



All Saints Alive!

The Newsletter of All Saints Episcopal Church
June/July 2023



Mother Bonnie's Corner

As June begins, I can't help but joyfully anticipate a new summer pace. I've been doing some recent reading on Sabbath rest, and in consultation with your Vestry, am happy to share some of my plans for creating some time for rest and renewal over these upcoming summer months.

I'll be streamlining some administrative tasks, as there will be fewer All Saints activities this summer. One example is this newsletter. With fewer activities, it's easier to combine June and July editions into a single newsletter.

Another is that our June/July activities will primarily be lay-led. Our wonderful Vacation Bible School will have many volunteering hands, led well by Amy Floyd, Bronwyn Young, Kipp Gill, and others. *Celebrating the Saints* will continue, led by Mary Christian, with a June offering that will include discussions of James W. Johnson and Pauli Murray. And watch for something new, as Rachael Heidler introduces *Dungeons and Dragons* to our Parish family. I strongly encourage you to join in these wonderful activities!

And you'll be seeing some new faces in the pulpit this summer! In addition to Deacon Barbara and our Licensed Lay Preacher, Paul Davison, you can also expect to hear from our All Saints' Postulant to the Priesthood, Dominique Deming; our Aspirant to Holy Orders, Taylor Irwin; and our Deacon Postulant, Debra Bruner-Smith. My hope is that these new voices can be an inspiration to all as they share their thoughts on the Word.

And on a personal note, I'll be exploring daily Sabbath time. As pastor Ken Shigemastu writes in *God in My Everything: How an Ancient Rhythm Helps Busy People Enjoy God*, "The golden rule for the Sabbath is to cease from what is necessary and to embrace what gives life."

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That's a wonderful summary of my plan for this summer: to capture what brings life and renewal; to count my blessings; to pause for rest and restoration by walking in nature and savoring the beauty of God's creation; and to play *Go Fish* with the grands.

I recently read an article on *The 30 Minute Summer Sabbath*, by Jerusalem Jackson Greer, who I was blessed to meet a few years ago at one of our Annual Diocesan Council meetings. Here are a few of the ideas she has that could help any of us to begin a new Sabbath practice:

- **Rule 1:** Don't Stress out.
- **Rule 2:** There is no rule about how often you should practice Sabbath. Do it when you can. No beating yourself up about not doing it more often!
- **Rule 3:** Sabbath practices really do work best when all devices are put away and turned off (*adults too.*)
- **Rule 4:** Everyone in the household should find a way to participate if possible . . . even grown-ups!
- **Rule 5:** No murmurings of discontent.
- **Rule 6:** End your Sabbath practice with a prayer of thanksgiving.

And if you're looking for more detail on Jerusalem's ideas, here's a link to her recent article: <https://buildfaith.org/30-minute-summer-sabbath/>.

Sabbath practices are all about restoration — about intentionally taking the time to pause and rest and appreciate God's many blessings around us. A good practice can begin as easily as asking the question, "*What brings you life and joy?*"

My prayer is that you enjoy a wonderful summer, filled with Sabbath moments, blessed adventures and safe travels, for life is so very precious. *May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you, be gracious to you, and bring you peace.*

Blessings, Mother Bonnie



P.S. I will be taking some family vacation time, July 10 – 27.

That first week will be Nana/Papa Summer Camp, as four of our grandchildren, ages 6 – 10, come to stay with Jess and me here in Warner Robins.

(And that second week is to recover from the first.)

From our Deacon

Ah, summer!

When I was a kid, as far as I was concerned summer really started on Mother's Day, the day it was "permissible" to go barefoot. By the end of May there was no more getting up to go to school, no homework, no bookbags, and no need for very quiet, undivided attention. Summer was all about playing baseball (home plate was in our backyard), riding bikes everywhere, building skateboards out of old roller skates and a plank, wading in creeks, and every night playing "hide and seek" throughout the neighborhood until our parents called us home. It was pretty much carefree. The only mild hiccup was on Sunday mornings when we had to actually put on shoes that felt like shackles, get dressed up in clothes we couldn't play in, and be quiet for extended periods of time.



