

# MAGGIE'S CROSS



## From the Rector

BY FATHER TODD R. DILL+

# *I'm Thankful for the 65%!*

The Episcopal Church has recently released their latest report on church attendance. For many years, mainline churches have seen a steady decline in church membership and attendance, and this trend was greatly accelerated during the lockdowns of the pandemic. The latest data reveals that the Episcopal Church nationally has seen a decrease in worship attendance of 35% of its membership, a drastic decline to say the least. At Saint Margaret's, we have locally experienced that exact same reality. Before the pandemic, Saint Margaret's would average 390 people in worship on any given weekend. Today, that number is 220. As you can imagine, this has created much consternation amongst the leadership and the clergy of the church, and I do have to admit that I have not been immune from some of that worry. I love our church so deeply and want nothing more than for it to continue to thrive and bear witness to the Risen Lord.

But a funny thing happened to me while I was on sabbatical. One of the things that I love about walking portions of the Camino is that it offers me the chance to let go of all distractions and to really focus of God's voice and what He might be trying to say to me. At some point on my walk, God whispered to me to stop worrying about His Church, and to spend more of my time in gratitude for the faithful disciples whom I have been called to serve. I found that message so liberating, and frankly so helpful. This parish has hundreds of faithful souls that are committed to worship, committed to prayer, and committed to the building of God's Kingdom. I returned from sabbatical not only personally refreshed and re-energized, but more importantly, profoundly grateful for this church and the people who have dedicated themselves to our shared vision and ministry, and who walk together in faith to follow Jesus and build His Kingdom!

As Jesus began to show Himself to His disciples after His resurrection, Jesus found a very small group of followers who were scared, uncertain, and anxious. As Jesus prepared to ascend to His Father, He left them with these words:

*Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and*

*said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

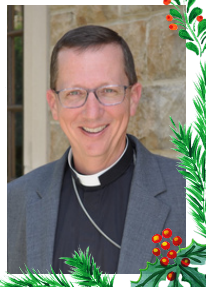
Eleven disciples. Eleven disciples that changed the world! The Risen Lord rose from the dead, and these eleven, faithful souls went into the world and proclaimed Jesus as King. Jesus said to go, and they went. Jesus told them to baptize everyone, and the revolution grew by billions. Jesus promised that he would be with them always, and He still is!

The call is the same for us. Go, and share the Good News. Baptize all people. Teach others the way of Jesus. Love Jesus, Love your Neighbor, and Bless the World. And always, always, trust that He is with us.

Eleven people helped change the world. Imagine what we can do!  
Your priest,

*-Fr. Todd+*

[dill@saintmargarets.net](mailto:dill@saintmargarets.net)



*Join us!*

*A Festival of Nine*

*Lessons & Carols*

*Sunday, December 4th*

*4:00 pm*





## STEWARDSHIP 2023 CAMPAIGN

*Results as of 12/2/22*

2023 Pledging Unit GOAL:	245
<b>Pledging Units to date:</b>	<b>203</b>
Proposed 2023 Budget Goal:	\$915,000
<b>\$ Pledged to date:</b>	<b>\$781,855</b>

We gained 22 new pledgers this campaign.

There are roughly 95 families that are considered members that have not pledged for 2023 yet.

***Do you fall into this category?***

***Please help us reach our goals.***

***Thank you!***



# *Join us this Christmas!*

*Saturday, 12/24:*

*4:00 pm*

*\*Children's pageant*

*\*no nursery care*

*7:00 pm*

*Adult Choir featured.*

*\*no nursery care*

*11:00 pm*

*Adult Choir featured.*

*Choral prelude will begin at 10:30pm.*

*Incense will be used.*

*Sunday, 12/25:*

*11:00 am*

*\*no nursery care*

***2023 Worship Times***

*\*changing to: Sundays at 8:15 am & 10:30 am*



# Youth Spotlight

**BY ELIZABETH PFEIFER**

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

[pfeifer@saintmargarets.net](mailto:pfeifer@saintmargarets.net)

# be the light of the world!

Our StM Youth Group is wrapping up our fall semester and we have had an incredibly fun fall semester! Our guiding principle this semester was discussing what it means and looks like to be “the light of the world” and to let our “light shine before others, that they may see our’ good deeds and glorify our Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16). We created a list of Jesus’ characteristics, such as intentional, conscientious, loving, compassionate, and generous and, through a variety of activities, we thought about how we can embody those qualities and, through word and deed, show our community the light of Christ. We also played lots of games, our group loves any version of capture the flag or hide-n-seek, and did many up-front challenges for donuts when Elizabeth had leftover donuts from the Sunday morning youth class “Jesus and Donuts.”



