

January 2025



*St. Mary's Episcopal Church:
Serving with JOY!*

The Bell Ringer

Online at www.stmaryskinston.com

JANUARY 5, 2025

3pm & 5pm

Free to the Public



St. Mary's has offered the Boar's Head Festival as its annual gift to the community since 1990, the 650th anniversary of the festival's start at Queen's College, Oxford, England, in 1340.

With much thanks to PBS Producer and St. Mary's Parishioner, Seraphim Smith, the Boar's Head Festival was recently brilliantly featured on an episode of North Carolina Weekend ([check out Season 22, Episode 11!](#))

But why, you may wonder, a "boar's head"?! We, in Eastern NC, understand well the cultural significance of a pig pickin'! The Romans, likewise, served boar as the first course at their banquets, and it would draw a crowd like it does today! Additionally, the boar was a fierce and dangerous creature. So, as the Gospel spread throughout Europe, the boar's head came to represent evil's ultimate defeat by the power of God through Jesus Christ.

The pageant follows a similar narrative arc. While clearly a Christian celebration from the start, the pageant's early sections feature secular wintertime celebratory songs. But as all of the characters gather for a feast, the story dramatically shifts to tell the story of Immanuel: how God became with us in the person of Jesus. Shepherds, angels, and wise men soon join the more than 150 other people dressed up as peasants, nobility, craftsmen, kings, clergy, cooks, and so much more. In the end, everyone in attendance can relate to one or many of the characters and find his or herself uniquely placed at the Christ child's manger, where all people are found to be beloved recipients of God's greatest gift.

The services at 3pm and 5pm are free as a gift to all. Following the 5pm service, a delicious ticketed fundraiser banquet is held, consisting of a full meal of wonderful food & drink, all set in the king's decorated hall (*tickets for the banquet have already sold out for this year!*). We hope you will join us as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with the JOY that is the Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival!

BOAR'S HEAD PERFORMERS: *Please see page 5 for the full rehearsal schedule.*

From the Rector

Sometimes it makes me sad when I notice that some have put Christmas in the rear-view mirror. What's the hurry?! Have you sensed that you really catch people off-guard when you wish them a Merry Christmas only a few days after December 25, much less towards the 12th day?!

Here at St. Mary's, I'm glad that we continue to celebrate the birth of Jesus into this world and into our lives through all twelve days, leading right into the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6. It's yet another opportunity that we have to spread JOY!

Epiphany is often referred to as a festival of light. On this occasion, we remember the light of the Star of Bethlehem that led the Magi to the Christ Child. And in our many ways of celebrating the Epiphany, light is featured... perhaps none more precious to members of St. Mary's Church than the Christ Candle being carried out into the world at the conclusion of the Boar's Head Festival. The significance of this light-bearing moment is always of the utmost importance for our lives and for this world. How wonderful is it that you, dear friend, are beginning this year with opportunities to live out your life of faith and serve as a beacon of God's light wherever you are and for whomever God has placed in your life?!

Throughout this January edition of the BellRinger, you will find news about some opportunities just like this. Opportunities to nourish and cultivate the faith that has been given you. Opportunities to get to know one another and serve others in Jesus' name. Opportunities to be a reflection of the light of God around you. There are, of course, countless other opportunities that the Lord may be placing on your heart too. I encourage you to ask God where you might be blessed (and be a blessing) by joining in. May we all welcome Jesus into our hearts and lives as He comes to us afresh in this time, and may we seek to know Him and to make Him known in this new year. Yours in Christ,

Tom +



Congratulations to Fr. Jon Sargeant, the newest priest in the Diocese of East Carolina! Fr. Sargeant was ordained to the Priesthood at St. Mary's on Sunday, December 8, 2024. May God bless his ministry!



NEW AL-ANON GROUP TO MEET IN THE NEW YEAR

A new Al-Anon group will meet at St. Mary's on Tuesdays at 5:30pm in the Parlor, beginning January 7. While Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is a group for individuals who are in recovery themselves, Al-Anon is a similar mutual support group for those whose lives have been affected by the alcohol use of another. No sign-ups are necessary, but if you would like to learn more about Al-Anon, please contact Judi Norman at jmnorman5@gmail.com. AA groups continue to meet at St. Mary's on Sundays at 8pm in Moseley Hall.

Monthly Outdoor Worship

Our next Outdoor liturgy will be a service of Compline on **Sunday, January 12th at 5pm** on the Parish Commons. At this time, we'll also enjoy the annual "2nd Lighting of the Warren Family Christmas Tree." Hope to see you there!

The Episcopal Church

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In the Anglican Communion

A global community of 80 million Anglicans in 38 member provinces/churches.

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In the United States

A community of 1.9 million members in 118 dioceses in the Americas and abroad.

Established in 1788.

