

MAGGIE'S CROSS



From the Rector

BY FATHER TODD R. DILL+

A Command to Love

Years ago, after a long Sunday of worship, I stopped at a local restaurant to get a quick bite to eat before I returned home. If I am being totally open and honest, I was tired, a bit cranky, and not much in the mood for conversation. The morning worship was glorious, but it had taken every bit of energy that I had, and I just wanted to go home and relax. As I sat down to eat, I noticed a gentleman looking at me the entire time. Once I was settled at my table, he picked up his plate and proceeded to come over and sit himself right next to me. I was taken a back, and I wasn't quite sure where this was heading. He looked at me, pulled out a bible, and asked me, "Do you believe this or not?" Direct, to the point, and frankly, not an inappropriate question to ask a priest! I swallowed the bite of food in my mouth, took a deep breath, and answered. "Yes. I do. Every word of it!"

I know that sounds a little crazy, but I really do believe this book, believe its story, and believe that it contains all things necessary for our salvation. It bears witness to the story of God and His people, and to His Son Jesus coming to dwell among us. Jesus came to show us a new way of being human, and I believe this new way of humanity is how God works His purposes in the world, even when the way of Jesus seems so different from our own instincts!

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. (Matt 25: 35-36)

This section of the Gospel of Matthew contains a central teaching of our Lord. We are called to love our neighbor, will the good of the other, and work for that good to become a reality. I highlight this section of the Gospel because I would like to invite everyone to a three-week course that will be offered this January during the Adult Formation hour on Sunday mornings (9:30-10:15) that will help us to live out our Christian love of others. Keith Adams, a parishioner and Co-founder and Executive Director of Common Heart, will present the **Bridges out of Poverty** Workshop for our parish.

A fuller description is contained within this newsletter, and I commend it to you for your reflection and consideration. I believe that Saint Margaret's is uniquely situated to have a positive impact in our community and can powerfully live out our Gospel calling to love our neighbors, and to use our abundant resources for the good of our wider community.

To believe in Jesus also means to follow, as best we can, all His teachings, even the hard ones. It can be so easy to forget that even in our little section of the world, families struggle with food insecurity, struggle to pay bills, and sometimes lose hope of life ever changing for their families. I would offer to you that Jesus called us here, in this place, to do our best to help. Our Lord calls us to center our lives not on ourselves, but on Him, and in doing so to show love and charity to our neighbors. Jesus ends this discourse with these words:

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Direct, to the point, and a call for all of us. I believe it. Every word of it. Come join us and let us learn to live it together!

Your priest,

-Fr. Todd+

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Youth Spotlight

BY ELIZABETH PFEIFER

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

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The St. Margaret's youth program had a phenomenal calendar year full of fun programs and retreats, small group discussions, and a fair amount of silliness. We had a dedicated senior class of 2022 whose shoes are being filled by an ever-growing number of committed younger students. We appreciate the youth and parents who worked very hard to juggle all that life throws at them while still managing to read all of Elizabeth's weekly news.

A look back at what the youth of St. Margaret's took part in in 2022:

- Had 31 Sunday night EYC meetings
- 3 weekend retreats or overnights. Our beloved beach retreat finally returned!
- Made homemade pretzels during Lent and learned about their history and hidden meaning to remind us to pray
- Studied the Parable of the Lost Son through a taste testing activity
- Celebrated 20 graduating seniors who received their handmade scarves from our Knots of Love ministry
- A domestic week-long trip to Jacksonville, FL
- Twelve students and adults were confirmed into the Episcopal Church
- Volunteered at Vacation Bible School
- Welcomed our 6th graders and new families with our annual summer bowling outing
- Volunteered at Bright Blessings and practiced how to wrap gifts
- Avoided a lot of red ant hills while playing games outside
- Spent the day at Bethelwoods Camp participating in team building activities, canoeing, archery, and more
- Strengthened relationships with adults in our parish through Fall into Fellowship & Prayer
- Got our fill of ice cream and mix-ins at Cold Stone, several times over (what can we say, it's a group favorite!)
- Had toilet paper mummy races
- Baked pet treats in honor of St. Francis of Assis
- Spent multiple meetings discussing the characteristics of Jesus and how embodying those traits allows us to shine light into our world
- Ate a rather absurd amount of candy. But, hey, if you can't do it when you're a teenager, when can you?!