**Mark your calendars** and plan to join us in December from 5:00-6:30pm with dinner 6:30-7:00pm. Haven’t been to EYC yet this school year? **COME JOIN US!** We’d love to see you. **We will meet Dec 4th, Dec 11th (White Elephant Christmas Party), and Dec 18th (Christmas movie night).** All 6th-12th graders are invited, friends are always welcome!

**It’s White Elephant time!** Make sure to carve out time in your schedule for EYC on Dec 11th from 5-6:30pm with dinner 6:30-7. Bring a small (\$10 or less) gift for our yearly, hilarious tradition of a White Elephant gift exchange; feel free to get creative or reuse something from around the house. Remember: **NO GIFT CARDS.** Christmas PJs or tacky Christmas sweaters welcome!

ADVENT IS...  
JOYFUL PREPARATION

**HOPE TO SEE YOU AT OUR LAST EYCS OF 2022!**

EYC will meet Dec 4th, 11th\*, and 18th from 5:00-6:30pm with dinner 6:30-7:00pm

\*Dec 11th: White Elephant Gift Exchange  
Dec 18th: Christmas movie night!

'And they shall name him Emmanuel, which means God is with us.'  
-Matthew 1:23



Father Todd in the hot seat at an EYC gathering in November.



# Children's Ministry

[childrensministry@saintmargarets.net](mailto:childrensministry@saintmargarets.net)

**BY CATHERINE CHINTALA**

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

I can't believe it's already December and we are in the midst of Advent! We have had an amazing month in Children's Ministry, and our Sundays have been filled with fun, music, learning, and fellowship! We started last month in the Love Neighbor unit of our Love First curriculum. Students studied the story of The Good Samaritan, and spent time learning about who our neighbor is and how God calls us to help our neighbors. We finished our unit with a wonderful service project! Keith Adams shared the story of how Common Heart was started by a few people showing love to their neighbors in need. We learned about food insecurity, how great the need for food is in Union County, and we learned about how we can all do our part to help our neighbors in need.

We are gearing up for two annual children's events here at Saint Margaret's!

- **The Saint Nicholas Festival** is on Saturday, December 3rd at 10am. This fun morning of fellowship will feature holiday crafts, live music with Laura Sells, story time with Deacon Ludwig, a digital photo booth, a hot cocoa bar and light refreshments.....and a very special visit from Saint Nicholas!
- This Christmas we are having a **children's Christmas Eve pageant at our 4pm service** in lieu of our Epiphany pageant. All children are welcome! Costumes and props will be provided at this "pickup" pageant. No rehearsals and no sign ups are needed, just show up by 3:30 to participate in this sweet tradition as we share the story of the birth of Jesus! Questions? Please contact [childrensministry@saintmargarets.net](mailto:childrensministry@saintmargarets.net)



Catherine & Jamie, VBS 2022

*This will be my final newsletter article before I pass the Children's Ministry torch to Jamie Peters.* It has been an honor and a pleasure serving as the Assistant to the Rector for Children's Ministry for the past 4 years! The children are such a blessing to our church, and I have enjoyed getting to know so many of our families here at Saint Margaret's!

I will continue to be an active part of our church as a parishioner and volunteer...so I'm not really saying goodbye. I am so excited that Jamie is joining the staff! She has been a key volunteer in Sunday School and has helped lead VBS, and will do an amazing job!

*Please join me in welcoming her to our staff!*

Take time to enjoy this beautiful season of Advent, and amidst the crazy hustle and bustle of December don't forget the true meaning of Christmas!

Have a blessed Advent,  
Catherine

## StM Sunday School Outreach Project for Common Heart



Showing LOVE to our neighbors in Union County!

