



J A N U A R Y 2 0 2 1

# The Call



*May the words of our mouths and the mediations of our hearts be acceptable in Thy sight o Lord our strength and our redeemer.*

**A Monthly Newsletter**

**January 2021**

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Eucharist Pictures

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## Fish of every kind and the mission of the church

At the end of every Eucharist, we are sent into the world. The dismissal— “Go” – tells us that we are people on the move.

“Let us go forth in the name of Christ...

“Go in peace to love and serve the Lord...

“Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit...

We Christians have ended our services with “Let’s Go!” for so long that the languages aren’t spoken anymore. “Ite, missa est” can mean “Go, it is dismissed,” but also, “Go, it is mission.” When we leave church on Sunday, we are launched on a mission just like missiles from a launching pad. The worship inside the church building ends so that the worship in the world can begin.

As St. Francis said, “Preach the gospel always. Use words when necessary.” Or as the great mystic country parson, George Herbert, said “Seven whole days, not one in seven, I will praise thee.”

We are launched from the community of the faithful. The Greek word for church is “ekklesia” —ek means “out of” and keleio means “called.” We are called together out of the world and then sent back into the world with our cry “Let’s go!” We get our word “ecclectic” from the word for “church” — God’s unique collection of people “deriving ideas, style, or taste from a broad and diverse range of sources.”

God has very broad and diverse taste bringing us all together. Jesus tries to tell us this all the time. “The kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet gathering fish of every kind.” (Matthew 13:47). A dragnet (Greek sagéné) is a big rectangular net with weights on one side and floats on the other. When a dragnet is pulled in with ropes from the corners, it snags whatever gets in the way: boots, bottles, beer cans, seaweed, old tires and every kind of fish.

Some of us fish are tropical lovelies, like Nemo the Clownfish, Rainbow fish, Angelfish, Lionfish, and even the dazzling blue Regal Tang. And others of us are less stunning, like the drab Grouper, the walking Sea Pig with seven pairs of unaesthetic nubby feet, and even one poor guy with the unfortunate name, the Blobfish. But the point is that all of us fish, beautiful or not, belong together in the dragnet that is God's peculiar collection.

So, if a congregation is made up of people who think exactly alike, who look exactly alike, and who agree on everything, then they failed to live into God's creative diversity. Notice that God fishes with a dragnet, not fancy hand-tied fly fishing gear designed to land only speckled trout, as Robert F. Capon is fond of pointing out. Or to put it differently, Church is where we go to be with people who are different from us, in order to prove that God's unifying love is more powerful than our differences.

With all that background in mind, I am on a personal mission to eliminate a common word from our vocabulary, and more importantly, from our thought processes. That word is "Recessional" as in "Recessional hymn" indicating the end of a service.

The church does not declare recess when we go forth into the world. We do not recede from anything. Recessional comes from the Latin "recedere" which means to go backwards! Christians never go backwards because we are too busy going forth into the world! We do not declare recess until next Sunday. We process into the world, or more accurately, we are launched. So, just erase "recessional" from your mind, and strike it out of your heart as a piece of negative thinking we just don't need. We go on our way rejoicing, instead of receding into our hole until next week.

[Please note that there is no place in the Book of Common Prayer where the word "recessional hymn" is found. There is merely the note on page 409: "A hymn may be sung before or after the postcommunion prayer." So, if we don't call it a recessional hymn, what do we call it? Try "Concluding hymn" or "Procession into the World" or just plain old "hymn." ]

I saw the most ironic thing on Youtube the other day. A church posted a video of their small congregation singing "O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling." They sang it with vigor, with gusto, with personal commitment, with missionary zeal. They sang with all their hearts: "Proclaim to every people, tongue and nation that God, in whom they live and move, is Love." And in the middle of all this positive missionary forward movement, whoever posted the video labeled it a "recessional hymn." It was really a "Let's go and win one for the Gipper" hymn. It was really a "take no prisoners" hymn. It was really a "Go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit" hymn.

We do not declare recess. We declare victory over sin and death. We declare glad tidings of great joy for all people. Jesus's Resurrection invented the idea that Love always wins two thousand years ago. We declare that God loves you exactly as you are, and this congregation is the place where you can find God's love reflected in God's people "with skin on them."

