

The Epistle of St. Paul Church

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted
on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. ZECARIAH 9:9



FEBRUARY 2018

Mardi Gras, February 13, 6-8 pm

It's the Feast Before Fast: Let the Good Times Roll



Every year we invite our community to come for a Cajun “blowout” to enjoy live music and a cajun supper of grilled sausage, jambalaya, beans, salad, french garlic bread and traditional bread pudding with whiskey sauce. It is a Feast before the Fast of the Lenten season. For folks who cannot stay to eat, we also offer “Take-Out.”

February 24, 10 am

Ladies, Please Come for Brunch

On Saturday February 24, the Episcopal Church Women (ECW) hosts an Everyday Mission Outreach Brunch for women of the church to honor our outreach partners. In the spirit of sharing and caring for others, ladies are invited to bring a brunch dish to share and join in a morning of fellowship.

The day is all about sharing – and exploring needs in our own community. We'll meet the directors of our outreach ministries and learn how we are Connecting in God's Love now, and how we might be able to do more in the future.

Each and every woman of the church is important to the ministry of the church. Each of us has unique spiritual gifts – our individual talents and skills – that, when brought together, form a stronger ministry for both the church and the community. At brunch we share fellowship, get to know each other better, and look forward to special events throughout the year.

ECW encourages all women to find their place in one of the events hosted by ECW, such as Mardi Gras, the Taste of Autumn Tea, Women's Bible Study, the summer Women's Retreat and Everyday Mission supporting our outreach partners – Waxahachie CARE, Common Ground Ministry, First Look, and Wedgeworth and Marvin elementary schools in Waxahachie. For more information contact Carolyn Ross, 972-923-2335.✦

There will be music and celebration, and everyone has a great time! We also send meals to the firefighters of Midlothian, Waxahachie and Red Oak as our way of thanking them for their service to the community.

The women of ECW count on all of us to help. Signup sheets to volunteer are in the narthex on Sunday mornings. Please sign up to help prepare the food, set up and clean up, serve as a cashier, work in the “take out” area, grill sausage, deliver meals for the local fire stations, and/or donate the cost of the food. And, of course, buy tickets and be sure to invite your friends!

Mardi Gras is hosted by the ECW as a fundraising event for outreach programs. This Feast before the Fast is a great time of working together and greeting the community. Please come and welcome our neighbors to our church! Tuesday, February 13, from 6-8 pm. Tickets, available in the foyer, are \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids. ✦

Why Do We Celebrate Mardi Gras at Church?

Mardi Gras is really all about Lent. It is a last fling of celebration before Lent, the penitential season that begins on Ash Wednesday. Lent is a revival, a time of spiritual overhaul. We spend Lent reviving our relationship with God through spiritual self-examination, confession and determining what things we should be actively doing in order to better love and serve God. Fasting during Lent was introduced to the Christian church in 330 AD. Being human, people steeled themselves for the 40 days of abstinence by inventing festivals of overindulgence that sprang up in Europe as preparation for the season of self-denial.

These festivals had many names, all derived because people observed a period of merrymaking or feasting prior to Lent. In French, *Mardi Gras* means *Fat Tuesday* and is celebrated the day before Ash Wednesday as a way of purging the pantry of things that would not be consumed during Lent. *Shrove Tuesday* is from the Old English tradition of *shriving* – receiving absolution by confession and penance.

The contrast between Mardi Gras and Ash Wednesday is stark and powerful. We spend a day of revelry and awake the morning after to begin our revival and renewal. We start with the services of Ash Wednesday, followed by the 40 days of Lent, as our time to focus on our salvation through the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. ✦

In the penitential Season of Lent, we look at Reconciliation (also known as Confession) and Absolution.



What is absolution? The formal act by a bishop or priest of pronouncing God's forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ. The absolution of sins reflects the ministry of reconciliation committed by Christ to the church. Absolution may be pronounced following private confession of sins, as provided for by the two forms for The Reconciliation of a Penitent in the BCP (pp. 447-452). Absolution may also be pronounced following a general confession of sin in the Holy Eucharist, the Daily Offices, the Ash Wednesday service, and the Penitential Order. The BCP provides that a deacon or lay person may make a "Declaration of Forgiveness" by God of the penitent's sins after private confession, and that a deacon or lay person may pray for God's forgiveness following the general confession in the Daily Offices. Christians receive the grace of forgiveness when pronounced by the clergy as though it were given by Jesus Christ himself. (MATTHEW 16:19-20)

What is the Reconciliation of a Penitent? The BCP provides two forms of service for the Reconciliation of a Penitent. When a confession is heard in a church building, the confessor may sit inside the altar rails while the penitent kneels nearby. The confession may be heard in a place set aside for greater privacy. It is also appropriate for confessor and penitent to sit face to face for a conference that leads to absolution or a declaration of forgiveness. Once the penitent confesses all serious sins troubling the conscience and gives evidence of contrition, the priest offers counsel and encouragement before pronouncing absolution. Before pronouncing absolution, the priest may assign a psalm, prayer, or hymn to be said, or something to be done, as a sign of penitence and act of thanksgiving. ✠

Annual Meeting Report

New Vestry, New Ministry & Online Giving

At our Annual Meeting of the Mission, we elected the new Vestry Class of 2021, reviewed our new ministry and budget, and introduced online giving. (See story below.) A recap of the reports follows.