For all of those things and more, I say: thank you and here's to 2023!

A special thank you to the many adults who volunteered with youth group in a variety of capacities this year. We especially thank: Madison Dill, Sue Jaquish, Julie Jenkins, Erin Nelson, Molly Scialabba, and Mark Shaffer for the time they dedicate to our Sunday night gatherings.





Children's Ministry

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BY JAMIE PETERS

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

The end of 2022 brought with it a busy month of children's events here at Saint Margaret's! During Sunday School, we continued with our **Love First** curriculum with several Advent lessons and crafts centered around the Nativity story. It's one we all know well, but like many Bible stories, we can revisit it time and time again, and always learn something new. The younger class particularly enjoyed making their own sock baby Jesus!

Club 4-5 met on December 11th for a pizza lunch and fellowship. It was wonderful to gather during this special time of year and discuss the importance of the Nativity story. Children enjoyed using their creative skills to make their very own nativity scene using graham crackers, icing, marshmallows, candy canes, and gum drops!

Our annual Saint Nicholas Festival took place on December 3rd with plenty of fellowship and smiling faces. Children made homemade Christmas cards for the residents of White Oak nursing home in Waxhaw and collected donations to benefit Common Heart, along with special Christmas ornaments and Advent journals to take home for themselves.

During the 4pm service we held our first "pick up" children's Christmas Eve Pageant in lieu of our Epiphany pageant. Since no rehearsals were needed, children were invited to show up and pick out their favorite costumes to participate. The children did a remarkable job sharing the story of the Jesus' birth and brought smiles to everyone's faces!

As we enter January, we will be covering Epiphany and starting our Love God unit in the **Love First** curriculum. Mark your calendars for a few upcoming dates in Children's Ministry, and keep a lookout for emails with additional details:

- **Sunday School weekly from 9:30-10:15am *NEW TIME***
- **Nursery Care weekly (Available 9:15-11:45am)**
- **Jan 8, Feb 12, March 12, April 2, & April 30: Club 4-5 from 11:45am-1:00pm *NEW TIME***
- **Feb. 26, March 12, & March 19: Holy Communion Classes from 9:30-10:15am**
- **March 26th: Holy Communion Celebration at the 10:30am service**
- **April 9th: Easter Egg Hunt at 9:30am**
- **June 19th-22nd: Vacation Bible School**



If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at childrensministry@saintmargarets.net.

As we look forward to 2023, I am honored to serve as the Assistant to the Rector for Children's Ministry. This ministry has always been close to my heart since my family and I began attending Saint Margaret's. I want to thank Catherine Chintala for her loyalty and service that she has provided to the Children's Ministry and the families of Saint Margaret's in the past several years. She is a true blessing to our church!

Have a happy, healthy, and blessed 2023!





Parish Connection

connection@saintmargarets.net

BY TRACI SCOTT

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR FOR OUTREACH & PARISH CONNECTION

The nametag board is BACK! It was hiding under our Christmas photo booth backdrop, but now you can once again wear your nametag to help us get to know all of the new faces here at St. Margaret's.

If you need a new tag, please email Traci at connection@saintmargarets.net or to order a hard plastic magnetic one, please [CLICK HERE](#).

Update your profile pic in StM Connect!



A new year, a new picture....our clergy and staff rely on these pictures to help put faces with names so, **please make sure to upload yours.**

Click [STM CONNECT](#) here or find it located in the top banner of our home page or the bottom Episcopal Shield icon at www.saintmargarets.net to create an account or to look at your current profile.