This week, I was lucky enough to take communion to one of our elderly members who lives in an assisted living memory unit. As we were leaving after our too brief visit, she wanted to give her visitors a hug. The staff member at the facility stopped her and said "I'm sorry, but right now we can't do that." While it was for our Covid safety, the inability to give one another a hug broke my heart into little pieces. You could just see her sweet face drop.

So, I make you this promise: when we can finally safely gather again after this Covid mess is over, we are going to hug one another as we have never hugged one another before. We are going to exchange the peace as Christians have done for two thousand years, with all the agapé, acceptance, and affirmation that we can muster. We will treasure every one of the “fish of every kind” that Jesus has gathered into this dragnet. And we will each be sent forth to fish like dragnets in the oceans of the world. “Let’s go!”

Father Ed

*Worship offerings are listed below.*



Due to our increasing Covid cases

**We are back to Stage 1B**

At 9:30am on Sunday Mornings

Live stream via

Facebook Live

<https://www.facebook.com/stmarksepiscopalnc>

### **Morning Prayer**

**Monday, Wednesday, Friday**

**8:30am**

**Join via zoom link below  
(passcode 654321)**

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7047478893?pwd=UUpYb3QrK01oTzU4MSsyZ0NXajl0QT09>

**You can access the service order with the link below**

<https://conta.cc/2vRUtpl>

**FACEBOOK FRIDAYS with JORDANA**

**Look for Jordana’s Friday Reflections during the day.**



**Christmas Eve  
Drive Through  
Eucharist**

**It was a little  
wet and soggy  
but we appreciate  
all of those that helped to  
make  
Christmas Eve  
Drive through Eucharist  
Possible.**





J A N U A R Y 2 0 2 1



Christian Formation  
Resumes January 17th  
Civil Discourse is Back.  
(by popular demand)



If you were not able to join us when we launched our Civil Discourse Class  
at the end of 2019 beginning of 2020

We will offer this course again beginning  
January 17th at 10:45 am  
on Sunday mornings via zoom.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7047478893?pwd=UUpYb3QrK01oTzU4MSsyZ0NXajI0QT09>

This will be a good opportunity for those that missed it or  
just need a refresher.

Mary Kendrick will lead us in Part I of this course for six weeks.

We hope you will join us.

If you have any questions please contact Mary Kendrick  
[marykkendrick@yahoo.com](mailto:marykkendrick@yahoo.com)

### Flyin' Lion Transition to Employment Update:



Thank you so much for your support of the Thanksgiving pies and Christmas cookie sales. We were thrilled to net \$1700 thanks to the generosity of our congregation! We hope the baked goods added some sense of normalcy to your holidays during this very un-normal year.

Flyin' Lion is prepping for take off!! Be on the lookout for a new brochure and web site shortly after the first of the year. And stay tuned for an invitation to a "kitchen shower" for the Flyin' Lion Ministry in the New Year.



We are currently planning to begin the program in April of 2021. During the next three months we will be networking with social service agencies who may have clients they would like to refer to participate in the Flyin' Lion program. We will also be calling on businesses that might be looking for employees well-trained in culinary skills. If anyone knows specific contacts in appropriate social service agencies or businesses that may consider partnering with us as we assist our graduates to find employment, please contact Linda Amidei at 727-543-2600. Lastly, if you know of businesses such as local cafes, coffee shops or gift shops/country stores that we could contact regarding the sale of our products we would appreciate hearing from you.

Most importantly, please keep Flyin' Lion Ministries in your prayers as we try to lay a firm foundation on which to grow this ministry.

## THE RAFTERS AT HISTORIC ST. MARK'S

### We're Hiring!

As we prepare to launch the wedding and events business at The Rafters, we are looking for the perfect Venue Coordinator to help make all of our dreams a reality. If you are interested in applying for this position, please refer to the full job description [here](#) and submit a resume and cover letter to [theraftersevents@gmail.com](mailto:theraftersevents@gmail.com) no later than Friday, January 8th.

Please share this job posting with any friends or colleagues who may be a good fit, and help us promote the opportunity by sharing on your social media pages.

They can find us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/theraftersevents>

or on the Rafters Website

<https://www.theraftersevents.com>

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### THANK YOU

To ALL who supported La Escuelita Tree and Wreath Sale.

