



All Saints Alive!

The Newsletter of All Saints Episcopal Church
February 2023



Mother Bonnie's Corner

This past couple of months, I've witnessed my Mom weather several dramatic changes with remarkable grace and resilience. She moved from Arizona to Tennessee, only to suddenly be whisked away due to my brother's ill health to spend a short time with Jess and me, then depart for Texas, where my sister lives.

I was worried about how she'd react to all the change. Would she like her new place? Could she thrive? Will she be happy?

The move went remarkably well, but I kept up my overly-frequent calls, hoping that everything would stay that way. But I had quite the shock when in less than a week, Mom said she realized why she was there . . . why she was in that particular place, at this particular time. It had come to her the night before that she was there because *she had a purpose!*

Then she excitedly told me about a woman she's regularly sitting with at dinner, who no longer cries like she used to because she knows Mom will be her friend. And another lady she's met who likes the same kind of movies that she does and so they're enjoying going together to the theater right down the hall. And there's this man there who has been so helpful! He has all sorts of tools and likes to fix things, so when he noticed that a prong on one of her rings was catching on her clothes, he offered to fix it right away. And now she's checking in with all the ladies to see if they need his help, too.

Bonnie, it's really been great here. I'm here for a purpose! I'm here to help people and let them know not to worry because we're all here together and we can help one another by doing things together. Besides, isn't that always the best way to live with your neighbors? Helping one another and being grateful for all our many blessings?

It was probably a good thing that this was just a phone call and I wasn't on FaceTime, because it took me more than a moment to get my jaw off the floor.

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My mom, at 94, had experienced a real *God-moment*. Instead of worrying about what was or wasn't going on in her own life or dwelling on the losses of aging, she was purposely striving to be her own best self, living each day by being present and attentive to what's going on around her, making new friends in her new community, and shining her light, while encouraging others to shine theirs.

To put that in "church-ier" language, she'd been touched by the Spirit, helping her to let go of all that she couldn't control. And instead, with intentionality, she was seeking to be present and aware of what's around her: to simply be and trust in God that all shall be well.

For me, this conversation with Mom was also my own God-moment. A moment when I too could feel the Spirit, as I was caught completely off-guard by genuine and truly joy-filled surprise. But this wasn't my only God-moment for I had another on my first day back at the office.

Linda Gerdes, our wonderful Parish Administrator, was catching me up on life at All Saints during my time away. She and Shelley Strickland, our Sr Warden, had successfully managed to not involve me in much of anything during my two weeks away, and I really wanted to hear about all that had happened.

Linda shared about the distribution of this year's Epiphany Star Words at the recent Sunday service and the joy of having the children running up and down the aisles distributing stars to all. It was then that I noticed the basket of stars, sitting right there on Linda's desk. So I asked Linda to pick one for me, too. I needed to have a new star to add to my office collection, too.

Linda picked one and started to toss it back. *No, that one's silly for you. Let me get a better one.*

But I wanted *that one*. The first one. The one randomly picked because I knew it would be perfect, and so she handed it to me. *Faith*. My star word was *faith*.

Why was that a God-moment? Because with all of my bust-ness during the past two weeks — all of the stuff involved in getting Mom moved again, squeezed between holiday time with family, and my personal push to get everything done and settled as fast as I can — I realized I had drifted away from abiding and trusting and was trying to fix and control everything, all by myself. What I *really* needed was to *lean into faith*, for none of us is alone, nor can any of us "do it all." I too needed that star-reminder, for it's with God's help, that each of us can live lives of purpose.

I'm still learning from my Mom. I'm still learning from family, friends, and neighbors and all those random encounters out in the world. And may that never stop, for I do believe that whenever we slow down enough to open our eyes to see what's right in front of us — slow down enough to experience the delightful surprises that God wants to share with us all — it's so much easier live by faith, for we do see God's hand at work in the world around us.

As we each continue our journey through Epiphany towards Lent, my hope for us all is to take the time to *simply be*. To be with God, to lean into our faith, to rest in God's endless love for each of us. And to watch for those joy-filled surprises that truly will delight us: those God-moments that are right around the corner.

Peace, Mother Bonnie

From our Deacon

Since my very first visit to the Episcopal church I have been swept up in the worship services. It's hard to describe. There is a mysterious timelessness. I call it the Holiness of the Thirteenth Hour of the Eighth Day. Somehow I am brilliantly reminded that God is always waiting for me with wide open arms – wherever I am or whatever state I'm in – to bring me closer for whatever I need to help me be my best self.



