

# The Assister

MAY 2017

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI



*Minds to think  
Hearts to love  
Hands to serve*



**We welcome you without concern for race, color, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or age.**

## Maggie's Meanderings



I want to share a story with you, as best I remember it, one I've already shared with the vestry. One of my favorite authors is Henri Nouwen, a Dutch Catholic Priest, renowned author, and professor at Notre Dame, Yale, and Harvard, among other ministries. He died in 1996, but he lives on in his books and the memories of those who knew him. The story is about an encounter he had with a former student who dropped by his office one day. "Don't worry," said the student, "I just came to visit. I don't have any questions or favors to ask!" They went out to sit on the lawn and they chatted about books, people they knew in common, the news of the day, cabbages and kings ... when they fell silent, it was a comfortable thing, not a time when either one thought they should think of something to say! "I feel I'm sitting in the presence of Christ," said the young man.

"It's the Christ in you who sees the Christ in me," replied Nouwen. "From now on, wherever I am and wherever you go, all the ground between us will be holy ground."

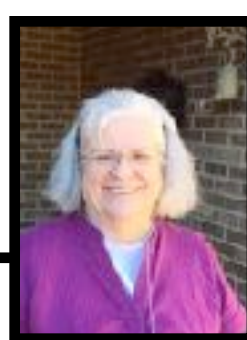
In a way, that's what I think the church is. It's a gathering of all sorts of people who

love God and try to follow in Christ's way, people who love each other, who try every day to see the Christ in each other. Some of us come, some of us go, but always, all the ground between us is holy ground.

I want you all to know what a joy and a privilege it has been for me to be with you these 16 months. You have extended the warmest welcome to me, and I feel as if I've become part of the family. I'll miss you, but I'll be praying for you all, and know that you will love and support your new rector as you have supported me! God's richest blessings to you, each and every one, and don't forget to take off your shoes! – this is holy ground.

Shalom, Maggie+

## Deacon's Corner - Judy Lee



Wow – I can't believe we are almost into summer and a new beginning for St. Francis is almost upon us. Corey Jones will be ordained as a transitional deacon on June 2<sup>nd</sup> at All Saints Episcopal Church, Homewood at 11 am. I hope many of you will be there to show him we are committed to his new ministry amongst us.

We have had two wonderful outreach projects come to fruition recently. Ellen Hamilton headed up a team of workers that drove to Louisiana to help refurbish a house that was hit by the tornadoes of last year. I understand they all had an exhausting but good time together.

We also had a good team of folks on Friday night, April 21<sup>st</sup> and again on April 22<sup>nd</sup> for the Gumbo Gala. Between Archie & Jessie Creech's New Orleans touch, Alfredo Valencia's expertise as a hotel chef and Tim Shaffer's presence as overall organizer (never mind all the others who helped chop and stir on Friday and others who showed up on Saturday to man the St. Francis tent), St. Francis did such a bang-up job that we won third place in the category titled: "Backyard Cooks". There is now a nice clean pot sitting in the parish hall under a poster of the Gumbo Gala and \$300.00 was part of the prize! Certain equipment will be bought to make next year's gumbo even better. Yes, a huge paddle is needed to stir a huge pot of Gumbo. I do hope many of you will come as guests next year. Believe it or not tent after tent ran out of gumbo. For the residents of Episcopal Place the profits gained from the gala will help with transportation, the food pantry and other basic needs.

Lastly – I will be leaving on June 11<sup>th</sup> (after that service) for a three month sabbatical. What will I be doing? No definite plans but will certainly visit family in CT. Possibly go to a Diaconate retreat with Deacons from all over the world, take a vacation at the beach – and perhaps clean out my garage!

St. Francis is building a house where all God's children dare to speak, to dream of God's reign, where the where the cross stands as witness to God's grace. Amen!

## Senior Warden - Karen Valencia

Well friends, it's almost time! I hope you were able to celebrate Maggie's ministry with us this past Sunday. I am very grateful to her for agreeing to be a part-time interim rector for us this past year, in addition to being essentially a permanent supply priest for us for six months prior to that. She made us cry, she made us laugh, and she made us think. She provided stability for us during this transition, and took time from her retirement to do so. I truly appreciate what she has done for us, and I hate to see her go, but we are about to welcome our new priest Corey Jones and his family to St. Francis.

Corey has a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in philosophy and religion from the University of Montevallo, and a master's in organizational management from Ashford University. He has served both as a summer camp director at Camp McDowell and as a leadership coordinator at their Environmental Center, and was Youth Director at All Saint's Episcopal Church for almost 16 years before going to seminary. Corey even worked with the EYC at St. Francis around 2004 or so....have you seen the old picture of him on the bulletin board in the hallway? He played guitar at the Sunday evening services as well, so don't be too surprised if he picks up a guitar and sings with The Beatitudes on Guitar Sundays!