As I look back there is a part of me that wishes that I could still go barefoot, play outside in the rain, and roar around the neighborhood with a pack of my friends.

But in looking back, I also realized something important. Something I didn't give a second thought about back then. I cannot remember thinking even once about the kids who had been in my class that lived in different neighborhoods. While school was in season we had been very good friends, most of the time. We helped each other with tricky assignments, worked together on group projects, played together at recess, and swapped sandwiches at lunch. The kids in my class were the people of my school world. But when school closed, my non-neighborhood friends sort of rode off into the sunset of summer and were not thought of until school began again.

For some, things don't change much when school's out for the summer. But in fact, for others, day-to-day life basics can become even greater challenges and burdens.

Hungry people are still hungry. But hungry families may struggle more when the children aren't in school where they get breakfast and lunch Monday through Friday, except during school breaks. Weekends year-round can be a struggle, but during summer, it's more common to have the additional strains of stretching already tight food budgets. Then there are the utility costs that rise right along with the heat index. For those folks already economically stretched, these expense changes can bring family finances to a screaming breaking point.

Summer is the time for most of us to kick back and take things at a slower pace, which is truly a good and wonderful thing!

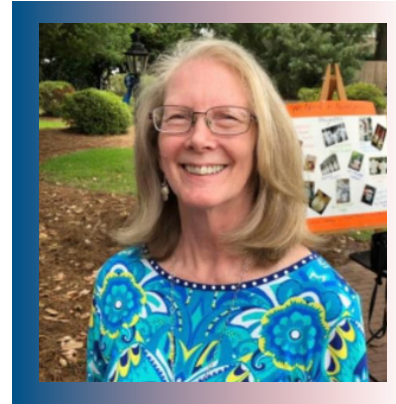
And yet, Summer is not the time to forget our extended family members in Christ who may find life more difficult and heartbreaking just because they don't live in our "neighborhood." Let us listen to our hearts and continue to *be there* for all of our brothers and sisters . . . especially those in need.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord,

Deacon Barbara

From the Senior Warden

Thank you to those who completed their forms and their directory photographs. We have completed over 50% of our entries. Also, a big thank you to Katie Reynolds for being our All Saints' photographer. If you have not completed your forms and/or photo, we need your help. We want all of our All Saints' family included in the new directory. The forms are available in the office and also every Sunday. We will announce dates for future photo opportunities. Please contact Shelley Strickland if you have any questions, shelleykstrickland@gmail.com.



We are so excited about our upcoming Vacation Bible School. So many lasting memories are made through this traditional summer activity. I can still remember my own children experiencing VBS here at All Saints. We sang many choruses of "The Lord Told Noah to Build Him an Arky Arky" and "Rise and Shine and Give God the Glory!" We will be asking for your help to make this a memorable experience for our children. Watch for opportunities to sign up to contribute and/or participate.

We hope to see everyone on Sunday, June 4th for our Rector's Forum and covered dish. We will be doing something a little bit different as we plan to do a breakfast theme this time. We will be serving waffles and ask that you bring other breakfast items. You can sign up through SignUp Genius.

Deacon Barbara and I recently attended a meeting of the Homeless Coalition. There were about 50 people from various parts of the community. They represented groups that work to help the homeless in various capacities. One of the goals established at the meeting was to survey all these groups to determine what services were available and where there were gaps and overlaps. The big news was the purchase of a facility on Green Street. This building will be refurbished to provide shelter for the homeless. Currently, there are very few places for homeless women and families with children. Long term, the group will be looking at solutions for permanent housing. The rising cost of rent has made obtaining housing a huge challenge for many people in our community. Options are being explored, including the possibility of building tiny homes. There will be many challenges as this group works to meet the needs of the homeless. Please pray for this group and the people they serve.