Often it's the sermon. Sometimes it's music. Other times it's simply the cadence of the liturgy. Always, it's the people! The holiness of the people!

Let me use the words of someone wiser than me to explain. In her book, *The Rule of Benedict: A Spirituality for the 21st Century*, Sr. Joan Chittister, O.S.B. explains, "Holiness... is not something that happens in a vacuum. It has something to do with the way we live in our community lives and our family lives and our public lives as well as the way we say our prayers. The life-needs of other people affect the life of the truly spiritual person and they hear the voice of God in that."

Last month, on the First Sunday after the Epiphany, All Saints' children passed out the traditional Epiphany Stars at the beginning of the announcements. Just a simple paper star with a single word written in the center. I've kept every one of them, taped to the wall in my workspace at home so I can just glance up and get whatever inspiration I need at the moment. They remind me of good people.

This year the Giving-of-the-Stars was particularly heart-full for me. When called up to the front of the nave, the children rushed to get their stars to share with everybody. The youngest of our children came up to the chancel all by herself. Her big sister was at home that day.

By the time she got up front, all the "big" kids were already out among the people gifting stars. Standing there by herself she suddenly seemed a little lost but clearly still wanted to give people stars. So I got up, went to her, and knelt down to ask her if she would let me help her give stars to people.

"Yes, please." She held out her hand, I took it, and we went to get stars from the basket. As we started down the aisle, my heart filled to the point of tears. Happy ones!

Our older children were moving around the nave with all the enthusiasm only children can offer the rest of us.

My little star partner stopped at the end of a pew. As we approached the person I saw the star already in his hand make a quick disappearance. He smiled as he leaned a little lower to receive the star gift. The grownups gave the gift of smiles and thank yous when accepting their star gift from this beloved child.

When we got to the last aisle and approached her mother, my star partner jumped onto the pew with her mom. I was witness to the heart-bursting moment of being in the presence of the holiness of absolute love.

As I turned to go back to my place up front, I was able to look through the glass doors out to the world beyond and I prayed, "This is what star gifting is all about. Getting what we need in church to Gift to the world beyond the doors."

Walking up the aisle, I picked up the stars that had fallen to put them in the basket for another time of star gifting. Once again I was struck by the continuous blessings that do envelop us here at All Saints, from the youngest to the oldest, for with the many gifts we receive, we can truly do the most holy things. **Together, we gift the world beyond the doors!**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

Deacon Barbara

From the Senior Warden

Last month we welcomed three new Vestry members: Mary Christian, Leslie Tidwell, and Bronwyn Young. Each Vestry member was assigned a liaison position. A big thank you to Judy Reynolds for agreeing to assume the Junior Warden position. Other positions include: Christian Education–Bronwyn Young, Communications–Mary Christian, Fellowship–Anne Sanders, Long–Range Planning–Barbara Attaway, Outreach–



Linda Christie, Stewardship–Leslie Tidwell. We plan to assign liaisons to Memorials and Personnel, as needed. The Senior Warden is the Finance Liaison. Mike Tarnoff and Beth Wood are our co-Treasurers, and Linda Gerdes continues in the position of Vestry Clerk. We are looking forward to working together in what promises to be an active and meaningful year.

February will be another busy month here at All Saints. On Sunday the 5th, we will have our monthly Covered Dish. The St. Philip Cathedral Book Store will be joining us. They will bring items that will be available for purchase. On Sunday the 12th, Bishop Robert Wright will be joining us for worship, confirmations, and a Bishop's Forum, with a small reception, will be after the Sunday Service. Shrove Tuesday is February 21st, and we will begin our Lenten activities that week.

The Warming Center at The Table continues to be a blessing for our homeless neighbors. Located across from the Houston Health Pavilion, their plan is to continue to be open through February. The city and the Homeless Coalition will continue to work on a more permanent facility. Communications for The Warming Center have primarily been through their Facebook page, *Table Warming Center WR*. They post needs every few days and Items may be dropped off at the back of the church.

If you are interested in volunteering, you must complete a background check. The Police Department will do it at no cost. If you wish to be a volunteer, you may sign up through SignUpGenius. If you have questions, please contact Mother Bonnie or Shelley Strickland.

And finally, If you are interested in becoming more active in parish life here at All Saints, there are many opportunities. Included in the Annual Report is a list of email addresses for the contact person for each of our activities and groups. If you see something that interests you, please connect with the contact person.

Shelley Strickland, Sr. Warden

February at a Glance

February 5th: Cathedral Bookstore at All Saints and Monthly Covered Dish

February 6th: Women's Interfaith Alliance, Wesleyan College, Noon

February 12th: Bishop Rob Wright is with us!