Crystal grew up in Birmingham, and is currently the Executive Director for Programs and Operations at Sawyerville Day Camp. She is also coordinator for Happening in Alabama, and has been a dancer all of her life. Their sons Thompson and McKeand enjoy riding their bikes, playing in the creek, Star Wars, and Pokemon. AnneClark keeps everyone in line and also loves to dance.

This is an exciting time to be a part of the St. Francis community! I look forward to us working together with Corey to grow spiritually and to do God's work in our community and the world. Thanks be to God!





# Mission Trip to Louisiana

A group from St. Francis of Assisi, Indian Springs, recently returned from a mission trip to Louisiana. Sponsored by Episcopal Relief and Development, the Diocese of Louisiana is helping individuals whose homes were damaged by the floods of 2016.

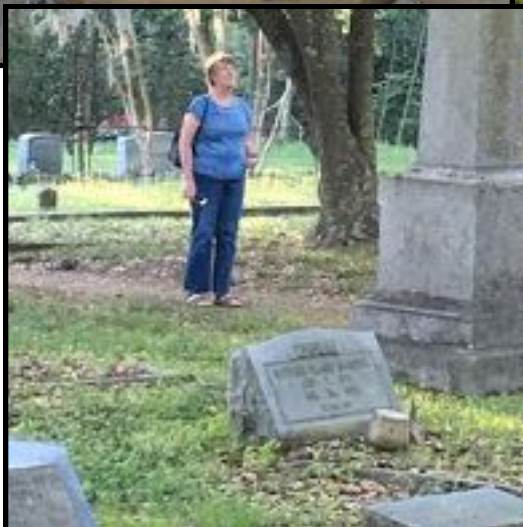
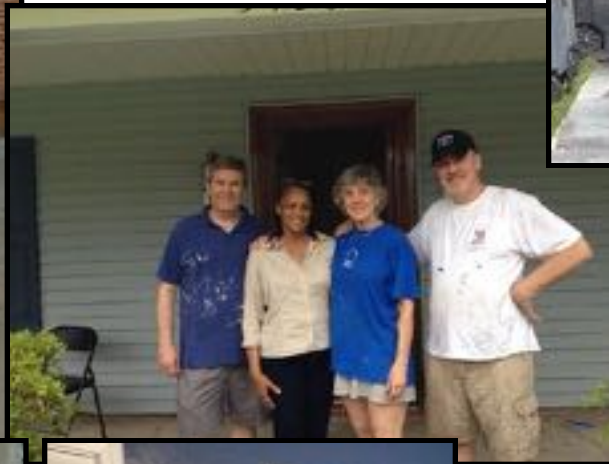
Our group worked on the home of a very nice woman who told us the story of the water rising in her neighborhood of ranch style homes that had never before flooded. It came up the street and gradually made its way up into her yard. As she waded up the block to the waiting bus, the water reached her thighs. It eventually climbed 3 feet up the walls inside her home, ruining everything. Since she lives in an area that never floods, she did not have flood insurance. ERD has been instrumental in getting her home repaired, but there is a long way to go. As of this weekend, Her bedrooms are now habitable, but she lost her kitchen cabinets, refrigerator and stove so her kitchen is unusable. She has been living in a FEMA trailer nearby.

We were hosted by Grace Episcopal Church in nearby St Francisville, a beautiful old town filled with live oaks and perched on the shore of the Mississippi River. We had a great time and would recommend others go down and help while ERD is still working there, through the end of June.

Those who went were Judy Franklin, Irene Lanca, Bing Lingle, Archie Creech, Susan Adams, Tim Shaffer, and Bruce and Ellen Hamilton.



We had a great time painting Miss Lilly's house. We stayed at Grace Episcopal in St. Francisville which was awesome. It was built in 1820 and the live oaks and cemetery were gorgeous. Ellen Hamilton



# Vestry Minutes

*Vestry meetings are open to all who wish to observe. If you wish to address the vestry during the meeting, please contact the Senior Warden, Karen Valencia, so she can add you to the agenda.*



## February 15, 2017

Vestry members present: Karen Valencia, Irene Lanca, Chip Dawson, Jessica Manfredi, Betty Bond, Eric Holmes, Helen Sparks, Deacon Judy Lee, the Rev. Maggie Taylor.

Maggie opened the meeting with a prayer. Judy Lee led a meditation on Salt and Light.

