



All Saints Alive!

The Newsletter of All Saints Episcopal Church
December 2023



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Contact us: 478-923-1791

office@allsaintswr.org

allsaintswr.org

Mother Bonnie's Corner

Advent is upon us, that time of waiting and anticipation for the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We experience two waitings during this season: one, the celebration of Jesus' birth, and the other, that great awaiting for Christ's second coming in Glory.

The world encourages us to keep moving at full speed during these days of the Christmas countdown, for there is always one more event to attend, or gift to buy, or an additional item on our to-do lists. But this can also be a beautiful time to deepen our relationship with Christ in quiet anticipation, through practices of meditation and prayer. Know that opportunities and resources are available for you to help you find moments of rest, amid our active lives.

- **Wednesday, 12-12:30: Noonday prayer.** Take a break and join us for this time of prayer and quiet contemplation.
- **Thursdays, November 30, December 7, 14, and 21: Our weekly Advent program, *Mary Had A Baby*.** We will lean into Advent through Scripture and Spirituals in this year's program, which begins with Evening Prayer at 5:45 pm, a light potluck dinner at 6:00 pm, and then our program from 6:30-7:15 pm. Watch for a SignUp Genius each week, as we gather for prayer, food, and fellowship.
- **Reflection Guides.** We have materials available to assist you with your own personal prayer time, including Forward Day-by-Day and a new Advent Reflection guide. These materials are available in the Parish Hall.

And finally, this newsletter contains the schedule for our upcoming December 24th Sunday services. Do notice that the morning service will be the liturgy for the 4th Sunday in Advent, while later that evening we offer our traditional Christmas Eve services.

Mother Bonnie's Corner - continued

May this Advent and Christmas season be a blessing to you and all your family, as we prepare to receive God's most blessed gift of Love into the world.

Peace, Mother Bonnie

From our Deacon

We are officially in our new church year!

It is an exciting time for our church. We have the opportunity to grow together as a parish. Our relationships can deepen, new relationships develop, new opportunities to experience meaningful worship, and we'll have the chance for new opportunities to be stronger, more committed neighbors within our larger community.



Warner Robins is embracing new ways to build a stronger, more equitable place for all our neighbors to live into their best being. The new homeless shelter is currently scheduled to open around April, 2024. The churches have been building stronger relationships and working together towards building a network of services to help our neighbors find a more secure way of being. Agencies and churches continue to help with utility assistance so that our brothers and sisters can stay warm or cool and have lights and the means to cook meals. Dreams are being shared and the commitment to work together to make them come true is gathering strength.

It is going to be a good new year!

Still, with all this good stuff going on, it is important to recognize that the challenges are not going away. At least not for a while. There is still a lot to be done.

There are children and youth who still struggle with some of the demands of success in their education and we there's an elementary school we were actively involved with pre-COVID. Perhaps there will be new ways engage in the future.

Some families struggle to find their way to a safe and secure place to live. All Saints has maintained our ministry to our sisters and brothers who are working to get their feet onto a more level living field. Our continued ministry with Family Promise is a great start. We're hopeful there's a way to extend our commitment with Family Promise, should the purchase of Holly House occur, exploring something that we've never done before..

Simply stated, there are some dreams that are very personal and private. And there are some dreams that can only become reality when we work together to make them come true.

A new year is the perfect setting for dreaming dreams.

Do you have a community dream? Is it shared with at least one other person you know? Want to talk about it and see if there is a way we can work together to make it come true?

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

Deacon Barbara

From the Senior Warden

It is so hard to believe that it is time again to close another year here at All Saints. Thanks to the combined efforts of the members of our Church Family, we have accomplished so much!

During 2023 we were able to complete our new Church Directory and see the completion of our new church sign. Both of these projects helped us to connect not only with our Church family, but also with our community.



Our recent Trunk or Treat was a great success. We had an opportunity to meet some of the neighborhood families. A big thank you to all of you that showed up in costume to share snacks and fellowship with our neighbors.