Saint Margaret's Episcopal Church Sunday School Food bag for Common Heart



# Outreach & Parish Connection



**BY TRACI SCOTT**

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR FOR OUTREACH & PARISH CONNECTION

## **3 more drivers needed on December 17th.**

Our monthly food delivery ministry, *Community Kitchen Fellowship*, will be making a holiday ham dinner on Saturday, December 17th. We have enough volunteers to cook and bake this time, **but we need 3 more delivery drivers at 11:00am to deliver the meals to homes in the Waxhaw area.** It will take you about 1 hour. Great opportunity for the children and youth of our parish to help!

If you can help, please **[CLICK HERE](#)** to sign up here to DELIVER. Questions, contact Traci Scott at [connection@saintmargarets.net](mailto:connection@saintmargarets.net)

## **Blood drive at St. Margaret's on December 18th 9am-1pm**

OneBlood will be on-site at St. Margaret's with 2 buses: one for traditional blood donations and the other for platelets. Platelets are critical for the treatment of cancer as some of you may have experienced if your lives have been impacted by this disease. Platelet donations take about 90 minutes. You can donate platelets every 7 days and donate whole blood every two months.

DONOR SIGNUP – WHOLE BLOOD **[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP](#)**

DONOR SIGNUP – PLATELES **[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP](#)**

**Heartfelt thanks** to all of the parishioners, family members, friends and neighbors who supported our Angel Tree this year! Because of you, St. Margaret's was able to fulfill the Christmas wish lists of 100 children and seniors in Union County. What a special outpouring of Christmas blessings from our community! Thank you all!



Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Halloween candy drive! **We collected approximately 800 pounds of candy at St. Margaret's and within our community.** We also have dental items, snacks & cards of support. NC Packs 4 Patriots is already busy preparing holiday care packages and they are so grateful for the candy!

## **MOVIE SERIES**

Join St. Margaret's Episcopal Church Women (ECW) for a free movie series designed to open the eyes of our hearts to people whose abilities, age, ethnicity, class, and social status may differ from our own.

Our third gathering will be on **December 9th from 9am-12pm**

(movies start promptly at 9:15 AM) in the Youth Room. We'll be watching "Queen Bees."

RSVP here for the movie(s) you plan to attend: **[CLICK HERE](#)**

Schedule of movies: **[CLICK HERE](#)**





Our church office is open M-Th from 9:00-4:00  
& 9:00-12:00 noon on Friday.

**Rector**

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

Priest Associate

**The Reverend Sarah Hollar+**  
hollar@saintmargarets.net

Priest Associate

**The Reverend Fr. Jay Mills+**  
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Deacon

**The Rev. Ludwig Wallner**

Organist & Director of Music

**Gavin D. Craig**  
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Executive Assistant to the Rector

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Assistant to the Rector for Children's Ministry

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Assistant to the Rector for Outreach  
& Parish Connection

**Traci Scott**  
connection@saintmargarets.net

## 2022 Vestry

Jessica Parker  
Chad Hinton  
Brian Scott  
Kathyann Dugan  
Hugh Laughlin  
Simon Haaroff  
Paula Holbein  
Colin Miles  
Charlie Winsman  
David Feldser, *Treasurer*

# December Calendar



- 12/4 Angel Tree Gifts due
- 12/4 Lessons & Carols, 4 pm
- 12/10 Advent Retreat Day at StM
- 12/17 FINAL Saturday 5pm service
- 12/18 Blood Drive
- 12/24 Christmas Eve Services: 4:00 pm, 7:00 pm and 11:00 pm
- 12/25 Christmas Day service: 11:00 am
- 12/26-30 Church Office Closed
- 12/28 Feast of the Holy Innocents, quiet service at 5:30 pm
- 1/1 NEW SUNDAY WORSHIP schedule begins:  
8:15 & 10:30**
- 1/2 Church Office Closed
- 1/8 Sunday School resumes, 9:30 – 10:15

- *Saturday Worship: Rite II, 5:00 pm through December 17*
- *Sunday Worship: Rite II, 8:45 am through December 17*
- *Sunday Worship: Rite II, 11:00 am through December 17*

 [CLICK HERE for our YouTube channel](#) *SERMONS in library!*

**REMINDER:**  
**NEW SERVICE TIMES**  
**IN 2023**

**Sundays only:**  
**8:15 am & 10:30 am**