### Rector's Report

1. Judy Franklin, Janet Griffin, and Betsy Parton along with Rev. Maggie Taylor and Deacon Judy Lee will attend the 2017 Diocesan Convention on February 17-18.
2. Judy Franklin compiled the Format for the Customary Book. The Book of Customary Practices is meant to be a record of how we at St. Francis conduct our routine worship and business. It can be amended by approval of the vestry.
3. A new Sunday school class for youth ages 10 and up is now being offered (as of February 5th) on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at St. Francis. Episcopal 101 "Lite" is being headed up by Lara Patterson.
4. Flyers for Mardi Gras are posted throughout the church and extras are on the table in the narthex. Also, information is on our website, Facebook and email blast.
5. Please let Jenny Damman know of any special things/services we're doing for Lent so that she can let the diocese know.
6. Maggie informed the vestry that she might soon be taking some vacation time because she's worked over her allotted hours.

### Deacon's Report

1. Karen Valencia had brought up to Judy Lee a media release regarding bringing more Hispanics into our community. The Episcopal Church is offering an intensive course for church leaders exploring Latino ministry. Maggie said if we did a dual language program- everyone (vestry and church as a whole) would have to come onboard. Maggie suggested putting this off, especially since we are getting a new rector at about the same time. She feels it will be offered again and will be timelier for us. She suggested we start discussing it now and get our new rector on board. Karen asked the vestry be thinking of how to accomplish having dual language services and that the rector must be willing to do this.
2. The remainder of February thru May we will be collecting dry goods for Episcopal Place, Oak Mountain Missions and the Greater Birmingham Missions.
3. Sawyerville is on June 3rd. This Involves cooking a meal for approximately 120 people (Alfredo Valencia heads this up).
4. The Cahaba Valley Dental and Eye Clinic will be July 23rd: 1-4 p.m. Jan Hanson will head this up.

### Senior Warden's Report (Karen V.)

1. Weekly communication is ongoing with the electrician.
2. Asking everyone to turn in keys they have if not needed. We're not changing combination locks because they'll have to be changed again in 6 months.
3. Maggie suggested that office doors be closed and locked during service times.
4. Senior Warden emailed Chip Dawson about duties of the V-POD. Who schedules V-Pod people was asked.
5. Betty and Jessica are combining calendars and posting on the website as a master schedule on google drive.

## Junior Warden's Reports

### 1. Inside (Chip)

- a. Judy Lee and Judy Franklin did a facility assessment and it is already posted on the Trello Board.
- b. Anything you see that needs to be done needs to be put on the Trello Board.
- c. The double doors in front are on the board and it's fully drawn out and the approximate cost. Chip will get a local estimate.
- d. The broken window (latch) in the EfM room is being addressed.
- e. Breakdowns will be put on board as PDF files so easier to view. There is a calendar part on the board that also will be used. Vestry members need to put their ideas and suggestions on the Trello Board.

### 2. Outside (Irene)

- a. On February 25th, 3 men with chainsaws will trim pear trees. This is separate from general outside cleanup due to time issues.
- b. The lawnmower has been picked up for service. Lawn care was \$385 got it to \$320. Hopefully, now we'll have a cushion for pine straw, ant poison, etc.
- c. We'll have a big clean-up before Easter (Around the end of March). We need more volunteers and we need to stress on folks who have committed to do their certain areas outside. We'll do a touch up on the lawn/outside before the new rector arrives. Sign-up sheets for volunteers will be out plus we need to actually contact people face to face.

### Financial Business (Eric)

1. There is a \$16,000 budget shortfall but we have a \$29,000 surplus due to having an interim rector this year. We will make it this year.
2. We will have \$13,000 more than last year.
3. Pledges are down overall. We lost several people.
4. Rector and Deacons Human Needs Fund needs to be cleaned up. On paper some items were misallocated. We have about \$550.00 in the contingent account.
5. \$195.00 was posted from Music Academy. For the last smoke/cook, we don't have the numbers yet.
6. Currently we have 46 pledges for \$165,000. Last year we had 59 pledges for \$195,000. We are down about \$30,000.
7. Maggie said that she will need candles for the Taize Service that she believes is the Wednesday after Ash Wednesday but is subject to change.

### Liaison Reports

1. Cub Scouts will be here this coming Saturday for Pinewood Derby. They have several days scheduled monthly on the calendar. We have received a little over \$600.00 from them for church use.
2. Pledge statements went out mid-January. We are using the new software now.
3. Episcopal 101 'Lite' is offered for the children that have aged out (10+) of Godly Play. Materials used will be from youth confirmation classes found online from the local diocese. It will be an ongoing class. Marco Palmer has ordered some more Godly Play Books for that age class.

### Other Business

1. Maggie gave out retreat minutes to be approved. They were approved.
2. The new format for the Customary Policy Book was approved.
3. Karen V. will be doing the meditation for the March vestry meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Johnson, Clerk of the Vestry

### Addendum

February 20

The vestry voted (via e-mail) to approve the BSA's position on Transgendered Youth.

March 8

The Taize service is scheduled for April 5th.

**March 15, 2017**

**Vestry members present:** Karen Valencia, Betty Bond, Eric Holmes, Helen Sparks, and the Rev. Maggie Taylor.

Maggie opened the meeting with a prayer. Karen led the meditation with a poem, "Welcome to the Real World". Maggie suggested sending out in an email blast.