We enjoyed a beautiful All Saints Evensong and reception on November 1, 2023. On November 12, 2023 we honored our Veterans and recognized services members in our congregation and those close to our members.

Our recent Stewardship campaign was successful and helps us look confidently to the future. Thank you to all who participated. If you would still like to complete a Pledge Card, it is not too late. Pledge cards are available in the office and in the Church narthex.

The GIPL Energy Grant application has been submitted. We hope to continue to upgrade our LED light transition in the Education Building. We should hear back from them soon. Our last grant was approved, so we are anticipating a positive response.

The calendar is full in December 2023. The Thursday Advent program started on November 30 and will continue on December 7, 14 and 21. Evening Prayer is at 5:45 followed by a Light Potluck Dinner at 6:00, and the program from 6:30-7:15 pm.

On December 10, we will have Advent Lessons and Carols. We will also have Vestry Elections on that date.

A wonderful All Saints' tradition will occur during our Sunday worship on December 17th. The annual Christmas Pageant will be presented, starring our All Saints' youth.

Christmas Eve is filled with opportunities to worship and celebrate here at All Saints. We will begin with Advent Worship at 10:15 am. At 5:30 there will be a Family Service, at 8:00 pm Musical Introit, and at 8:30 pm there will be Christmas Eve Liturgy with Incense.

As another busy year ends here at All Saints, I am nearing the end of my term on the Vestry and as Senior Warden. It has been an honor to have served this parish. I am so grateful for all the support I have had from the congregation. This time has provided me many opportunities to get to know and appreciate the members of this congregation. I feel I have grown spiritually and cherish the many memories I will carry with me. This church family means more to me than I could ever express. Thank you for your patience, support and encouragement.

Wishing you all a wonderful and meaningful Christmas. As we remember the true meaning of Christmas, let us celebrate this joyous occasion while spreading joy, harmony, and the message of Christ. Merry Christmas!

Shelley Strickland

Year Round Stewardship

Sunday School: The Letter "T" on Top of the Church

"I like your necklace." A small face grinned up at me as I filed out of church with the rest of the choir. "It's like the letter 'T' on top of the church."

I smiled and nodded. It didn't feel like the right moment to dive into a discussion of spelling and iconography, but I was glad to know that this five-year-old had a solid alphabetical foundation. Her comment raised a question, though: How do you explain to a child why the letter "T" is on top of the church, and why so many of the people inside wear necklaces to match? How do you explain why so many people bow before they sit in their pews, or what big words like "Trinity" and "Eucharist" mean?

Amy Floyd, in the eighteen years she has taught Sunday School at All Saints, has thought about these questions a lot. "A big part of what we do," she says, "is make children look at things in the church." One week, that means going into the sanctuary to count how many crosses they can find and talk about why this shape reminds them of Jesus. Another week, they go into the robe room to look at Mother Bonnie's vestments, thinking about what the different colors might mean. Teaching children about different liturgical seasons and feast days is important, she says, because "This is part of what makes the Episcopal Church different. We want the kids to understand that we're following something, not just making stuff up."

Some seasonal activities have become annual traditions—the dressed-up saint procession for All Saints Day, wreath-making for Advent, the pageant at Christmas, coloring and burying the Alleluias just before Lent, planting flowers for Easter. Other activities change from week to week. Sometimes, the activity involves sharing a lesson or gift with the adults in church, as when, a few weeks ago, a troop of small costumed saints handed out circular (halo-shaped) pretzels at the church door for All Saints' Day—reminding congregants that the snack could be enjoyed even if some of the "halos" were broken or out of shape (like the saints we had gathered to celebrate).

Often, the Sunday School story and craft focus on the gospel reading or the other scripture passages appointed in the lectionary for that week, so that when children hear the readings in church, they're reminded of what they've already learned in class. For Amelia Christie, learning about new Bible stories is the highlight of the class. She's hoping that one of the upcoming lessons will be about Zacchaeus in the tree—her favorite Bible story. Alexandra Evans always looks forward to playing and snack time. Elizabeth Evans and Clara Buttersworth love the art projects most—in one recent class, they drew turkeys and ears of corn to celebrate Thanksgiving. Addi Christie enjoys the art too, but for her, the best part is being together. "It's fun," she says, "when everyone sits around one table, and we get to be crafty."