If you need help logging in, contact Traci at connection@saintmargarets.net



**StM welcomes
new members:**

Tommy & Kathy Clapp

Pat Bryfonski

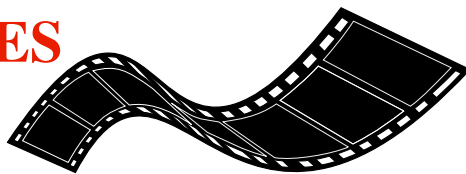
Robert & Jennifer Mullis

Linda Goodwin

Bob & Susan McElreath

*Interested in officially joining St. Margaret's
to be included in our parish records?
Please contact Traci for details.*

MOVIE SERIES CONTINUES



Join StM's Women's Group (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.

NEXT MOVIE JANUARY 13 AT 9AM

Our next gathering will be on January 13th from 9am-12pm in the Youth Room. We'll be watching *Antwone Fisher*.

RSVP here for the movie(s) you plan to attend:

[CLICK HERE](#)

Schedule of movies: [CLICK HERE](#)

SAVE THE DATE

for our next session of

**StM 101 class for
newcomers**

February 12 & 19

9:30am - 10:15am



Outreach

BY TRACI SCOTT

ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR
FOR OUTREACH & PARISH CONNECTION



OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY: MEAL DELIVERY

Our monthly food delivery ministry, **Community Kitchen Fellowship**, will be making and delivering a hot meal on **Saturday, January 21st**. If you've never joined us for one of these events, come see what it's all about! We need more volunteers to help us cook and assemble the meals at 8:30am OR deliver them to homes in the Waxhaw area at 11:00am. Great opportunity for the children and youth of our parish to help!



If you can help on January 21st, please sign up by clicking the links below:
to **DELIVER** and/or to **COOK or BAKE**

Questions, contact Traci Scott at connection@saintmargarets.net

NEW! 3 week Sunday School workshop:

Bridges out of Poverty

Jan. 15, 22, 29th at 9:30 in the Parish Hall

Please join us for this important discussion!



Jesus was clear in his command to love and care for neighbor. To equip us to follow that command effectively, we present a 3 week Sunday School workshop, Bridges Out of Poverty. Bridges is a framework for understanding poverty, developing relationships of mutual respect, and improving the lives of neighbors living with a lack of resources.

We will examine:

- mental models
- hidden rules
- driving forces of economic class stratification
- the causes of poverty
- and the 11 resources needed to move out of poverty and the skills required to love and serve our neighbors better.

These 3 sessions are an introduction and overview of the Bridges Out of Poverty Curriculum. Keith Adams, Co-founder and Executive Director of Common Heart and Co-founder, President of Thrive! Union, an anti-poverty, upward mobility collaborative in Union County NC and St. Margaret's parishioner will facilitate this study.

Keith Adams is a certified Bridges Out of Poverty and Workplace Stability instructor and a facilitator of Getting Ahead in a "Just Gettin'-by" World that is a starting point for new future stories for families living in generational poverty.



2022 Senior Warden Brian Scott speaks at Annual Parish Meeting on Jan. 8.



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

Rector

The Reverend r. Todd R. Dill+
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Priest Associate

The Reverend Sarah Hollar+
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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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Assistant to the Rector for Children's Ministry

Jamie Peters
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Assistant to the Rector for Outreach
& Parish Connection

Traci Scott
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2023 Vestry

Kathyann Dugan
Hugh Laughlin
Simon Haaroff
Paula Holbein
Colin Miles
Charlie Winsman
Josh Ward
Emily Nelson
Tom Washington
David Feldser, *Treasurer*

January Calendar

**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

1/13 ECW Movie Series

1/14 DOK monthly meeting

1/16 Church Office & Preschool CLOSED

1/17 Vestry Business Meeting

1/21 Community Kitchen Fellowship

1/21 Knots of Love monthly meeting

1/27-29 NC Diocesan Youth Event: Bishop's Ball

A Blessing for the Season of Epiphany

May Almighty God, who led the Wise Men by the shining of a star to find the Christ, the Light from Light, lead you also, in your pilgrimage, to find the Lord. Amen.

May God, who sent the Holy Spirit to rest upon the Only begotten at his baptism in the Jordan River, pour out that Spirit on you who have come to the waters of new birth. Amen.

May God, by the power that turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana, transform your lives and make glad your hearts. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. Amen.

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