



ST. MARY OF THE HILLS EPISCOPAL CHURCH BLOWING ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA MARCH 9, 2025 FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

WELCOME TO ST. MARY OF THE HILLS

Connection Card in the pew rack so that we might connect with you further. More information about our parish is available online at www.stmaryofthehills.org. Members of our Vestry (*elected lay leadership*) are identified by name tags with yellow lanyards. Seek them out for details about our congregation's life and ministry.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY CHRISTIAN FORMATION OFFERINGS

- **Youth:** Youth Formation occurs at 9 am in the St. Mary room.
- **Rector's Forum:** During Lent, we'll return to a series we began several years ago, "Signs of Life: Why Church Matters," developed for use by the Society of St. John the Evangelist. This year, we will pick it up again, trusting that rich conversation and reflection will once again emerge.
- **Children & Worship:** This offering runs through the first portion of the 10:10 am service. The children begin church as usual and leave together at the beginning of services for a lesson that corresponds with the Sunday readings. They'll rejoin their families during the Peace.
- **Note:** Godly Play is taking a break during the season of Lent.

EVENING PRAYER – Evening Prayer will be held at 4 pm in the Church on Wednesday, March 12.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! RISE AGAINST HUNGER EVENT MARCH 16 – We'll be packaging meals at Blowing Rock School for Rise Against Hunger on Sunday, March 16. There are plenty of volunteer spots available! Sign up at <https://www.stmaryofthehills.org/outreach>.

LENTEN BOOK STUDY BEGINS TUESDAY – Join Fr. Andrew in reading Henri Nouwen's classic book, "Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World." A conversation circle will convene on Tuesdays from noon to 1 pm in the Barrett Room. Books are available at the Church for a suggested donation of \$10 and online from a variety of book sellers.

PRAY THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS – The Way of the Cross, also known as the Stations of the Cross, will be prayed each Friday in Lent, beginning March 7, at noon in the Church. All are welcome!

RITE OF RECONCILIATION DURING LENT – The Reconciliation of Penitent, commonly called 'Confession', will be offered each Friday in Lent, from 11 am until 11:45 am. Reconciliation is also available at any time by appointment. Please contact Fr. Andrew at rector@stmaryofthehills.org if you'd like to make an appointment or to learn more about the rite of Reconciliation in the Episcopal Church.

FIFTH SUNDAY PARENTS CIRCLE MARCH 30 – Parents of children all ages are invited to join us for Fifth Sunday coffee and conversation from 9:10 am to 9:50 am in the Parish Hall by the fireplace. Children can be dropped off in the nursery or meet upstairs for special programming. This month's Parents Circle is hosted by Michelle Curry.

TORCHBEARERS NEEDED – The Acolyte Guild is looking to add Torchbearer teams to the 10:10 am services. Torchbearers learn about Episcopal customs and traditions, contributing to a deeper understanding of the church's rituals and practices. They carry torches representing the "Light of Christ" during the processional, recessional and gospel procession. Contact the church verger, [Michelle Curry](#), by email at verger@stmaryofthehills.org or by text at 828-719-9508 if your child is interested in participating.

SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 18-20 – Vacation Bible School will occur June 18-20. More details forthcoming.

ABOUT GREGORY THE GREAT

Commemoration: March 12

A sixth-century Pope and Doctor of the Church, Gregory was consecrated Bishop of Rome in 590 and served until his death in 604.

Gregory is remembered for sending Augustine to Canterbury in 597 to do missionary work among the Anglo-Saxons. Gregory's book, *Pastoral Care* (c. 591), is one of the classics of pastoral theology and sets out his view of the bishop as the shepherd of souls.

Self-described as a "servant of God's servants," Gregory is one of only two popes to be given the title, "the Great," and is one of the four great Doctors of the Western Church. (Adapted from Episcopalchurch.org)

PARISH PRAYER LIST

For the Church: Sean, our Presiding Bishop; José our Bishop; Andrew, Sam and Gary, our clergy; for our Vestry and staff; for all the people of this parish

In our Parish Prayer Cycle, we remember this week:

03/09: Linda & Nick Elksnin

03/10: Doug & Terri Fabel

03/11: Frank & Meg Fary

03/12: Robert Felix & Jennifer Nelson, Robert Henry

03/13: Bob Finney & Bonnie Holder

03/14: Buddy Fore

03/15: Bill & Emily Furr

In the Diocesan Cyle of Prayer: Diocese of Western North Carolina Commissions, Committees, Agencies and Boards; Diocesan Staff

For our nation and those in positions of public trust: Donald our President; Josh, our Governor; all those who hold elected office

For all who suffer from war throughout the world and especially for the people of Ukraine and Russia, the Korean peninsula, Yemen, Ethiopia, the Sudan, Israel and Palestine

For all affected by natural disaster, especially those impacted by Hurricanes Helene and Milton, and those impacted by fires throughout California

For healing: Dale, Bill & Jorgann Rogers, Jeff Hedden, Christine, John, Ann Greene, Bob Barham, Clare, Bill Tessien, Emily R., Bob, Marty, Sam, Gary, Charlie, Pam L., Joe D., Lucy, Mary M., Charlie, Lance, Gae, Lynn Turnbow, a family in distress, Wayne, Hunt Phyllis

****Please note that the names on this list will remain for four weeks,
unless the office is notified that the person(s) needs to remain on the list for a longer period of time.****

For those who have died: Cloe, Thomas Whittington

For those with other concerns: All who are disenfranchised, Topper

For those who are traveling: Rick & Barbara

For safe pregnancy and delivery: Caitlyn, Chelsea, Hanna, Katherine, Kelley, Taylor Griffis

For those celebrating a birthday:

03/09: Buddy Fore

03/10: Margaret Jane Joffrion, Mike Austell

03/12: Alice Holt, Jim Shaut

03/13: Joyce Gibson, Tim Silver

03/15: Linda Norman

For those celebrating an anniversary:

03/10: Jim & Kay Snow

03/11: Robert Kling & Tom Veale