Scripture, creativity, and togetherness were likewise central themes in our Vacation Bible School program this past summer, as children heard stories about brave, compassionate, and practical people in the Bible, in history, and in our own time. Using a curriculum from the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, assisted by piles of yarn, construction paper, and

Year Round Stewardship - continued

and diverse snack items donated by church members, the children were led to imagine what it might look like to “Live God’s Dream.

As with many other church ministries, the children’s Sunday School program had to adapt and get creative during the months of Covid lockdown. When worship services shifted to online and then to outdoor gatherings, leaders provided take-home activities for children to do with their parents. As activities gradually eased back into an in-person indoor routine, teachers began holding monthly activities, before resuming the weekly Sunday School routine earlier this fall.

The program has also had to adapt to changing population numbers. Amy remembers that when she was a child in All Saints Sunday School, “Christmas pageants used to be huge. There were so many kids, you would have to wait your turn to play the big roles, like Mary and Joseph.” Now, it’s more of a challenge to recruit sufficient kids to fill the roles, or to find a script online that works for a small group. Many of the Sunday School activities she finds on Forma or elsewhere online are likewise designed “for huge churches,” and have to be revised for our group, which ranges from five to ten on a typical Sunday. But the numbers have been growing, and Amy hopes to split into two classes soon as the older kids approach the mid-grades. “And if anyone wants to help,” she adds, “they can certainly do that.”

In Sunday School and VBS, children learn to make sense of what they see and hear in church every week—the scripture readings, the repeated prayers, the robes and crosses, the bread and wine. Most importantly, these programs push them to think about how these lessons in church matter outside the church doors, in their homes and school and playing with their friends—how each part of what happens in church reminds them to love God and their neighbors.

Mary Christian

Christmas Flowers - 2023

The Altar Guild invites you to help make All Saints beautiful with flowers and greenery for Christmas. If you wish to contribute, please provide the info below to the Church Office with your \$20 donation, annotating “Christmas Flowers” on your check.

The deadline for notices to be included in the Christmas bulletin is 12/17.

- Given By: _____

- In Loving Memory of: _____

- In Thanksgiving for: _____





Thursday Evening Advent Program

Mary Had a Baby

November 30, December 7, 14, 21

We'll gather to pray, share food and fellowship, and reflect together on the Advent season through Scripture and Music

5:45 pm *Evening Prayer*

6:00 pm *Light Potluck Dinner*

6:30 pm *Program and discussion*

2024 is Right Around the Corner . . . and a new budget year

Your All Saints financial team is beginning the budgeting process for the new year and every 2024 pledge card helps us with our fiscal planning. Pledge cards are available by contacting the church at office@allsaintswr.org or 478-923-1791. Or, on Sundays, you can pick one up in the track rack in the church Narthex, and place your completed card in the offertory plate.

*And thanks to all for your stewardship gifts.
Your generosity helps us carry Christ's light into the world.*

New Vestry Candidates – 2024

We have a wonderful form of shared leadership in the Episcopal Church, which includes both our priest and the Vestry. Our All Saints Vestry consists of 9 members who serve for 3-year terms. Each year we elect three new people to serve, as the three who are completing their terms of service prepare to roll off the leadership team.

This year we are once again blessed with three wonderful members who are volunteering their time, talent, and treasure to serve the Church and this community in this important way.

Meet your Candidates! Vestry Elections will be held on Sunday, Dec. 10th

Lillian Burton



As a child, my family moved from place to place. I was never in one church for a very long time. Sometimes it was Baptist, sometimes Methodist, and sometimes Church of Christ. I became an Episcopalian after BT and were married. We visited St. Peters in Chattanooga and knew we were meant to be Episcopalians. We attended St Peters until the mid-80s. When we returned to All Saints, I knew immediately that I wanted to always be an active member of All Saints. I have worked in the Food Pantry since the beginning of the pandemic and worked with Path-to-Shine when it was our ministry. I also am an Altar Guild member. I love sharing my talents and time with my beloved All Saints family and I know that God is with me guiding me. Thank you, All Saints, for giving me the privilege of being a part of God's family here at All Saints.

