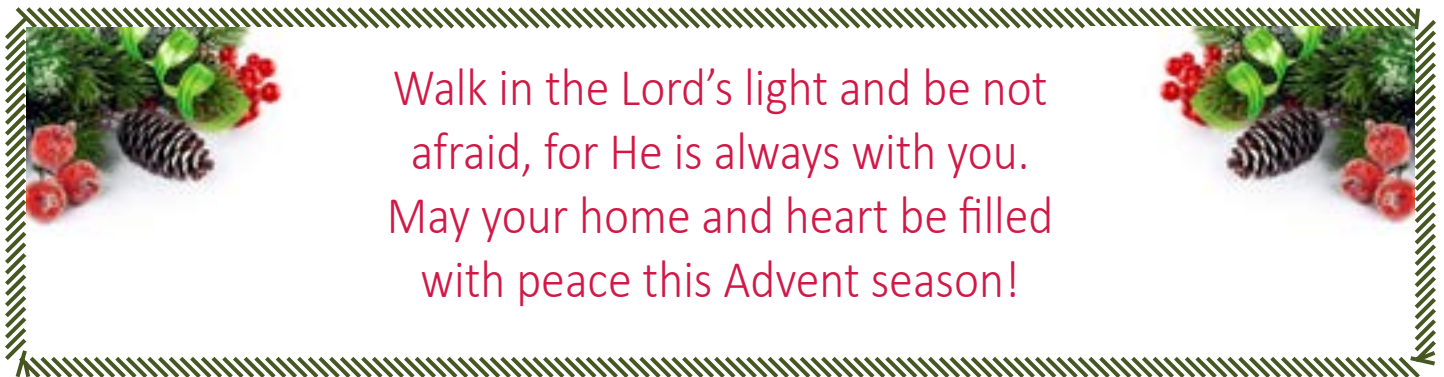




DECEMBER 2024

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT



Walk in the Lord's light and be not afraid, for He is always with you. May your home and heart be filled with peace this Advent season!

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A Note from the Rector Whalen



Beloved of Holy Spirit,

Just over two months ago Hurricane Helene collided into western North Carolina. When we, each in our own time and place, were able to witness the full impact, we were shocked with what looked like scenes from a big screen sci-fi disaster film. As we tried to absorb the devastation, while many jumped into action, some of us were traumatized and became numbed, demobilized.

As the days progressed, we witnessed something amazing. The best word I have come up with is, simply, neighborliness. Whether it was people across the way clearing our driveway, to groups arriving from far away to search for the lost, get supplies up mountains, provide food and water, or bring clothes and heaters in preparation for the approaching cold weather. They are still here. A group from St. Augustine, Florida, is coming back to serve a big Thanksgiving dinner.

Among the many blessings that have come from such a tragedy, is the blessing of good will, of neighborliness, that surfaced, even soared up, in response to needs of all shapes and sizes. So, in this coming Advent season, let's take time to reflect on what it means to be a good neighbor. Let's hear each other's stories and reacquaint ourselves with our Judeo-Christian teachings about how to be a neighbor. It is a quality of human nature that transcends differences and builds community.

On the Wednesdays of December 4, 11, and 18 a potluck dinner at 5:00 will lead into discussions we'll borrow from Mr. Rogers: Won't You Be My Neighbor? Please plan to join in – and why not invite some of your neighbors?

In Christ's love,
Dena+



MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Jim Sparrow	12/1
Ann Toney	12/1
Harold Toney	12/6
Bendik Clark	12/7
Diane Vestal	12/9
Larry Smith	12/11
Lee Ballard	12/15
Linda Ballard	12/22
Joey Larson	12/23
Anne Hutzal	12/28
Ginny Koranek	12/28
Charles Kinsey, Jr.	12/30
John Graeter	12/31

December 2024 EVENTS CALENDAR

SUN	1	8 am Men's Breakfast 10:30 am Holy Eucharist 12 pm Outreach Committee Holiday Bazaar Sneak Peek!
TUE	3	11 am Tai Chi
WED	4	9:45 am Centering Prayer 5 pm "Neighborliness" with potluck
FRI	6	Set up for Holiday Bazaar
SAT	7	9-3 Holiday Bazaar
SUN	8	10:30 am Holy Eucharist
MON	9	5:45 NAMI
TUE	10	11 am Tai Chi
WED	11	9:45 am Centering Prayer 5 pm "Neighborliness" with potluck
SAT	14	12:30-4 pm Honeycomb Music Circle 10-2 pm La Esperanza Youth Crafts
SUN	15	10:30 am Holy Eucharist 3-8 pm Building reserved for event
MON	16	10-1 pm Mujeres retreat
TUE	17	11 am Tai Chi 5 pm Vestry meeting
WED	18	9:45 am Centering Prayer 5 pm "Neighborliness" with potluck
THU	19	3:30 pm Communications Team
SUN	22	10:30 am Holy Eucharist
MON	23	5:45 NAMI
TUE	24	7 pm Christmas Eve Service
WED	25	10:30 am Christmas Day Service Merry Christmas!
SUN	29	10:30 am Holy Eucharist