The first order of business was to elect Joan Burnard, Skip Mondragon and Ron Mraz to join vestry members Caroll DeBolt, Grace Farnsworth, Vaughn Franks, James Matthews, Mark Middlebrooks and Jan Zerwekh. Fr. Terry named Grace Farnsworth Senior Warden for 2018, and the vestry named Vaughn Franks Junior Warden.

In 2017 we responded to a Call to Action and formed new Fellowship, Outreach and Finance Committees. For the first time in over a decade, we experienced our first drop in Sunday attendance. Fr. Terry and our Vestry asked the congregation for their input, which was generously given. The vestry responded quickly to make changes in our music, communications and fellowship. The good news is that Sunday attendance has increased since the first of last year. And, after Celebration Sunday, the total amount of Faith Promises increased. Our conservative overall income projections are higher than previous years. Thank you to everyone for your care and participation!

Our congregation also gives time and talent – donating labor for landscape, sound system and building maintenance – allowing us to decrease our financial budget in those areas. Financial donations have been made to support our music ministry, our clergy, to pay for new audio equipment and other unexpected repairs that came up throughout the year. A donation was also made to cover the cash that came with the Grace cards distributed on Celebration Sunday.

We are a congregation of talent and commitment. Last January the vestry asked us to help – to take a role in going where God leads us. And the congregation responded with their time, talent and money. ✠

Online Giving Explained

Many of you have taken advantage of Bill Pay through your bank to make your donations to the church. Now we offer you the opportunity to make donations by Online Giving, using your bank account or your debit or credit card.

To make online payments, go to our web site spcwax.org. On the menu, find the RESOURCES section to get to DONATIONS.

On the DONATIONS page, select the link to the secure site to make your payment. Once on the site, other drop down menus will allow you to designate the amount and how to apply your payment. The choices for applying your payments are **Operating Faith Promise**, **Regular Giving**, and **Gifts of Celebration**.

Once you fill in the first screen choices of amount and fund, a second screen will have a second drop down menu to choose by what method the payment will be made, either from your checking account or by a debit or credit card. Please note, a small charge to the church is incurred by making payments available by debit and credit cards. *If you have questions, contact Rebecca Wellborn, treasurer, 469-441-6857 or epistle@spcwax.org.*

Online Options for Designating Your Donations

Operating Faith Promise .. Choose this option if you submitted a Faith Promise card for the current year.

Regular Giving Choose this option if you make regular donations throughout the year, but you have not submitted a Faith Promise card.

Gifts of Celebration Choose this option if your are donating to celebrate a person or occasion through a gift of altar flowers or Eucharistic elements. *Note: Flowers are not on the altar during Lent or Advent, but you may make a gift during those seasons to celebrate, at the altar, someone or something special in your life.* ✠

February 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY		
Sunday Worship 8 am Holy Eucharist Said 9:15 am Nursery Opens 9:10 am Sunday school for all ages 10:30 am Holy Eucharist with Music				1	2	3		
 Scout Sunday	4	5	6	7	8	9		
	7pm BSA Troop Meeting	7 pm Boy Scouts	7pm Holy Eucharist	6:30 pm Choir Practice 7 pm Boy Scouts 7 pm Cub Scouts		10 8 AM MEN'S BREAKFAST 9:30 AM DOK 		
 Baptism 10:30 service	11	12	6-8 PM Mardi Gras! Feast before Fast Cajun Supper Live Music	 Ash Wednesday Noon & 7 PM Holy Eucharist Imposition of Ashes	14	15	16	17
	7pm BSA Troop Meeting			6:30 pm Choir 7 pm Vestry 7 pm Scouts			 6 - 8 PM Venture Crew Spaghetti Dinner	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24		
	7pm BSA Troop Meeting	7 pm Boy Scouts	 6-7:30 PM Lenten Soup Study Service	6:30 pm Choir Practice 7 pm Boy Scouts		10 AM  Women's Outreach Brunch		
 SPY Outing at Main Event	25	26	27	28				
	7pm Blue Star Mothers 7pm BSA Troop Meeting			6-7:30 PM Lenten Soup Study Service				

Coming in March

Lenten Soup, Study, Service
 6-7:30 pm Wednesdays through March 21
 Soup & Study, 6-7 pm; Worship, 7-7:30 pm