New Vestry Candidates - Continued

Rachael Heidler



I've been brought up in church all my life. My parents, longtime Baptists, are firm in the belief that Christians are called to serve, not to just sit and warm a pew, and did their best to instill that same belief in me. However, many of the experiences I had in being a servant during my teen years left an acrid taste in my mouth, to put it mildly. When I moved away for university, and later when I married Cody, I ignored or resisted every avenue for service that came my way. I blamed anything and everything I could to avoid any sort of responsibility and held firm that I would never hold any position the church ever again. The Lord surely must've been laughing when I said that, because a couple of years back, I accepted an invitation from Dominique Deming to attend All Saints during the weeknight advent potlucks, and instantly was struck by how the atmosphere here was different. I found hope and peace and encouragement for the first time in decades. I found myself, almost instantly, and definitely without really noticing, getting involved. Being here, I've found that serving has been easy -- not in the sense that it doesn't require work or effort or preparation (because it certainly does!) -- but that it is easy on the soul. It was after starting up the D&D game here when I realized that it wasn't that I wasn't to ever serve, it was that I just was waiting for the right church. I know now that I've found that church, and hope that I'll make up for lost time here, in our new family. I hope to give back to All Saints and our Lord through service in the vestry, to help spread love and community, and to share with others that same sense of belonging you all have been so generous as to share with me.

Roland Leach



I am retired from 35 years of government service where I was the chief of media relations for Robins Air Force Base. I was born and raised in Zion, Illinois, and moved to Middle Georgia in 1991 to work on the base. Over the 32 years that I've been in the community, I have seen this area grow and prosper and have many family and friends. I have a 26-year-old daughter, Jasmine who makes me proud and continually excels as a college graduate and is beginning her professional career as an athletic trainer for a high school in Tampa, Florida. I have been a member of All Saints since 2007 and grew up in the Anglican Episcopal church with my confirmation in 1977 at the Annunciation of Our Lady church in Waukegan, Illinois. The rector of Annunciation, Edgar Wells, introduced me to the traditions of the Episcopal faith where I served as an acolyte and my mother, Phyllis was the organist, and father, Wardner served on the vestry. My love, Sandy Gabriel, and I are proud to be members of All Saints and enjoy working on the Trunk or Treat and Mardi Gras celebrations. This is a thriving parish and will continue to be an integral part of the Warner Robins community.





December Altar Guild Schedule

Many Hands Make Light Work



December 2nd: Put up Angel Trees in church and Parish Hall at 10:00 am

December 21st:

- Begin preparation for Christmas Eve Cleaning and Polishing
- Pre-arrange flowers for Christmas Eve

December 24th:

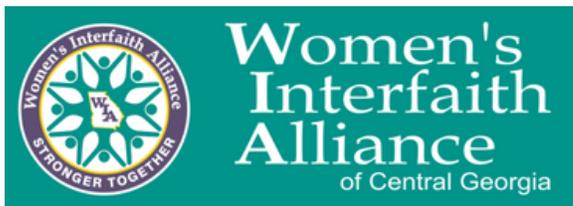
- Setup for Christmas Eve at 12 noon
- Grab a quick lunch after the morning service and come back to work!
We have flowers, candles, the Nativity scene, and more to setup for our Christmas Eve services, etc.

All Altar Guild members are invited to come for all these events

AND we welcome ALL church members to come and assist, too!



Parish Life at All Saints



December Luncheon/Meeting

Monday, December 4, 2023: 12:00 - 2:00 pm..

Wesleyan College

Macon, GA

WIA offers an opportunity to build relationships and learn more about different faiths, as we come together to explore our spirituality within a context of love, compassion, cooperation, and community service.