Summer is just about officially here. I hope you will all have an opportunity to enjoy some family time and some free time over the summer months. It does seem that we tend to rush and maybe plan more activities than we really have time to complete. A reminder that on Wednesdays at noon we have the Contemplative Prayer meeting for 30 minutes. I remember when I first started attending, I honestly had difficulty sitting in the quiet for 30 minutes. However, as time went by, I not only started to feel comfortable in the silence, I began to look forward to the time sitting in our church and growing closer to God in the stillness. Perhaps this summer you might join us at this special time.

Praying that you all have a wonderful and safe summer!

Year Round Stewardship: Food Pantry

Tents—check. Shopping carts—check. Card tables and clip boards—check. Sunscreen and sun hats—got them. And don't forget the fans.

Setting up for a church food pantry may not take much in ordinary times, as long as you have enough papers copied and enough bags pre-packed. During a pandemic, it is an undertaking. In the early days of the lockdown, as church activities moved mostly online, the All Saints food pantry moved out into the parking lot. Every Tuesday and Wednesday morning by 9:15, a small company of masked and gloved volunteers was scurrying back and forth between pantry, parish hall, and parking lot, hauling out carts full of food bags and all the other necessary equipment. Jess Underwood supervised the tent set-up. Dawn Ray laid out her papers on the card table, with her careful record of guests' names and the number of bags given out each day. Other volunteers lined up the carts, dropped cereal boxes and Publix baked goods into each bag, and made sure we had enough of everything, especially water bottles. And so, by the time the first cars pulled into the parking lot at 9:30, we were ready.

As the cars began pulling in, we fell into a rhythm. We passed the pens and paperwork through the car windows, collected the filled-out forms, and loaded the food bags into the trunks. If someone asked for diapers or hygiene supplies, one of us would run in and get them. If someone needed help with an electric bill or driver's license, someone would go find Mother Bonnie or Deacon Barbara. In the busy times, when six cars pulled in at once, one behind the other, we ran to keep up. In the slow times, when no one came by for twenty minutes at a time, we photocopied more forms or replenished the supply of food bags, or stood around reading the backs of each other's T-shirts. (Side Note: Those All Saints T-shirts offer a lot of reading material for the slow times. Since I had only recently started attending All Saints before everything locked down, this was a great help to my Episcopal education. I would read over the terms one by one, and young Buddy Parks would patiently tell me what they meant, or run inside for a BCP to show me what "Rite II" and "Form III" were.)

They were chaotic, those Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, and as the summer months came on and the heat and humidity climbed, it became a sweaty and exhausting chaos, even when we set up our tables in the shadiest corner of the parking lot. Yet for Dawn, those hot and frazzled mornings are among her favorite memories from her seven years of working with the food pantry. "People came together and got things done," she recalls, "even when it was a hundred degrees.

In the past two years, as vaccines have become available and infection rates have slowed, the food pantry has happily been able to shift back indoors, into the air conditioning. Less running and lifting, more paperwork. The number of families served has gone down from our pandemic peak of 60-70 per week to 15-20, allowing the pantry to reduce its hours and offer more food per person. Yet the mission of the food pantry is what it has always been—to serve our community's needs in the most practical and concrete way. As Dawn says, "That could be you or me tomorrow, needing food or diapers or five minutes of prayer." In the food pantry, wetry, with God's help, to live out our promise to "love our neighbors as ourselves and seek and serve Christ in all persons."

Something New: Invitation to an Open Table

An exciting new opportunity is here at All Saints – a Dungeons and Dragons group! Have you ever wanted to play, but couldn't find a game? Or are you curious about it and just want to watch and see what it's about? **Come join us on Sunday, June 11th** after worship, in the Parish Hall, and see what's going on! We'll provide all the materials, with both some premade characters, or some blank sheets if you want to come up with your own, and all the dice you'll need. You just come and have fun!

How did this come about? Why are we hosting a Dungeons and Dragons game? Well, permit me to tell a little story.