### **Rector's Report**

1. Rev. Maggie reported the Diocesan Convention was very good but no fireworks. Very calm and special.
2. Sunday school will be put off next week.
3. The monthly covenant payment is \$660. This is a lower payment but higher percentage. The Bishop's Discernment Fund money was not sent from last fall. The Good Friday offering is still sitting in the account also. Maggie suggested putting with this year's money so it will be more. This money goes to the Church in Jerusalem. This needs to be built into the process so it will be sent on time.
4. March 30<sup>th</sup>, Maggie will be meeting, along with the other Examining Chaplains, with the five new ordinands. They will re-read and study their answers. We should have permission the following Monday to make an announcement of our new Rector.
5. Holy Week - all services will be at 7:00 p.m. Taize service will be April 5<sup>th</sup>, the Wednesday before Holy Week. There will be a confession section. Everyone can bring up a sheet of paper listing a sin and offer for forgiveness. Then the paper will be torn up.
6. Ellen Hamilton turned down serving on ficom. Judy Franklin has agreed to serve if needed. A motion was made, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and approved. Judy F. will be serving on ficom.

### **Deacon's Report**

1. Not given since Judy Lee wasn't present.

### **Vestry Clerk**

1. Trish J. asked if everyone received a copy of last month's minutes-to make sure she had everyone's correct email address. Maggie asked if everyone read the addendum to the minutes. A motion was made to accept, 2<sup>nd</sup>, approved.

### **Senior Warden's Report (Karen V.)**

1. There was a concern about a second signature needed on the Compassionate Needs checking account. A letter was read from Judy Franklin about the Deacon's Compassionate Needs Fund (Deacon's Discretionary Fund). Let the minutes reflect that the Deacon and the last Senior Warden (Judy Franklin) are each listed on the checking account at US Ameri Bank. This account was set up so that the Deacon could have better access to money should a compassionate need arise. With no full time priest, we felt it was better to have a second signature so that money could be accessed if Judy Lee was out of town. We will have a new Priest in June. At that time, changes will be made as to how money will go into the Deacon's Discretionary Fund for compassionate needs. Judy Franklin stated, in her letter, that if the vestry wants she would stay on the account until the new Priest arrives, so that changes will not have to be made twice. Eric asked if the name of the fund had previously been changed from Compassionate Needs Fund to Human Needs Fund. Betty moved to leave things as they are until summer when all personnel are in place. The motion was seconded and passed. Judy Lee is the first signature and Judy Franklin is the second signature.
2. Easter - Judy Franklin has offered to set up the lunch we normally have after the service. She also reminded, by letter, the vestry that they usually buy the meat. There will also be an Easter egg hunt following the service. This is usually conducted by the Children's Church folks. It was suggested by Maggie to send out an email blast asking people to bring plastic eggs with goodies (candy) inside for the hunt-no chocolate. Karen will let Jenny know so that she can put in the bulletin. After discussion, the vestry decided to use the meat already smoked for Easter. It will be thawed, warmed and sauced. Helen said she would warm up the meat. Karen said she would get a ham from the Honey Baked Ham Store. Betty will bring lamb.

### **Junior Warden's Reports**

1. Inside (Chip)
  - a. Not given since Chip wasn't present.
2. Outside (Irene)
  - a. Not given since Irene wasn't present.

### **Financial Business (Eric)**



1. Karen read a letter from Tim Shaffer asking about getting our own account with SRA Foods for our meat supply. Maggie asked what the advantage would be-not tax exempt.
2. Year to date- we're about \$6,000 low on pledges and about \$3,000 high on plate offerings. Some prepaid pledges are out of date due to not having been transferred to the correct account as of yet.
3. The Cub Scouts had a concern about use of the tax ID number. This is not necessary per Amber.
4. The new software is working and complete now.

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### Liaison Reports

1. Betty said we will get the drapes up outside this weekend.
2. Karen moved the light outside to highlight the cross.
3. The Boy Scouts requested more storage room. Nothing has been done as of yet but this item is on the Trello Board.
4. We will wait until Judy Lee returns to complete the outreach forms. Then they can be sent in.

### Other Business

1. Easter Monday the office will be closed and Maggie will be taking time off.
2. Jim Lewis wants to donate a 55" TV to the church.

Respectfully submitted,  
Trish Johnson, Clerk of the Vestry

### Addendum

April 5  
The Taize service was cancelled due to bad weather.

### Up-coming Events

Saturday, April 22:

Gumbo Gala at Sloss Furnaces

Sunday, July 23:

Cahaba Valley Dental & Eye Clinic 1-4

*We are St. Francis...*





St. Francis knows gumbo! Third place winner - Backyard Chef





# Mardi Gras!