Questions? Please contact Mother Bonnie



Ladies' Friday Lunch Bunch News

December 8, 12:30 pm



For this Friday lunch, we will meet at Beverly McFall's home at 12:30. Beverly will make a couple of soups; please bring a side dish – savory or sweet – to share.

It is always fun to see all of the McFall's decorations! This will be our last lunch until January.



For all the Women of All Saints

ECW December Gathering
Saturday, Dec 9 – 11:30 am

In December, we are changing things up a bit! We are meeting on a Saturday in the Parish Hall, in the hopes that this will allow some of our working ladies of the church to come. And remember we do have a “children’s corner,” so don’t hesitate to bring them along. We will have several soup choices, sandwiches, and desserts for lunch., as well as a short meeting to discuss our next adventure – the Wine and Cheese Tasting on February 9, 2024 – and decide about this year’s donations to various community organizations.

If you can, please bring some Christmas cards with you. After lunch we will address cards to our shut-ins, members who have moved, and anyone we know who needs a little extra Christmas cheer!

Do come and join in the fellowship! Remember, **all** ladies are members of the ECW!
Hope to see you on the 9th!

December Worship at All Saints

December 10th
10:15 am



December 17th
10:15 am



Christmas Pageant

December 24th
Christmas Eve

Advent IV with Holy Eucharist, 10:15 a.m.

Christmas Eve Services:

- 5:30 pm Family Service
- 8:00 pm Musical Introit
- 8:30 pm Festive Christmas Eve Liturgy with Incense



FIRST EVER: *Christmas Hymn Sing at All Saints*



Wednesday, December 27
5:45 – 7:15 pm

*We're gathering, just for FUN . . .
to pray, share food, fellowship,
and **SING!!***

*Bring your voices, your instruments,
and join us as we make a joyful
noise to the Lord!*

5:45 pm *Evening Prayer*
6:00 pm *Light Potluck Dinner*
6:30 pm *Program and discussion*

Monthly at All Saints

Sunday Mornings

Adult Choir Rehearsal: 9:15 am
Adult & Children Sunday School: 9:15 am
Worship: 10:15 am, also live-streamed

Sundays, after Worship

1st Sunday: Covered Dish and Rector's Forum
Other Sundays: Coffee Bar and Fellowship
Bi-Weekly: D&D, 1 pm in Youth Room

*All are welcome
to Worship
and
Fellowship
Events*

*See weekly
eNews for
details on
upcoming
events*

Weekly

Monday
Book Club: 4:00 – 5:30 pm
Tuesday
Food Pantry: 9:30 – 11am
Wednesday
Noonday Prayer: 12 – 12:30pm
Thursday
Choir 7:30 – 8:30 pm
Friday
Shawl Ministry: 10 – 12:30pm
ECW Luncheon: 12:30 pm

Monthly

1st Tuesday
ECW Meeting, 10–11:30am in
the Parish Hall
1st Wednesday
Holy Eucharist with healing
prayers, Noon in the Sanctuary
Note date change in November
4th Thursday
Men's Group, 6:00–7 pm, at
O'Charley's on Watson Blvd

*The Men's Group will not meet in Dec.
Next meeting is January 25*

A New Offering at All Saints
Sign up NOW for this January Offering

Mindfulness

an eight-week introductory course

taught by Jason Hobbs, LCSW, MDiv

Mindfulness is a mental technique for focusing your awareness on the present moment. Participants will learn to use a variety of techniques to “shift” away from thought patterns that contribute to anxiety and depression. Mindfulness techniques have been used to treat a variety of difficulties such as depression, anxiety, chronic pain, and substance abuse.

- **When:** Class begins Tuesday, January 23, 6:30PM to 7:30PM, continuing every Tuesday for eight weeks through March 12, 2024.
- **Where:** Parish Hall at All Saints' Episcopal, 1708 Watson Blvd, Warner Robins.
- **Cost:** Fee for the class is \$135 if you register before December 22, 2023. After December 22, the fee for the class will be \$150.