 **Celtic Eucharist**
 10:30 am, Sunday, March 18
 Celebrating St. Patrick's Day

A Week Unlike Any Other
 Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday, March 25

St. Paul Youth Take a Field Trip

After late service on Sunday, February 25, the youth will spend an afternoon doing Main Event special activities. Cost is \$20 per person. Events cost \$7 each, and the youth will do a minimum of two events. Parents are needed to drive. Please contact Darlene, 469-337-2892. ☩

February Birthdays

1 Andy Alvarez	8 Wayne Sharp	13 Dawn Lopez	21 Josef Matthews
Kris Middlebrooks	Brittany Songer	14 Jim McAdams	Sarah Shauck
2 Sam Fulce	9 Sue Batson	16 Nicholas Galetka	22 Julia Johnson
Bernie TenPas	Jennifer Sloan	Alaina Johnson	Bill Vansyckle
4 Patrick Wald	Ron Smith	18 Bill Doonan	24 Tim Beyer
5 Heather Sell	10 Bonnie Franks	19 Alice Compton	26 Lisa Doonan
6 Kyle Osteen	11 Harlan Lowrance	20 Donna Kracmer	27 Monica Pantoja
	12 Joan Burnard		Paul Wise

February Anniversaries

17 Dana & Todd Stanton
21 Casey & John Pfeiffer
22 Donna & Frank Kracmer
23 Martha & Bill Vansyckle

Check it Out!

WEBSITE

www.spcwax.org

and

FACEBOOK PAGE

www.facebook.com/spcwax/

Organizations & Committees

ORGANIZATIONS

Men's Fellowship

David Gregory 972-875-4535
Breakfast for all men, Second Saturday, 8 AM

Daughters of the King (DOK)

Ruth Gibson 214-957-9549
Women of Prayer meets second Saturday, 9:30 AM

ECW Carolyn Ross, 214-926-2335

VESTRY, Staff & Committees

Sr. Warden (2019) Grace Farnsworth, 214-949-9548
Jr. Warden (2019) Vaughn Franks, 469-774-0029
Class of 2019 .. James Matthews, 214-693-5262
Class of 2020 Caroll DeBolt, 214-215-1352
Class of 2020 .. Mark Middlebrooks, 214-674-5850
Class of 2020 Jan Zerwekh, 92-345-3253
Class of 2021 Joan Burnard, 214-725-8746
Class of 2021 .. Skip Mondragoan, 580-713-9075
Class of 2021 Ron Mray, 214-399-0099
Clerk of Vestry Denise Osteen, 214-587-7869
Treasurer Rebecca Wellborn, 469-441-6857
Welcome Center Sarah Bennett, 469-781-2970
Sexton Sam Bell, 972-825-9212
SPY Darlene Mackey, 469-337-2892
Worship & Music .. Chuck Fitzhugh, 214-668-0572
Layreaders Rhio Goddard, 972-617-9797
Acolytes Matt Perkins, 972-937-8077
Altar Guild Anne Tuley, 972-938-8024

Right Now Media: "The Netflix of Christian Bible Study"

We are blessed to have access to rightnowmedia.com, the customizable video Bible study library for every person in our church. We received invitations to login and register for individual access to a variety of studies. In addition to offering individual studies, it is well suited to small group study so members can watch sessions at home and come together for discussion.

As Lent quickly approaches, think about logging in and picking a Bible Study. There's even a section called **Fr. Terry's Favorites**. (A shortened list of available libraries is shown below.)

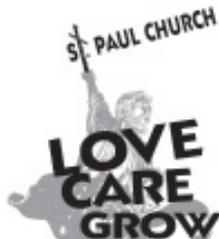
Fr. Terry will be happy to send you an invitation if you have not already created an account. frterry@spcwax.org ☩

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| ☩ ST PAUL CHURCH | • WOMEN | • MENTAL HEALTH |
| • PARENTING | • SMALL GROUPS | • COLLEGE & YOUNG ADULTS |
| • YOUTH | • BIBLICAL FINANCE | • APOLOGETICS |
| • KIDS EPISODES | • MISSION & OUTREACH | • LEADERSHIP |
| • MARRIAGE | • EVANGELISM | • CHRISTIAN LIVING |
| • MEN | • RECOVERY | • HISTORY |

Resources Available on our Web Site: <http://www.spcwax.org/>

Our web site contains information about who we are and when we worship and what to expect when you come to worship.

It also contains the **Newsletter**, **Calendar**, **Sermons** and **NOW**, a portal to a secure web site for **Online Giving**. We invite you to take a tour! spcwax.org ☩



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*Traditional, Bible-based Worship
in a prayerful, loving,
Christ-centered Community.*

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Love God, Love & Care for Others,
Grow God's Kingdom