If I ever got the chance to travel back in time and find high school me, I'd gleefully inform my teenage self that as I approached my forties, there'd be one hobby, one pastime that had done more to shape my character, views, and outlook on life outside the church than anything else. You could've given me half a dozen guesses as to what that hobby was and I'd have gotten every one of them wrong. Perplexed, I'd ask what it was; with the answer, the shock, curiosity, and, let's face it, fear, would be evident on my face. After all, I am a child of the 80s and 90s, born and raised in the Southern Baptist church, and with that came with a whole list of things that *just aren't done*.

Dungeons and Dragons was definitely on that list.

As a child in a church community that spoke often (and loudly) of the mission of evangelism, of taking care of the poor and the needy, but without a lot of effort or work to show for it, I began to wonder as a newly minted adult what community really was. I grew up with a very strong sense of *the other* and had some views as I entered college that weren't entirely in line with what I've come to know now as the true love of God. There was a lot of pride, a lot of self-importance, and a lot of emphasis on helping for the wrong reasons, with a clear distinction between *Us* and *Them*. Let's be honest: I was pretty messed up.

When I first moved to Warner Robins 14 years ago, newly married and with no friends whatsoever in the area, my husband and I started playing as a way to connect locally with others our age. I'd heard about the game my whole life, and as my hypothetical time-traveling story attests to -- not all of those things were good things. Let's put those fears to rest (I assure you they're unfounded), and talk about how the game has literally changed my outlook on life, and in a way, brought me closer to the Lord and to his people.

Dungeons and Dragons, also called D&D, has taught me, over the past fourteen years, that there's no such thing as a hero or the "main character". There's a word, coined by David Koenig in 2012, known as *sonder*, which he defines as "The awareness that everyone has a story -- that all the random passersby you see around you have an emotional life just as rich as yours, even though to you they're just an extra in the background." D&D has driven home the concept of *sonder* more times than I can count. The cashier at the grocery store, the waitress, the construction worker, the homeless, the CEO, the single mother, the convict: we are all here, and we are all valid.



I've been reminded time and again that everyone has a different skill set – what is easy for some might be impossible for others, and our own individual strength, no matter how great, cannot do it all. That not being able to "do it all" is not a moral failing. Everyone's cup runs out eventually, and it's ok to ask for help. Together, however, we make up a perfect blend that can move mountains and support each other when we are feeling weak or broken. There is strength in true community and teamwork.

I've learned that everyone has a unique backstory – that even what people tell you isn't the whole of it, and that every experience you've had up to this point has shaped who you are and how you process both triumph and trauma. Hand in hand with that, I've learned to never judge someone on their first impression or appearance -- that aforementioned backstory runs deeper than anyone but God himself knows. There are old wounds, scars, and stings that people can choose to divulge (or not) in their own time.

I've learned that violence is almost never the answer. There's a stereotype that heroes in fantasy adventures conquer everything by hacking and slashing their way through with a sword, and let's be honest, a lot of people in life today are a little too quick to raise a sword against those they deem other. There can be just as much, if not more, gained whenever possible by diplomacy, a level head, and a cup of tea.

I've learned that there is always room at the table to pull up another chair, to share your dice, your food, your books, your experience, or your imagination. God has given us so many gifts, and to tell those around us "You can't sit here" is the polar opposite of what Jesus instructed us to do.

These are just a few of the lessons I've gleaned from D&D, and in joining that community, I've learned what community really means – working to dismantle my idea of other and instead fostering a sense of unity and valuing the safety and well-being of the whole over that of the individual. It is those lessons learned at the table with a set of dice, a catalytic line of dominoes in my life, that prompted me to leave my former church and find instead a church family that truly valued everyone as they are. It's the nudge that put me on the path that ultimately led to All Saints and the Episcopal church.

So what is it? What's involved?

To play *Dungeons & Dragons* you need, at the least, pencil, paper, and a set of polyhedral dice. You have a character, whom you alone are in charge of -- their actions and reactions are entirely up to you. This character can be premade, or the product of your own imagination -- think a theater improv class. Then, you sit with other friends and tell a story together -- literally any story you want.

And that is where you, dear reader, come in. There's a table in the Parish Hall, and we've got a seat for you, if you want it.