**THANKS
TO SUSAN
SEWELL FOR
PROVIDING THESE
MEMORIES!**



GIFTS, FOOD, MUSIC, AND MORE!

On December 7th, Holy Spirit is hosting a Holiday Bazaar fundraiser to support the work of Community Housing Coalition and Beacon of Hope.

- **December 7 9am-3pm**
- **Crafts, silent auction items** (including an ebike, fabulous art and photography by our church members, pottery, stained glass and on and on and on).
- **Music in the afternoon** Mary Jo Sparrow's brass quintet will provide holiday spirit in the sanctuary, from 1:30-2:15 (see below to learn more about this extraordinary quintet).
- **Soup and chili to enjoy at no charge**, and perhaps to take some home. Or make a donation!
- **Bake Sale!**



WNC Brass Quintet [\(\[wncbrassquintet.wordpress.com\]\(http://wncbrassquintet.wordpress.com\)\)](http://wncbrassquintet.wordpress.com)

The WNC Brass Quintet is the latest version of a quintet that began in Denver in the 1970's!

Until 2022, all versions of the group included Mary Jo and Jim Sparrow (Jim retired in 2022). The group has been known as The Festive Brass and the Mars Hill Brass, and has had homes in Columbus, GA, Denver, CO, and Lawton, OK before its current iteration in Mars Hill.

Come hear this incredible local talent at our Holy Spirit's Holiday Bazaar December 7!





Benefitting
Madison County's
Beacon of Hope
&
Community
Housing Coalition



433 Bone Camp Rd.
Marshall, NC
828-689-2517
www.holyspiritwnc.org



Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit
Holiday Bazaar
"Warm Hearts, Full Plates & Cozy Homes"



Saturday
December 7, 2024
9 a.m.--3 p.m.

Crafts



Gnomes, Cork Ornaments, Nativity Scenes, Wood Ornaments, Crochet Hats, Scarves, Dog Bandanas and more!

Silent Auction

Pottery, Fabric Art, Paintings, E-bike and more!

Food

Enjoy a cup of soup or chili on us
(Take out-donations accepted)

 *Snow Date - Dec. 14* 





What Will You Put in Your “Frame” This Christmas?

By Deacon Ty Jones (jtjones100@gmail.com)

But, where did the pumpkin lattes go already?

Here’s some advice for helping one manage a season swimming in ticklish “must do’s” and weighed down by emotional burdens.

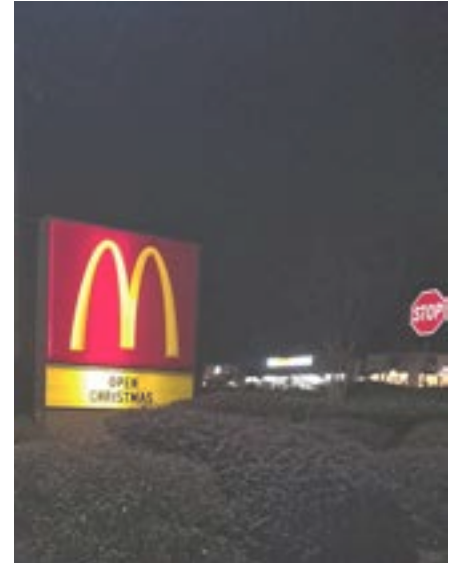
The powerful writer, preacher and theologian Frederick Buechner (died 2022) described the power of embracing “framing” as a way to capture and “see truly” the beauty of ordinariness in those momentary mundane events in their passing. He used the example of the painter Rembrandt, whose painting of an ordinary old woman (perhaps his own mother?) showed such a deep understanding and appreciation that *what’s inside the frame* seems to capture the essence of *all that is good in life with all that one simple life can mean*.