Presiding Bishop

The Most Rev. Sean Rowe

Episcopal Church Center

815 2nd Avenue

New York, N.Y. 10017 212-716-6000

www.episcopalchurch.org

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In the Diocese of East Carolina

A community of more than 15,000 communicants in 70 churches.

Founded in 1883.

The Rt. Rev. Robert S. Skirving

Diocesan Office, 705 Doctors Dr.

P.O. Box 1336, Kinston, NC 28503

Tel: 252-522-0885

Fax: 252-523-5272

www.diocese-eastcarolina.org

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St. Mary's Episcopal Church

"Serving with JOY!!"

Jesus First,

Others Second,

Yourself Last"

800 Rountree Street

Kinston, NC 28501-3655

Tel: 252-523-6146

Fax: 252-523-5134

www.stmaryskinston.com

Rector	The Rev'd Thomas P.H. Warren
Sr. Warden	Mr. Jess Edwards
Jr. Warden	Mr. Jim Purnell
Parish Administrator	Mrs. Lori Kelly
Minister of Music	Mr. Sam Holt
Communications Director	Mrs. Sherry Tanner
Mary's Kitchen Executive Director	Mr. Jim Godfrey

News at St. Mary's



From the Parish Register

Transfer In

Dennis Riddell

December 24, 2024



Jim Godfrey, Mary's Kitchen Executive Director, Announces Retirement

At this year's annual Mary's Kitchen Volunteer Celebration, Executive Director Jim

Godfrey announced that he will retire at the end of February. Over 7 years, Jim has led Mary's Kitchen through historic growth in expanding staff & services, fostering partnerships with other organizations, and fundraising. He will be dearly missed. In the coming weeks, the job posting for Executive Director will be shared through the Mary's Kitchen Facebook page. Please pray for the selection process and all involved, as well as for the continued mission of Mary's Kitchen, & for the Godfrey family.



Blessing of the Homes at Epiphany

The Church has a custom of blessing homes on the Feast of the Epiphany (which is **January 6th** every year) and the season which follows, ending on Shrove Tuesday (which is **March 4th in 2025**). Historically, family and friends would gather to ask God's blessing on their homes and those who live in or visit the home. It is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest in our home, our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows. A traditional way of doing this is to invite the clergy of the church to visit your home for the blessing. During this liturgy, "20 + C + M + B + 25" may be written with chalk above the home's entryway. The letters C, M, B have two meanings. They are the initials of the traditional names of the three magi who bear gifts to the Christ Child at Epiphany: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. They also abbreviate the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless this house." The "+" signs represent the cross of Christ and the numbers "2025" indicate the year of the blessing. It is a blessing to your clergy to share in your lives! They would be glad to offer prayers of blessing for your home if requested. Being invited to offer this gift of the church to your home would be a great joy, so please don't hesitate.

News at St. Mary's

SAVE THE DATE!
Chili & Cornbread Cookoff
Super Bowl Sunday
Sunday, February 9th - Noon!!

The competition is back! Heat up your chili pots, brush up your favorite recipes, and come see who will take home the awards for "Peoples' Choice," "Most Original," & "Best in Show!" All are welcome to enter the contest and bring friends to share in the fun to raise money for the Glory Ridge Summer Trip!



This quarter, we will be collecting cans of chicken noodle soup and vegetable beef soup. We challenge everyone to participate! Please drop off your donations to the church during business hours during the week of January 6th-January 10th, or bring it on Sunday, January 12th at the morning liturgy. The items will be taken to the kitchen that week to coincide with our next quarterly service date on **Saturday, January 18th**. The Outreach Committee group is scheduled to serve.

Mary's Kitchen Food Drive & Quarterly Service Date

It's not too late to make one of your New Year's Resolutions to support the Mary's Kitchen Ministry!!! Our next food drive for the Kitchen will be **Sunday, January 12th**.

STEWARDSHIP

*Final year-end statements for 2024
will be mailed in mid-January of 2025.*

New Vestry Class of 2027



The Annual Parish Meeting was held on **December 8th, 2024, at the 10:30am liturgy**. At that time, the Vestry Class of 2027 was elected: **Rob Bizzell, Frances Herring, Sarah Warner, and Harry Wooten**. As you get the opportunity, please thank them for their discernment to serve St. Mary's and keep them (with the rest of our vestry and leadership) in your prayers. We are grateful for the members of the outgoing Vestry Class (Jess Edwards, Jo Parrott, and Ginny Wade). We are also grateful for their faithful service for their work as the Vestry Nominating Committee and SO MUCH more throughout their three-year term! The Vestry will hold its annual **Vestry Retreat Weekend on January 10th-11th**, at which time the new Wardens, Clerk, & Treasurer will be selected. Then, on **Sunday, January 19th**, the Vestry and Officers will be commissioned. May God bless the upcoming seasons of ministry for these leaders of our church family.