Holy Eucharist and Confirmations, plus Bishop's forum after the service

February 18th: Celebrating the Saints - Frederick Douglass

In recognition of Black History month, all are welcome, 11am in the Parish Hall

February 21st: Shrove Tuesday/Pancake Supper, 6pm

February 22nd: Ash Wednesday: Noon, 7pm

February 25th: Taize, 7pm

And in March

Wednesdays at Noon: Stations of the Cross

We meet in the Sanctuary each week.

Thursday Evenings at 5:45 pm: Lenten Supper and Program

Watch for a SignUp Genius each week.

March 12th: English Tea *More news as the planning continues! We'll need help with:*

Gathering raffle baskets and items for baskets.

- Restaurant gift certificates
- Bath and Body items
- Afternoon tea themes (nice cups & saucers, teapot, tea etc.)
- Entertainment (wine, glasses, etc)
- Other Themes (College/University; Gardening; Cat & Dog theme

Help with baking and advanced food prep: savory, sweet, and dessert items.

Assistance with setup, decorating, sandwich making, serving, and clean up.

And of course, selling tickets!

**Do check with our resident expert, Anne Sanders, with Tea questions,
or Linda Christie, who will be helping to coordinate ECW assistance**

March 24th: Lenten Evensong, with the return of two beloved guest musicians,
Maggie and Kristin Gill

Year Round Stewardship: Wilderness

As a child, I learned to think of spiritual life as a journey along a path—a steep, rocky uphill hike. In the Kindergarten class in church, we were taught about the “straight and narrow path” to salvation, and warned away from the “wide way to destruction.” My family and I sang hymns like “Look for the Waymarks” and “Higher Ground” as we hiked through our nine acres of Pennsylvania woods, keeping an eye out for snakes and pausing now and then to find the next blotch of orange spray paint. Sometimes my dad would carry a can of spray paint to refresh the markings if they were getting too faded, or bring clippers to cut away any new shoots that might grow into trees to block the path. We were stewards of the woods, I learned, taking care of the path so that people could walk on it for years to come and see where they were going. And spiritual paths, like hiking paths, needed to be carefully stewarded. The markings—the doctrines and proof texts that showed that the doctrines were “biblical”—needed to be watched for and regularly refreshed so that we would follow the One Right Path and not be confused, so that we could guide others and not stray into false paths.

That was why I felt so much anxiety when, as a teenager and a young adult, I began to see things that made me begin to question the simple One Right Path narrative. I began to notice parts of the Bible that didn't seem to fit with church doctrines. I noticed parts of the Bible that didn't seem to fit with . . . other parts of the Bible. I met people who had left the “straight and narrow” Christian path, or who had never been on it, and I realized that some of them were just as honest, kind, intelligent, and committed to caring for their neighbors as anyone I knew in church.

I began to question whether my church really had a reliable guide to finding the One Right Path to God—or if such a path even existed. The inner arguments became a regular feature of my weekly church routine. And yet it was a long time before I could contemplate any kind of life away from my church. More and more I felt I would have to pull away, but I dreaded the judgments, the concerned questions, the void it would leave in my life. I had always thought of my spiritual life as a narrow uphill path marked out for me by church pioneers and pastors. How would I even begin to have a spiritual life if I stepped away? If I didn't know how to find the path—if I wasn't even sure there was One Right Path—then I would be lost. And isn't “lost” the opposite of “saved”?

These questions had been going through my mind for months when, late in February 2020, I left Cochran earlier than usual to make the 45-minute drive back to Warner Robins for the Ash Wednesday evening service. I had been visiting All Saints once a month for the past three months or so, just to see what the services were like.

Besides the spiritual uncertainties that had been circling relentlessly in my mind, it had been a stressful week—a stressful several months. At school, the semester was in full swing, with teaching demands and writing deadlines pressing down. An impeachment trial had just finished in Washington, election campaigns were picking up speed, and every time I looked at the news there was wall-to-wall rage from every side of the political spectrum. Besides that, for the past two months the news had been reporting bits and scraps about something called a “coronavirus” that was spreading in China, that might—could—probably would—show up and wreak havoc here in the U.S.

In the service, the priest, whom everyone called “Mother Bonnie,” spoke about Jesus’s forty days in the wilderness, which are commemorated in the forty days of Lent. She mentioned others from the Bible—Elijah and Hagar and Moses and the newly-freed Israelites—so many people who, in one way or another, had found themselves in the wilderness and encountered God there. She said that all of us have had times of being in the wilderness, or perhaps might be there now, and that during Lent we reflect on the ways in which God has been present in those wilderness times.