Buechner would remind us that when we ignore simple, mundane moments as they rush by— like so many hurrying strangers we pass as we shop for the big holiday—we’re in grave danger of losing touch with what matters the most. As a way to embrace the holiness of our lives in this season of Advent, “Look to see”, he would remind us! While time only ever hurtles us out and away, it’s the little things inside that matter to us spiritually.

One Christmas Eve when I was in my twenties, I was feeling desperately sorry for myself, living alone and feeling oh, so lonely. I walked uptown to get a burger at McDonald’s as I navigated dark, slippery sidewalks and the bitter wind drove snow into my face. While neighbors’ windows cheerfully glowed with lights and decorations, my own were dark. Christmas Eve, which in my past had meant

crowded happy traditions now seemed to mock my freedom.

The welcome aroma of hot fries and apple pies greeted me as I pushed open the door, and immediately, my cold glasses clouded up so I had to take them off. That was the very moment I was greeted by a cheery little voice that came up to meet me. “Merry Christmas!” I heard the boy say, and he waltzed through the open door while I held it open for him. Astonished, I barely could manage mumbling a “Merry Christmas” of my own as he skipped away into the darkness. I spent the remainder of my humble dinner in wonder at it. And to this day, I recall an angelic voice and his Noel greeting on a dark night, and what such a heavenly greeting might mean.



DECEMBER'S FIRST SUNDAY OPEN OFFERING: OUTREACH FUND

Since the beginning, Outreach Ministries have been at the heart of our church. For the month of December, our First Sunday Open Offering will be designated for the Holy Spirit Outreach Fund. The Holy Spirit Outreach Fund provides funding for a variety of crisis needs that arise during the year.

In 2024 we provided funding for Church of the Advocate, shoe gift certificates for our foster children, emergency needs at Department of Social Services and urgent hurricane relief needs.

This fund allows Holy Spirit to make a difference throughout our community.

Donations will be accepted throughout the month of December when designated to go to "Outreach" or "December First Sunday." Total donations will be matched by the church up to \$350.





HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AT HOLY SPIRIT

Holiday Bazaar
December 7, 9-3

Advent Season Series

Rev. Dr. Dena Whalen

Wednesdays of December 4, 11, and 18

Potluck dinner at 5:00

“Won’t You Be My Neighbor?”

Please plan to join in – and why not invite
some of your neighbors?

Christmas Eve Service
December 24, 7 pm

Christmas Day Service
December 25, 10:30 am

Jewels of the Ocean

Nudibranchs (“noodibranks,”) or “snails”!

Known for their kaleidoscopic color, these small marine snails (mollusca), who lose their shells after their larval phase are as curious as they are beautiful. With over 3000 species (and color combinations), they are found in oceans all over the world. Nudibranchs can range in size from a few millimeters to 12 inches long and weigh up to three pounds.

Fun “Nudi” facts:

1. Their color advertizes their toxicity (if they are eaten), so they flaunt their beauty in plain sight.
2. They smell with their tentacles, which are retractable.
3. Nudibranchs are hermaphrodites: they can change their sex depending on whom they meet!
4. Both nudibranch parents lay eggs after they both become pregnant. (See #3.)
5. Like a gecko that can jettison its tail if attacked and regrow another one later, nudibranchs can ditch various parts of their bodies (the flamboyant parts) and regrow them.
6. They communicate with slime. Their slime as a chemical marker (just like land snails).
7. Usually they “crawl” slowly (they *are* slugs), but they can also “swim,” which is a strange and awkward undulation—also slow.

From “Original Diving” blog: June 6, 2023, Emily Chappell.

Here are just a few of these little living jewels:



“Through simply touching, more directly than in any other way, we can transmit to each other something of the power of the life we have inside us. It is no wonder that the laying on of hands has always been a traditional part of healing or that when Jesus was around, “all the crowd sought to touch him” (Luke 6:19). It is no wonder that just the touch of another human being at a dark time can be enough to save the day.”



Stand Off

by Nancy Miller Gomez

There are 14 men in the lunchroom. Some are sitting in chairs, some standing, some prowling around the edges of the room. They are men who have grown used to being on a schedule, and this is snack time. They are waiting for a door to open and a cart to come out. Sometimes it's oranges, sometimes apples. But today they have been here too long. Impatience builds like snow before an avalanche. We want our fruit, they say.

But the man watching from the protected enclosure tells them, You've already had your fruit. Eyes narrow, arms cross. No, they say. We've been waiting. And no one has brought the fruit. The man behind glass repeats into the speaker, You've already had your fruit. It was there on the tray. And now it's gone. Where's the tray? the men say. Where's the fruit? Their hands fly up in protest like a flock of startled birds. They have NOT had their fruit.