La Escuelita made a profit of \$1,242.78

La Escuelita was not able to have their usual Christmas Party this year.  
However, this did not deter Santa from offering gifts and visits with the kids.







### **Birthdays**

Sean Pope – 1/2  
Glen Hunt – 1/4  
Molly Marshall - 1/4  
Larry Leisey – 1/6  
Molly Thompson - 1/11  
Emma Hines - 1/12  
Kaelyn Sparks - 1/12  
Samantha Walseman – 1/13  
Genny Hinkle – 1/14  
Liz Gail - 1/16  
David Fahey - 1/19  
Sarah Benes – 1/22  
Robbie Roberts – 1/22  
Pierce Roberts – 1/24  
Milton Sullivan – 1/25  
Tony Bouldin - 1/26  
Brent Sparks - 1/27  
Mary Lou Blevins – 1/30  
Beth Wilson - 1/30  
Bridget Stein – 1/31

### **Anniversaries**

Bill & Linda O'Connor – 1/28

### **Prayers for continued healing:**

Saunders Black  
Martha Ann Springer  
Elena Michel and her family  
Richard & Mary Beth Masline  
Bob Chandler  
Jim & Patricia Woolley  
Joe Brown  
Ruth Blackwelder  
Robert Allen

### **Panera Bread Pick-Up**

**Holiday – 1/1**  
**Brent Sparks – 1/8**  
**Andrew & Libby James – 1/15**  
**Alan & Lesli Kathman – 1/22**  
**Scott Hundertmark – 1/29**

W.I.N.E

(Women in Need of Entertainment)



Has decided to take a break from zoom gatherings for the time being.

While we all miss being together our turn outs continued to dwindle each month. The group has collectively decided to take a break until we can have better options to gather.

Please reach out if you have any questions thoughts or ideas.  
[allibrett@gmail.com](mailto:allibrett@gmail.com)



Thirstday Thursday  
is Scheduled to  
take place on  
Thursday January  
14th at 6:30pm

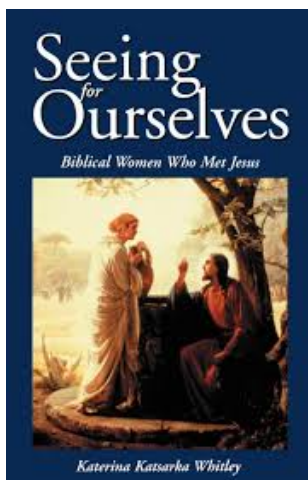
Our attendance has declined since we have not been able to meet in person.

We plan to meet via zoom  
However, please RSVP to David Fahey to let him know if you would like to attend.

Our gathering will be dependent on the responses we receive.

[david.fahey@carolina.rr.com](mailto:david.fahey@carolina.rr.com)

or text to  
704-562-7587



St Mark's Book Club

Will Meet January 6th at 7pm

This will be the last discussion for our current book.

We will meet via zoom.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7047478893?pwd=UUpYb3QrK01oTzU4MSsy-Z0NXajI0QT09>

Please contact Mandy Self Sparrow with any questions.  
[mandyselfsparrow@gmail.com](mailto:mandyselfsparrow@gmail.com)

### VESTRY UPDATE

We would like to thank ALL of our Vestry for the amazing work they have done this year. We give special thanks for the work done in the second half of the year which included navigating all of our staff changes, a pandemic and ways to keep our programming operational.

Due to Covid we were unable to vote as a congregation for our three incoming Vestry Members.

The congregation entrusted Vestry to make the decisions for us.

Please join us in welcoming our three new Vestry members.

Rick Stein, Kari Swogger and Laura Fahey.

#### Rick Stein



My name is Rick Stein and my family has been attending St. Marks for 7 years now. My wife, Bridget, and I are also apart of the finance team. This is definitely out of my realm of comfort as my childhood was not strongly embedded with faith. Each year as my time with St. Marks grows, so does my faith and sense of community and I couldn't be more thankful for finding this church and the people that make it great. It has been everything we were looking for that we left behind in Michigan and even though it took us a few years to find it, we know that this is our home. When asked if I would be interested in joining the vestry, I was caught off guard and had not realized to the extent how much I really cared about this community and what it means to me. When I agreed to teach Sunday School last year I had been contemplating how else I could be involved to be more apart of the community, because I had missed out on so much in the past years due to my career. I believe this was my calling of giving back to the community that has given so much to my family.

