have 2 dogs and 6 cats. We have been at St. Margaret's since 2012. We drove past the church after we moved here and after one visit I knew it was the place for us.

What does a typical Saturday night look like for you?
Since COVID, take-out and backyard campfire.

How did you celebrate Easter?
We were traveling over Easter and spent a beautiful day on the beach.

What's your favorite comfort food?
Italian food and pizza.

What are you watching right now on TV or what was your favorite show during the past year?
Currently we are obsessed with The Crown.

What's one thing you can't wait to do when Covid is over (besides come back to church!)?
Go to Europe. We were planning to go last summer.

"We drove past the church after we moved here and after one visit I knew it was the place for us."





A VIEW FROM THE VESTRY

SENIOR WARDEN



Jessica Parker

Hello fellow parishioners! This Easter season feels truly joyful, as we finally meet together again in larger numbers for communal worship. The vestry continues to work with the clergy and staff of St. Margaret's to move forward with informed financial planning, improvement and maintenance to our buildings and grounds, and the reopening of our church in a safe manner.

In April, St. Margaret's applied for and was granted forgiveness for the full amount of our Paycheck Protection Program loan of \$136,950. This amount will appear as income in our May financial statements. The vestry has decided to allocate this money to our capital reserve fund. We anticipate upcoming maintenance and repairs to our building, including carpet replacement, masonry work, flat roof repairs, and drainage mitigation. Additionally, we will reexamine the full reserve study, drafted in 2014, to see if with staff, vestry, and contractor input, we can better understand our annual savings strategy for future buildings and grounds needs.

At our April meeting, we heard from our organist and choirmaster, Mara DeLuca. Mara shared how, pre-covid, much of her time was spent with the choir. She is now resuming choral singing with small ensembles of three to four singers at our two Sunday services. Many of the adult choristers are eager to start! Throughout 2020 and early 2021, Mara has done so much to keep adult and child choristers connected and making music. In the summer of 2020, she organized a virtual choral piece with the adults and a virtual music camp for the children. In the late summer and fall, the adults met up outside for a little socializing. Cantors were allowed at services when we resumed indoor worship and then during the live stream. At Christmas, the adult choir met in small groups and recorded music for Christmas Eve, and this was also done for a Lenten Evensong. Many thanks to Mara for her leadership and talent. We are blessed to have such a wonderful music program at St. Margaret's.


As we resume larger in person worship services and welcome more visitors to our church, St. Margaret's needs the support of ministry volunteers. We have a need for ushers at all services. Ushers fill the vital role of greeting parishioners and guests and ensuring many aspects of the service run smoothly. If you would like to serve, please email the office at parishadmin@stmargarets.net or myself, and we will connect you with the ministry organizer for training. We look forward to seeing you during in-person worship at St. Margaret's soon.

Email Jessica at: [**jessica.cole.parker@gmail.com**](mailto:jessica.cole.parker@gmail.com)



May Calendar

In our continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are following the direction of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina.

- **Saturday Worship: Rite II, 5:00 pm**
 - 100 seat capacity. [Sign up needed.](#)
- **Sunday Worship: Rite II, 8:45 am** LIVESTREAMED on our YouTube Channel
 [CLICK HERE for our YouTube channel](#)
 - 100 seat capacity. [Sign up needed.](#)
- **Sunday Worship: Rite II, 11:00 am**
 - 100 seat capacity. [Sign up needed.](#)



**We'd love to see you
this weekend.**

*It's time to trade in your coffee & slippers
& come back to church.
We're saving a seat for you!*



Please note: Our church office will now be open
M- Th from 9-2 and on Fridays from 9-12 noon
with limited staffing. Drop in visits are not allowed.

Rector

The Reverend Fr. Todd R. Dill+

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Priest Associate

The Reverend Sarah Hollar+

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Assistant to the Rector for Outreach

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Traci Scott

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2021 Vestry

Terry Anderson

Mike Murphy

Densel White

Jessica Parker

Chad Hinton

Brian Scott

Kathyann Dugan

Hugh Laughlin

Simon Haarhoff

Warren McDonald, Treasurer