Rachel Heidler

Questions? Contact Rachel Heidler, indrabar@gmail.com or
Mother Bonnie, rector@allsaintswr.org

Parish Life at All Saints

Family Promise *Update*

A big thanks to everyone who contributed to the meal we served at Family Promise at the beginning of May. As always, the food was both delicious and plentiful.

Family Promise is able to continue its work to help families because of the support they receive from the community. They are currently supported by 26 partnering churches. The number of partnering businesses and civic organizations has tripled over the last ten years.

Family Promise supports families who are temporarily experiencing homelessness. While in the program, families work hard and save money in order to create stability for their children. A current challenge for the families is trying to transition out of the program due to the increase in rental prices. Please continue to pray for these families as they strive to care for their children and become productive Houston County citizens.

Shelley Strickland

Fellowship News

Hello everyone. We have had a lovely spring, something we do not get to enjoy very often! Following on the launch of the new "All Saints Coffee Bar" and the advent of the warmer Georgia summer weather, our thoughts turn to a nice glass of cool lemonade, and maybe a cookie or two, to stave off those hunger pangs until you can get to your lunch!

Starting June 11, the Fellowship Committee will be seeking volunteers to sign up to help with "Lemonade & Cookies" each Sunday, except for those days when we have either "Covered Dish" or the new "Third Sunday" Coffee Bar."



Teams of 2 people work best, the lemonade powder is supplied (it just needs mixing), you bring cookies (bought, made, or however you decide), and we will even have some ready-made to make things simple! Plus easy instructions are provided.

Please Contact Anne Sanders with any questions, 478-335-1487 or to volunteer to assist with Lemonade and Cookies.

ECW (Episcopal Church Women) Update

Spring Cleaning is coming to our Parish Hall. We will be doing a deep cleaning of the kitchen from May 30th to June 2nd. We have so many duplicates of supplies that our shelves and drawers are overloaded. As they say, many hands make light work, so we are asking for help. We will start each morning at 10:00. Come for an hour, one day or more. We will be happy to have you for whatever time you are able to give.

Our monthly ECW Meeting will be held at 10:30 on June 6, 2023, in the Parish Hall. We will be looking at our summer schedule at that time.

Friday lunches will continue each week at 12:30. We meet at a different restaurant each week and all are invited. Please let Linda Christie know if you are planning to attend. This helps us get a table set up before we arrive. If you have a favorite restaurant you would like us to try, just let us know. We are always looking for new places to try.

All the women of the church should be receiving regular emails regarding ECW events, meetings, lunches, etc. If you have not been receiving ECW notifications, you can have your name added to our list by contacting Linda Christie (lindaschristie@gmail.com) or the church office.

All Saints Summer Schedule

Sunday Mornings

Summer Choir Rehearsal: 9:15 am
Begins June 11th: All are welcome!

Worship: 10:15 am, in-person & online

*All are welcome
to Worship
and
Fellowship
Events*

Do Join Us!

Sundays, after Worship

1st Sunday: Covered Dish and Rector's Forum

3rd Sunday: All Saints Coffee Bar

Other Sundays: Lemonade and Cookies

Weekly

Monday

Book Club: 4:00 -5:30 pm
there will be some summer breaks

Tuesday

Food Pantry: 9:30 - 11am

Wednesday

Noonday Prayer: 12-12:30pm

Friday

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

Monthly

1st Tuesday

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

4th Thursday

Men's Group, 6:00-7pm, at O'Charley's on Watson Blvd

Remembering your Pledge

A friendly reminder to keep up-to-date with your financial support to All Saints, as you enjoy your Summer activities! There are many ways to give, even when you're traveling!

- Mail your check to All Saints Episcopal Church, 1708 Watson Blvd, Warner Robins, GA 30193
- Online giving through Realm at www.allsaintswr.org
- On-Line Banking through your personal bank's online banking system

Questions about online options? Contact the office at 478-923-1791 or office@allsaintswr.org.



Recognizing our first Education for Ministry Graduates!