The man in the booth looks at me as if I am the witness who will save him. Maybe I will say that I too saw the fruit. Only I've just arrived. I haven't seen anything. I stand there outside the guard station with my backpack filled with poems watching the men watch me.

Is it possible it's still in the kitchen? the instructor of the class before mine suggests. She wants these men to come back to the room where she is teaching them life skills: how to balance a checkbook, how to find a job, how to be honest in a world that isn't. She knows they won't pay attention until they've had their fruit.

Can I just go to the kitchen and look? she asks, and everyone quiets to hear what the man will say. Then he passes the key through the bulletproof portal. It scrapes across the metal. She scoops it into her hand and heads to the kitchen. Everyone waits. Minutes later she re-appears carrying a tray piled with 14 bananas. The men form a circle around her, each in turn taking one, and then they are eating and no one talks. Now they aren't angry men.

They are hungry boys who have just been fed.

From Punishment; Rattle, 2014.

DECEMBER MINISTRY SCHEDULE

	12/01/24	12/08/24	12/15/24	12/22/24	12/29/24	01/05/25
Vestry	Mike Robinson	Claire Gillespie	Deb Carlson	Peggy Wilson	Gail Kase	Carol Van Voorhis
Acolyte	Peggy Wilson	Amanda Hilty	Peggy Wilson	Gail Kase	Ann Smith	Gail Kase
Offertory Musician	Mark Holland	Robertjohn Gillespie	Mike Robinson	Ann Smith Nancy Larkin	Jan Mallindine	Jennifer Reda
First Reader	Claire Gillespie	Carol Van Voorhis	Ginny Lentz	Kathleen Phillips	Peggy Barnes	Ingrid Diederens
Second Reader	Dick Jordan	Gail Kase	Michael Smith	Patty King	Ty Jones	Mark Holland
Prayer Leader	Kathleen Phillips	Peggy Barnes	Carol Van Voorhis	Peggy Wilson	Gail Kase	Barbara Schauer
Greeter	Peggy Barnes	Ruth Van Sickle	Tom Panek	Barbara Schauer	Harold Toney	Mary Jo Sparrow
Ushers	Peggy Barnes Dick Jordan	Susan Sherard Teresa Matthews	Adam Reda Dick Jordan	Bendik Clark Amanda Hilty	Peggy Barnes Susan Sherard	Adam Reda Bendik Clark
Eucharistic Minister	Pam McNally	Peggy Barnes	Loraine Hilty	Tom Panek	Gail Kase	Pam McNally
Coffee Hour Host	Sewells	Ann Shiver	Hiltys	Peggy Wilson	Nancy Whitaker	Ruth VanSickle Bendik Clark
Sunday Cleanup	Peggy Wilson	Rebecca Sharp	Sewells	Loraine Hilty	Rod Vestal	Ann Toney
Altar Guild	Loraine Hilty	Colleen Boll	Jennifer Reda	Smiths	Peggy Wilson	Nancy Whitaker
Bulletin Folder	Loraine Hilty	Pam McNally	Colleen Boll	Ruth VanSickle	Peggy Wilson	Dick Jordan
Healing Prayer	Gail Kase	Nancy Larkin	Ann Smith	Barbara Schauer	Nancy Larkin	Barbara Schauer
Camera	Teresa Matthews	Carolyn Homra	Barbara Schauer	Teresa Matthews	Carolyn Homra	Barbara Schauer
Supply Stocker	Pam McNally	Pam McNally	Pam McNally	Pam McNally	Pam McNally	Danny Wyatt
Trash	Bill Sewell	Bill Sewell	Bill Sewell	Bill Sewell	Bill Sewell	Dick Jordan

STAFF

Rev. Dr. Dena Whalen,
Interim Rector
Martie Carson, Parish
Administrator
Teresa Sumpter, Parish Musician
Rebecca Sharp, Executive Director,
La Esperanza, and Parish
Custodian
Ana Gaspar Lara, Co-Director,
La Esperanza

VESTRY MEMBERS

Gail Kase, Senior Warden
Peggy Wilson, Junior Warden
Debra Carlson
Bendik Clark
Claire Gillespie
Amanda Hilty
Mike Robinson
Carol VanVoorhis

TREASURER
Sam Shiver

CLERK
Deidre Soileau