142nd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina

The 142nd Convention of the Diocese of East Carolina will take place in November 2025. The dates and location are to be determined and will be announced as soon as possible.

During our Annual Parish Meeting, the following members of our church were elected to represent St. Mary's at the upcoming Diocesan Convention:

Lay Delegates: *Richard Crumbacker, Jo Parrott, & Sherry Tanner*

Alternate Lay Delegates: *Barbara Crumbacker, Dacie Edwards, & Laury Sargeant*

Youth Representative: *Jayden Wright*

We give thanks for your ministry and keep you in our prayers!

Worship

BOAR'S HEAD REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

- **Thursday, January 2nd, 2025 - 6pm** - Spot rehearsal for "Here We Come A Wassailing" through "Nativity" Scenes (*Door Marshalls, Jugglers & Apprentices, Waits, Wizard, Cookie Girls, Tinkerer, Shepherds, Tintinnabulum, Star & Angels, Wise Men & their Pages, Torchbearers*)
- **Friday, January 3rd, 2025 - 6pm** - Full Cast Walk-Through with Everyone (*except the animals!*)
- **Saturday, January 4th, 2025 - arrive at 8am to get into costume, hard start at 9am** - Full Cast Dress Rehearsal for everyone (*except the animals!*)
- **Sunday, January 5th, 2025 - services are at 3pm & 5pm (arrive at 2pm to get into costume),** with a ticketed fundraiser banquet after the later service (*the ticketed banquet has sold out*).



The Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord is the feast day commemorating the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. It is celebrated each year on the Sunday following the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6th. This year, the Baptism of Our Lord will be celebrated on **Sunday, January 12th**, and we are excited to share that we will have the baptisms of Billy Heath and Ray Nute at the 8am liturgy. We will renew our Baptismal Vows at the 10:30am liturgy. Please keep Billy, Ray, their baptismal sponsors, and this day in your prayers and make every effort to join us as we welcome the newest members into Christ's Church.

Have you ever felt called to lay-ministries at St. Mary's but didn't know who to contact, where to begin, or how to learn? There will be **TWO** upcoming training events at St. Mary's, and we invite **ALL** to a new season of faith and ministry!



Eucharistic Ministers assists the clergy in administering the elements of Holy Communion, the consecrated bread and wine. They may also take the sacrament to those who are ill or otherwise unable to attend church. A time of fellowship and discussion about this ministry will take place on **Sunday, January 26th following the 10:30am liturgy** - we'll gather in the Nave.



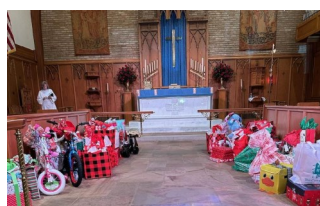
Ministry of Lector

Lectors lead worshipers in hearing the Word of God proclaimed during the liturgy. A time of fellowship and discussion about this ministry will take place on **Sunday, February 2nd following the 10:30am liturgy** - we'll gather in the Parlor.



Thank you to everyone who contributed to Advent observances & Christmas celebrations here at St. Mary's. You made the parish look beautiful and served in ways that have been a blessing to so many.

May God grant you a joyous Christmas season, and may you and those you hold dear have a happy New Year!



Thank you to everyone who supported the Foster Children Christmas Gift Program this year. Through your love and generosity, we were able to provide gifts for 23 children! With the monetary donations, we were able to assist other children as well! And

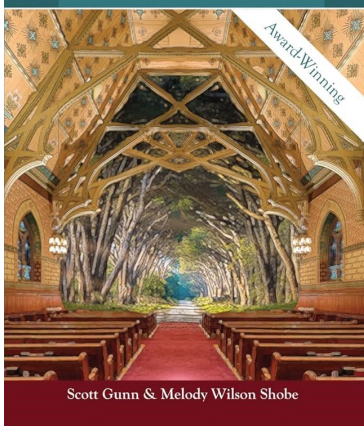
lastly, thank you to Brant and Levi Wentz and Nick Stark who delivered the gifts.!

Christian Formation



Walk in Love

Episcopal Beliefs & Practices



NEW "JOURNEY IN FAITH" GROUPS BEGIN IN JANUARY! -

Journey in Faith (JiF) is a short course that explores the basics of the Christian Faith, Episcopal Church, Anglican Tradition, and St. Mary's Church. The course is open to anyone, and is especially appropriate for newcomers to St. Mary's and anyone considering baptism or confirmation when Bishop Skirving visits St. Mary's on **Sunday, May 18, 2025**. There will be a Youth JiF group for high schoolers. Middle schoolers who are particularly interested in confirmation may speak with Fr. Tom about if this is the best year to participate. Adults will generally meet on Wednesday evenings and Youth will meet on Sunday mornings during the Christian Formation Hour beginning in mid-January. Pick up a letter about the course on the tables in the Narthex. The course book [Walk in Love: Episcopal Beliefs & Practices](#) is available for \$15 in the church office. Ask Fr. Tom any questions. May God bless us all in our life-long journey in faith!