I'm so pleased to announce our first graduating Education for Ministry class!

Completing *Education for Ministry* is a marvelous accomplishment. Graduates have spent four years of study, prayer, and fellowship time within small groups, gaining a deeper understanding of the Old Testament, New Testament, church history, spirituality, and theology. But EfM is much more than a four-year academic exercise. This course opens a window that enables us all to discover how to more clearly see God's hand at work in the world around us, through theological reflection.

On June 11, we will recognize our first graduating class during worship: Marsha Buzzell, Anne Eubanks, Linda Gerdes, Anne Sanders, and Leslie Tidwell.

Please join me in congratulating our folks on this wonderful milestone! And if you too would like to dive deeper into your life in Christ within a small group context, contact Marsha Buzzell marshap450@gmail.com or Mother Bonnie rector@allsaintswr.org about joining next fall's class. And do know you won't be making a 4-year commitment. This is something we do together, one year at a time.

Mother Bonnie

Summer at All Saints

June at a Glance

June 4th: Covered Dish and Rector's Forum, with a guest speaker from Episcopal Communities Foundation, after worship

June 10th: Annual All Saints at Macon-Bacon outing, 7 pm

June 11th: *Something New* - D&D at All Saints, after worship

June 18th: Happy Father's Day and our All Saints Coffee Bar, after worship

June 19th - 23rd: Vacation Bible School, 9 - Noon

June 24th: Celebrating the Saints: James W. Johnson and Pauli Murray, 4-7 pm

July at a Glance

July 4th: Happy Independence Day, America!

July 9th: Monthly Covered Dish, after worship

July 16th: All Saints Coffee Bar, after worship

July 30: 5th Sunday at All Saints, with Children's Sermon

June and July Happenings

Sunday, June 4th Rector's Forum *Planning for All Saints' Future with ECF*



On Sunday, June 4, the Episcopal Community Foundation for Middle and North Georgia will lead an informational session on the spiritual and material importance of supporting the poor and oppressed through legacy giving. Join us at our Rector's Forum following worship, to learn how Episcopalians in our parish and around the Diocese are caring for the least among us as well as providing ongoing sustainability for All Saints for many years to come.

Many in our Diocese are familiar with the grants that ECF provides to parishes and their nonprofit partners. Our own Food Pantry had received a gift from ECF in recent years! At this presentation, we will have a chance to learn more about how ECF is able to not only continue this work, but also help All Saints continue our good work in the future through legacy giving, which includes bequests, gifts of assets and appreciated securities, gifts from tax-deferred funds such as IRAs, life income gifts, and more.

Everyone needs an estate strategy, and estates of every size can make a lasting contribution to help the church continue loving like Jesus.

Please Note: our July Covered Dish will be held on July 9th, due to the July 4th holiday.



Saturday, June 10th *Annual All Saints Macon Bacon Ballgame*

Baseball season is right around the corner and the All Saints Men's Group is getting ready for opening day and the annual group outing for a Macon Bacon game. We have reserved tickets for group seating for the game on Saturday, June 10.

Watch for announcements on pickup times all for those who pre-purchased tickets. Please contact Dan Bibler at danielbibler@gmail.com or 229-938-3190 with any questions.

We look forward to seeing you at the ball game!

Something New

Invitation to an OpenTable
June 11th, after Worship
in the Parish Hall

*Watch for more news on
this first time event*



All Saints Coffee Bar

Our May kickoff of our All Saints Coffee Bar was a marvelous success!

Join us on June 18th, as we once again gather for coffee, tea, and light snacks on Father's Day, as we come together for a relaxing time together, getting to better know one another.



Your College of Congregational Development Team
Marsha Buzzell, Danielle Christie, Judy Reynolds,
Deacon Barbara and Mother Bonnie

Coffee
bar

Please note, our July Coffee Bar will be held on July 16th.



Vacation Bible School

June 19 – 23, 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Bringing God's Dream to Life

Information on registrations
and volunteer opportunities are available
on Sundays and in the church office.