We will be using a book entitled *Mindfulness: An Eight-week Plan for Finding Peace in a Frantic World* by Mark Williams and Danny Penman. Purchase of the book will also enable you to download an audio version of the exercises so that you can practice at home.

For more information or to register, contact Jason at:
Phone: (478) 953-0088
Email: jasonhobbslcsw@gmail.com
Website: <https://spring24mindfulness.eventbrite.com>



You may recall that Jason led our recent Real Issues Speaker series on Mental Health. I'm thrilled he's offering this program at All Saints!

Mother Bonnie

Outreach at All Saints

*Wondering how you can help others this holiday season?
Here are some opportunities at All Saints.*

All Saints Food Pantry

Our Food Pantry at All Saints has seen a recent surge in families needing help. While we averaged 16 families a week early this year, we're now averaging about 55.

Your gracious giving to the Food Pantry helps us purchase food at considerable savings through MGCFB (Middle Georgia Community Food Bank).

Breaking Barriers

On Tuesday, our Breaking Barriers team helps local clients who need assistance with their utility bills, as well as providing help to our homeless brothers and sisters with government identification

Your gifts to the Rector's Discretionary Fund provide the funds to support this ministry. Thank you.



Care Packages for the Homeless

The Daughters of the King are beginning a service project to help the homeless, in collaboration with the City of Warner Robins. The goal is to create 200 care packets for our homeless neighbors, to assist in the upcoming winter months.

There are several ways to help:

- Watch for more specifics in upcoming eNews and Sunday announcements
- Use this QR code to find items on an Amazon wish list
- Or write a check to All Saints, noting "DOK Care Package" on the memo line.



As we near the end of the year, I would like to thank everyone who supported this wonderful organization. Whether you cooked part of a meal or donated your time, your efforts are appreciated. Many families have passed through the doors of Family Promise this year. The temporary support offered these families has enabled them to once again become independent.

We are still waiting on next year's schedule. Watch for future opportunities through our Family Promise SignUpGenius in 2024.

A reminder that if you are interested in volunteering, the one-hour training session is offered monthly. Please contact Shelley Strickland if you have questions or would like to attend the training at shelleykstrickland@gmail.com

'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Matthew 25:40

Happenings at a Glance



December 3rd:

- Potluck after worship, with Rector's Forum
- D&D, 1 pm in the Youth Room

December 7th: Advent Evening Program 5:45 – 7:15 pm

December 10th: Advent Lessons & Carols and Vestry Elections

December 14th: Advent Evening Program 5:45 – 7:15 pm

December 16th: Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 10 am

December 17th:

- Christmas Pageant during worship
- D&D, 1 pm in the Youth Room

December 21st: Advent Evening Program 5:45 – 7:15 pm

December 24th: Christmas Eve

- **Advent IV with Holy Eucharist** 10:15 am
- **Christmas Eve Services**

5:30 pm Family Service with Holy Eucharist

and . . .

8:00 pm Musical Introit

8:30 pm Festive Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist with Incense

December 27th: Christmas Hymn Sing and Potluck 5:45–7:30 pm.

Bring your voice (*and instrument*) and join the musical jam session!

Plus, Coming in January . . .

January 1st: *Happy New Year!*

January 7th:

- Commissioning of our 2024 Vestry
- Monthly Covered Dish and Rectors Forum

January 21st: All Saints Annual Meeting and Covered Dish



All Saints in Pictures

Marketplace -- Our *biggest fundraiser of 2023*



So many vendors, selling their wares!



Thanks to all who created and sold, organized, set up, and tore down . . . all those many hands who assisted in making this year's Marketplace so amazing, **raising \$5,272.55 to support Community Outreach!**

Plus our extraordinary kitchen helpers, assisting with sales of our baked goods and luncheon goodies.



Trunk or Treat - 2023



Marvelous Trunks, Creative Costumes,
and even a Music Corner ...
Activities and Fun for Kids of All Ages!





The Joy of Blessing of
the Costumes . . .
for ALL ages



Our community engaging in
the Real Issues Speaker Series:
*Can we talk? Conversations
about Inclusivity*

God is Good. All the time, God is Good.