Wednesday Night SUPPERS



Wednesday Night Dinners & Programs Return in January!

Please join us on **Wednesday, January 15th** for the return of our Wednesday Night Dinner and Programs. Dinner will be at 6pm, and the program will follow at 6:30pm. Staffed childcare will be available as well. Unless otherwise advertised, the program will be our Lectionary Bible Study during which we read and reflect on the lessons from the previous Sunday's liturgies. No homework needed, just a desire to share in exploring the Scriptures together!



THE SANCTUARY COURSE®

Wednesday nights at St. Mary's
beginning February 12

LEARN MORE AT
SANCTUARYMENTALHEALTH.ORG



The Sanctuary Course is a resource designed to engage communities of faith in vital conversations about mental health and mental health challenges. Come and learn about important topics such as stigma, recovery, companionship, and self-care. This course requires no prior mental health training or expertise; it is for anyone interested in starting the faith and mental health conversation.

Children, Youth, & Families

Winter Retreat 2025

January 17th -19th

8th - 12th Graders



Trinity Center is offering two spirit-filled opportunities for youth in the coming months! First, Winter Retreat 2025 is a collaboration between Camp Trinity and the Diocese of East Carolina Youth Ministries, planned for **January 17th-19th**. Join 8th-12th graders for a weekend of Camp T fun! This event is staffed by former Camp Trinity Camp Staff, so parish leaders are not needed. Registration information may be found at a <https://dioec.regfox.com/winter-retreat-2025>. Then, Happening #82 is a Christian experience presented by high schoolers, for high schoolers, with support from clergy and lay adult leadership, planned for **February (27th @ 6pm) 28th-March 2nd**. Registration information may be found at www.diocese-eastcarolina.org/events/happening-82/. See Fr. Tom with any questions about these events!

Happening 82

February 28 - March 2 | Trinity Center

THE SANCTUARY YOUTH SERIES

As St. Mary's adults are invited to engage in the Sanctuary Course, the EYC will be able to participate in the Sanctuary Youth Series. These youth resources are centered on the pressing questions that young people are asking about faith and mental health. They provide space to engage these questions and start important conversations within our community of faith. The Sanctuary Youth Series will take place on Wednesday nights beginning **February 12th** and continue through the season of Lent, ending at the cusp of our Easter celebrations.

EYC COFFEE

JANUARY 16 & 30
AT 4:15PM

MIDDLE GROUNDS COFFEE HOUSE

FELLOWSHIP

FAITH

COMMUNITY



A Family Easter Retreat at Glory Ridge

Make plans now to share in an Easter Retreat in the mountains of Marshall, NC on **April 21st-24th**. Families are invited to share this time together for fun and play, creating memories that will last a lifetime. Some may wish to use this time to continue recovery work projects after Hurricane Helene, while others may wish to participate in the guided retreat for the *Journey in Faith* courses. There are many options to participate and countless blessings to receive. More details to come, but mark your calendars today, and speak with Fr. Tom any time with any questions.



St. Mary's Episcopal Church
800 Rountree Street
Kinston, NC 28501-3655

The Parish Office
 will be closed
January 20, 2025
 in honor of the
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
HOLIDAY

EVERYBODY
 can be
 great.
 Because
 ANYBODY
 can
 SERVE.
 You only
 need a
 HEART
 full of
 A grace.
 SOUL
 generated
 by LOVE.



REMEMBER! CELEBRATE! ACT!

SUNDAYS

(Staffed childcare available 8:45am-Noon)

- 8:00 am - Holy Eucharist: Rite 1 in the All Saints' Chapel
- 9:00 am - Parish Breakfast in Moseley Hall
- 9:30 am - Christian Formation for All Ages
- 10:30 am - Holy Eucharist: Rite 2 in the Church
 (livestreamed to YouTube and shared in Facebook)

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS

- 8:30 am - Morning Prayer in the All Saints' Chapel

WEDNESDAYS

(Staffed childcare available 5:45pm-8pm)

- 7:00 am - Men's Prayer & Bible Group in Moseley Hall
- 6:00 pm - Supper & Programming for all ages

ST. MARY'S VESTRY

2024
 Rob Bizzell
 Jess Edwards
 Jo Parrott
 Ginny Wade

2025
 Andrew Dupstadt
 Bonnie Holton
 Anne Lindley
 Jim Purnell

2026
 Richard Crumbacker
 Corey Fader
 Randy Spaugh
 Kay Turner

Senior Warden – Jess Edwards
 Junior Warden – Jim Purnell

Clerk – Andrew Dupstadt
 Treasurer – Corey Fader