#### Kari Swogger

I'm Kari Swogger and excited to be one of the newest vestry team members! I'm a lifelong Episcopalian who was confirmed at All Saints Episcopal Church in Miami, Oklahoma. I'm a mother of three, and my family has lived in the Huntersville area since 2005.

While I may be stuck in an office working as an investment accountant Monday through Friday, you will most likely find me outdoors enjoying gardening, fishing, and golfing.





## Laura Fahey



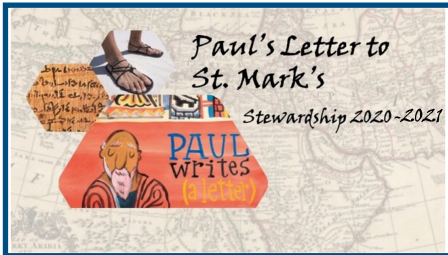
The Fahey's have been blessed to call St. Marks our church family since 1995. Our baby Maggie was just 2 weeks old when we came to our first service. The years since then have seen many changes. Maggie and Sarah have grown up, David has retired, but St. Marks has remained a treasured constant for us. We care deeply for this community and I especially feel very honored to get this opportunity to serve.

A little about me: My training is in mechanical engineering and I've worked the last 35 years as a software solution architect and sales engineer for companies that offer financial services software to banks. I've worked with and managed programmers and engineers all these years which makes me pretty nerdy but a great problem solver. I like to understand different views. On a personal note, some of my favorite things involve sailing, travel, horses, and aliens (but typically not at the same time). I've taken on several roles with the church, including outreach, hot dog Sundays, children's Sunday school, children's chaplain, ushering, and eucharistic minister. This will be my first time on the vestry. I hope that you all will view me as some one who you can feel comfortable talking to and sharing your ideas, hopes, and concerns. I am here for you.

Pledges and Offerings can be made online at the link below.

Please use New Building for  
legacy pledges as the category,  
or General Fund for regular pledges

<https://stmarksepiscopeal.breezechms.com/give>



If you prefer to pay with a check, please drop off at the church or in the mail to:

8600 Mt. Holly Huntersville Rd. Huntersville, NC 28078

Please note in the memo line what your check is for.

If you still need to turn in your pledge card for 2021 it's not too late.

We have received 79 pledges out of 132 for a total of \$285,454.

We hope to have a minimum of 90 returned (more would be lovely)

Online Pledge Forms can be filled out. Use the link below

<https://stmarksepiscopeal.breezechms.com/form/b8503b27>

## 2020 Stewardship Update

## 2020 Budget

November  
YTD Actual

Current Pledged Income	\$338,820	\$310,901
All other anticipated income		
Non- Pledge Offerings	\$20,167	\$14,959
Other income (use of space by outside groups)	\$17,326	\$20,520
Sales Tax Refunds	\$1,050	
Daisy Shipp McCoy Foundation Trust Income	\$31,460	\$29,433
<b>Total Budgeted Operating Income</b>	<b>\$408,823</b>	<b>\$375,813</b>
2020 Budgeted Expenses Approved by Vestry		
Staff	\$249,362	<b>\$209,507</b>
Diocesan Support	\$39,055	<b>\$39,055</b>
Campus Maintenance & Utilities	\$43,974	<b>\$38,444</b>
Office Admin & Other	\$26,204	<b>\$23,337</b>
Youth & Christian Formation	\$7,815	<b>\$6,374</b>
Outreach \$ Escuelita Support	\$13,270	<b>\$4,538</b>
Hospitality, Pastoral Care, Stewardship,& Retreat	\$6,390	<b>\$1,517</b>
Worship & Music	\$2,190	<b>\$4,456</b>
4% pledges unfulfilled based historic average	\$13,553	
<b>Total 2020 Budgeted Expenses</b>	<b>\$401,813</b>	<b>\$327,228</b>
Current Excess/(Deficit) of receipts over disbursements	\$7,010	<b>\$48,585</b>

**2020 Pledge update-94 families for a total of \$338,820 received**

**YTD Pledge fulfillment 92%**