Celebrating the Saints



James W. Johnson and Pauli Murray

June 24th, 4-7 pm in the Parish Hall

*An opportunity to learn more about the saints among us
as we share Evening prayer, fellowship, and food,
plus a viewing of the 2021 Amazon documentary,
"My Name is Pauli Murray"*

All Saints in Pictures

Youth Sunday



**Our Youth in Action!
Aaron Floyd leading the
Liturgy of the Word**



**Noah and
Amaya Rice
presenting
the readings**



**Our Junior Ushers,
Amelia and
Addi Christie
in action!**

**Our Youth Sunday
Altar Party**



Annual Picnic - Spring 2023

From good food . . .



*to balloons,
face painting,
and games . . .*



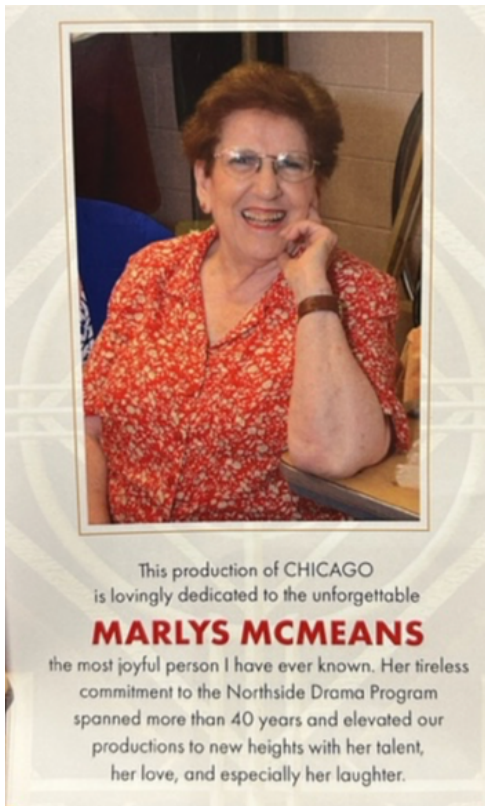
*to
fellowship!*



In Remembrance . . .

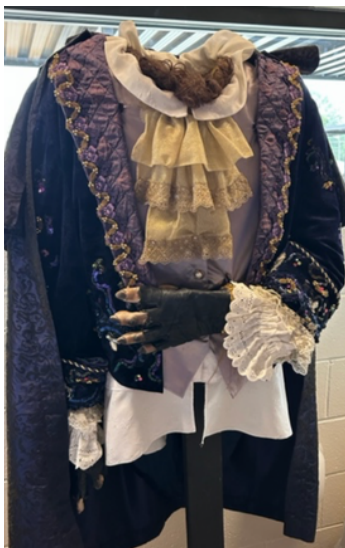
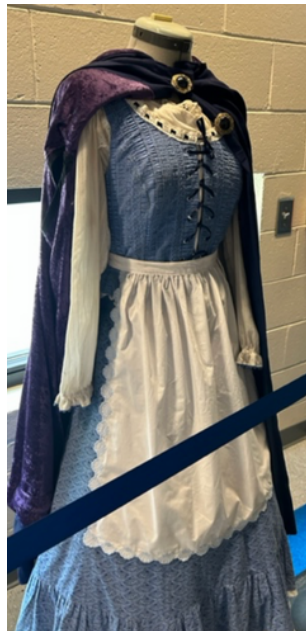
At a recent Northside High School drama performance, a few of Marlys McMeans' memorable costume creations were displayed.

What a loving gift to the community!
Thank you, Northside, for continuing to recognize the work of our beloved Marlys.



This production of CHICAGO is lovingly dedicated to the unforgettable **MARLYS MCMEANS**

the most joyful person I have ever known. Her tireless commitment to the Northside Drama Program spanned more than 40 years and elevated our productions to new heights with her talent, her love, and especially her laughter.



Jack and Puddy at the performance of Chicago, dedicated to Marlys McMeans.

Also pictured, Brian Barnett, Northside High School Drama teacher and very close friend of Jack and Marlys.