I sat there taking it in. I had heard over and over: “If you go off the One Right Path, you are lost, and your only hope is to get back on that path as fast as you can.” Now I was hearing, “You may be in the wilderness, but you will not be there alone. Wilderness has its pains and dangers, yes, but it can also be a holy place. If that is where you are, God can meet you there and teach you there, just as much as on any path.” As I went forward to receive the ashes, I breathed more freely than I had in months. My uncertainties weren’t all cleared up, but for now, it was enough to know I wasn’t alone in my uncertainty. And in the days that followed, I found myself thinking, “If this church has helped me see the holiness of wilderness, and shown that God could meet me there—if they have a whole season every year for thinking about wilderness—might this church be a good place for me?”

About a year after that Ash Wednesday, I joined the “Episcopal Church 101” class. Six months later, I was confirmed. Not because I believe this church is the One Right Path—I am still not sure there is such a thing—but because it has helped me make peace with uncertainty. In the vows I took, there was nothing about the Episcopal church being the only true church—but I promised to resist evil, pray, break bread, seek and serve Christ in all people. With God’s help. It is as demanding a path as any I have heard of, but I have seen none I would rather follow. And if ever there comes a time when I cannot follow this path, and I again find myself in the wilderness, I know God is present in the wilderness too.

Mary Christian

Annual Meeting

This year’s Annual Meetings was a time to recognize a joy-filled 2022 and our hopes for 2023.

Since our meeting was in the sanctuary at the end of our 1/22 worship service, you have the chance to view the meeting on Facebook or YouTube. We’ve also posted to Annual Meeting report on our website, for your convenience, where we post our Monthly Newsletters. Enjoy!



Family Promise *Update*

In January, we were blessed to share dinner with four wonderful families at Family Promise. The families included nine children and many of them were teenagers with healthy appetites. Several members of our congregation prepared delicious dishes to share with them. There were not many leftovers. A big thank you to our volunteers who donated food and those that joined the families to share a meal.

We are still looking for volunteers to complete the Family Promise Training. You must complete the one-hour training session in order to socialize with the families. Currently there are four people interested in the training. I am hoping that if we can get a couple more people, we can have another training session conducted here at All Saints. If you are interested in attending, please contact Shelley Strickland at shelleykstrickland@gmail.com.

All Saints Calendar

Weekly

Sunday

Worship 10:15 am in-person and online
Children's Choir: 1:30pm

Monday

Book Club: 5:15-7pm
EfM: 6:30-8:30 pm

Tuesday

Food Pantry: 9:30 - 11am

Wednesday

Noonday Prayer: 12-12:30pm

Thursday

Choir Rehearsal: 7:30pm

Friday

Shawl Ministry: 10-12:30pm
ECW Luncheon: 12:30 pm

Monthly

1st Sunday

Covered Dish and Rector's
Forum after Sunday Worship

1st Tuesday

ECW Meeting, 10-11:30am in the
Parish Hall

4th Thursday

Men's Group Meeting, 6:30-8pm,
*This month our location
changes to O'Charley's on
Watson Blvd*

*All are welcome
to Worship
and
Fellowship Events*

Do Join Us!

Save the Dates! February Happenings



CATHEDRAL
BOOKSTORE

Our *FIRST* Cathedral Bookstore Visit February 5th, after worship

Shop for books, jewelry, prayer beads, etc.
following the service and during our monthly
covered dish.

Women's Interfaith Alliance

February 6th, 12:00 - 1:30

Meet at Wesleyan College, Macon, GA
in the Pierce Chapel building
for this month's potluck and program.

Please, no pork or gelatin.



Holy Eucharist and Confirmation February 12th, beginning at 10:15am

Bishop Wright presiding
with a Bishop's forum and reception
in the Parish Hall following the service

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper February 21st, 6pm

All are welcome for this traditional meal
with plenty of games and activities
for the young and young at heart!



See our *Lent at All Saints* article for more information on
the upcoming Ash Wednesday and Taize services

CALLING ALL ARTISTS!

Outdoor Stations of the Cross

This year All Saints would like to offer an outdoor Stations of the Cross pilgrimage during Holy Week. The stations will be throughout the grounds of the church with plenty of space between them. Our prayer is that this will give folk another opportunity to connect and engage each station in a new and personal way.



Everyone at All Saints is invited to participate. These 14 stations will include more contemporary meditations and language, as well as a new way to participate! While all will be able to enjoy walking and meditating at each outdoor station, we also want to invite those interested to create a station.

This process will include choosing one of the stations, meditating on that station's reading, and then using your artistic skills (or "team/family skills) to create your personal vision for that station. Any medium can be used, keeping in mind that this Stations of the Cross will be outdoors. The readings will be laminated and available at each station. Stations should be ready to deliver to the office no later than Monday, March 27, in preparation for use during Holy Week.

If you are interested or have questions, contact Deacon Barbara at deacon@allsaintswr.org or by phone at 478-719-6458.

Table Warming Center

You may have heard about the Warner Robins Homelessness Coalition and efforts to address this concern for our neighbors in our community?

How can you help? The Table, the church across from the Pavillion, is using Facebook and SignUp Genius to let us know how you to assist.

Table Warming Center WR
3h · 🌐

Thank you for your interest. The signup link is - <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050F4CABAF28A6F94-table> . Message us and we can send you more information about the Table Warming Center WR and the volunteer roles.

QUESTIONS ABOUT VOLUNTEERING?

YOU CAN ATTEND ONE OF OUR SCHEDULED TRAINING SESSIONS - JAN 27 AT 11:30 AM & FEB 3 AT 5:30 PM.

OR

SIGN UP THROUGH OUR ONLINE TOOL. VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE EMAILED TO YOU.

OR

YOUR CHURCH OR ORGANIZATION CAN REQUEST A VOLUNTEER TRAINING SESSION. JUST COMMENT ON THIS POST AND WE WILL CONTACT YOU.

Table Warming Center WR
January 12 at 10:45 AM · 🌐

We now have an Amazon wish list! Thank you Lacey Nichols for setting his up!!

AMAZON.COM
Check out my list on Amazon

Lent at All Saints



Ash Wednesday Services

February 22nd

Imposition of Ashes and Holy Eucharist

Noon and 7:00 pm

Taize Service

February 25th, 7 pm

*A contemplative time of Scripture readings
and Music, as we begin our Lenten journeys*



Stations of the Cross

Wednesdays in March

at Noon

Lenten Program

Thursday evenings in March: 5:45 – 7:15

Light Potluck and Book Study

For this year's study, All Saints will be engaging with
our Diocesan Bishop Rob Wright's Video series:

Jesus Makes the Difference
Bishop's Lenten Series 2023

Parish Life

Something New!

Wondering about some of those home recipes for those goodies served at our Covered Dish Luncheons? Here's one from Mary Christian, who had several of us ask about her recipe.

Ginger Cheesecake

Crust:

1.5 cups graham cracker crumbs or gingersnap crumbs
6 Tbsp. butter, softened

Filling:

2 packages cream cheese, 8 oz. each
1/2 c. sugar
2 eggs
2 tsp. lemon juice
1 Tbsp. fresh ginger root, finely grated, or 1/2 tsp. dried and powdered ginger

Top layer:

2 c. sour cream
5 Tbsp. sugar
2 Tbsp. crystallized ginger, slivered (available in most Asian grocery stores)

Blend butter and cookie crumbs until mixture is a firm dough. Press dough on the bottom and sides of a greased and floured 9-inch round springform pan. (If you don't have a springform pan, a 9-inch pie pan can also work—less pretty, but it tastes just as good.) Prick crust with a fork to prevent air bubbles. Bake crust 5-10 minutes at 375 degrees.

Whip cream cheese together with eggs and 1/2 c. sugar until batter is smooth. Stir in lemon juice and fresh ginger, and whip until mixture is smooth. Pour into baked crust, and smooth out the top. Bake cheesecake at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes, until top is puffed and slightly brown.

While cheesecake bakes, whip together sour cream, 5 Tbsp. sugar, and crystallized ginger until smooth. As soon as cheesecake is baked, pour sour cream mixture on hot cheesecake and smooth out the top. Turn off oven heat and return cheesecake to warm oven for 5-10 minutes.

Allow cheesecake to cool in refrigerator overnight. Carefully loosen it from the sides of the springform pan, transfer to plate, and serve.

All Saints in Pictures



*Our Phenomenol Organist, Pianist,
and Choir Director, Kipp Gill!*



*Ribbon Cutting at the Table
Warming Center*



Advent Wreath Making



Our Magnificent Christmas Flowers

*(January didn't have a bunch of
photos, so we
thought you'd enjoy some
from the recent past.)*



And a big thanks to our All Saints photographer-extraordinaire, Katie Reynolds!