

The Call

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The Monthly Newsletter of
St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, 16808 Holmes Road, Kansas City, MO 64012

Fr. Jason writes—

St. Mary Magdalene? Who Are We Really?

Revisiting our Core Identity during Transition



During this time of transition as we move into our new building, I believe it is essential for us to renew our understanding of who and what we are. It is critical that we stay connected to our roots as a mission congregation and stay grounded in our calling to be a church community that is *Real, Rooted, and Relevant*.

The move into our new building will simply allow us to expand and do better the great things that are already making us a life-giving and thriving congregation. This transition into a new location and space is not going to change who we essentially are. As we move into the new building we will be able to take the best of our past with us and simply expand and grow those best parts of who we are as we journey into the future.

Who are we? And what are the core values that feed and sustain our life?

We are a people that is "Real." We take the real life questions, doubts, joys, sufferings and "embodied human experiences" of life lived in the "here and now" and allow them to rub up against the Christian faith. We welcome newcomers to join our community without putting up barriers that require them to act like "they have it all together." We are all pilgrims on a journey toward wholeness and transformation, and we welcome all into our fellowship wherever they are on that walk. Welcoming new people into our community with their "real" lives, questions, doubts, joys and sufferings is an essential value for us. We bring our lives and allow them to rub up against our faith. It is in this intersection that life-giving dynamic faith is born. This openness and insistence upon "authentic lived faith" is key to who we are.

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We are a people that is "Rooted." We honor and value the traditions of the Church. We worship with a deep sense of connection to the past while remaining open to what is best in contemporary expressions of worship. We listen to the words and life-witness of Jesus, and take it seriously as our guide and model for faithful living. We are apprentices, students, pilgrims on the way, seeking to follow Jesus' radical "upside-down" kingdom way of life. We seek to stay grounded in and grow deeper into the life of Christ and the mission of Christ in the world. Being rooted in the best of the Christian tradition is at the heart of who we are.

We are a people that seeks to be "Relevant." Our faith must make a difference in our personal lives and in the lives of others. The faith we seek to live out is more than ideas or ritual practices. We seek to embody our faith in such a way that makes a difference in our relationship with those most intimate to us and a difference in the surrounding communities in which we live (and beyond – like the Gulf Coast, Haiti and Botswana). We seek to connect our daily life and our faith. To be meaningful we've found that faith must intersect with our lives and the lives of others. Keeping our faith connected with life as we actually live it, and with the life of the world, remains a thriving pulse that energizes our community.

As we transition into our new building I look forward to carrying the best of who we are into the future God is laying out before us. In the new building we'll continue to welcome, worship and reach out in the same way we have in our past. Now we will simply have the facilities to do this with greater excellence that will enable bringing more and more people into our community fellowship.

I very much look forward to sharing our first Sunday of worship with you on July 4th! Truly this will be a great day for all of us and the life and mission of our community!

Faithfully yours in Christ,
Fr. Jason+

First worship service in new building set for July 4

By Fr. Jason

Sunday, July 4, will be our first full Sunday morning worship service in our new church home at 16808 Holmes Road. Our worship focus will be on thanksgiving and asking God for the grace to continue to live into the life He has already been breathing into our community for these past eight years.

Through the use of this new building we now are simply asking God to help us grow and extend that which has already been life-giving and connecting us (and others) to the presence of God among us. Come worship with us during this transformative worship service! (Note: The current worship furniture will be used until the Dedication and Consecration on Sat., July 31.)

**We're
almost
there . . .**



On June 16, a glazier (seen above and, from the narthex, at left) sealed one of the windows flanking the main entrance to the new St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church building. After a series of rainy days that had interfered with orderly progress, the building was abuzz with workers installing woodwork and kitchen fixtures, mudding and sanding wallboard in the education wing, and performing dozens of other finishing touches. A few such tasks will remain even after we celebrate our first Holy Eucharist in the new building on July 4.

What is the Church?

The Answer, as Revealed in the Catechism of *The Book of Common Prayer*

By Fr. Jason

What is the Church? Good question, huh? Well, take a look at what the *Book of Common Prayer* has to say in its Outline of Faith (Catechism):

Q. What is the Church?

A. The Church is the community of the New Covenant.

Q. How is the Church described in the Bible?

A. The Church is described as the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head and of which all baptized persons are members. It is called the People of God, the New Israel, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, and the pillar and ground of truth.

Take note: *The church is a community. It is a gathering of persons. Not a building, not a program, not a location, not an institution. People, gathered, connected, living life together for a common mission. The church is not a place you go; it a community gathered and scattered!*

The Dedication and Consecration of Our New Church Building

On **Saturday, July 31** at 10:30 a.m.,
join Bishop Howe, your mission clergy, diocesan clergy and laity,
and our assembled community as we dedicate
the new baptistry, lectern, altar and nave for worship!

Open House--Invite Your Friends and Neighbors

Every Sunday is a good day to invite friends to church. **Sunday, September 12**, will be an especially good time invite our friends and neighbors to join us in worship and to see what this new church that has sprung up on the southern border of Loch Lloyd Country Club is all about. Watch for further details of this celebratory event.



The Bulletin Board



Evening Prayer Service takes a break

The Evening Prayer service, which has been read one evening each week in the State Line Chapel, has been discontinued for the summer. Contact Deacon Peisha at (816) 507-8099 for information about where and when the weekly Evening Prayer service will resume.

Better Than Ever

Better Than Ever dinner club will meet Sat., July 17, at 5:30 p.m. at R.C.'s Restaurant in Martin City. If you plan to attend, please register in the narthex of the church or contact Ida Cox at (913) 906-9161.

BTE has shifted monthly meeting dates from the 4th Saturday to the 3rd Saturday to avoid conflict with House of Grace events. Next month's meeting will be a carry-in dinner at the new church building on Sat., Aug. 21.

Women's Book Club

Monthly discussion will be at 7 p.m. on Mon., July 12. Our usual meeting date is the first Monday, but due to the Independence Day holiday we had to change. We will meet in the first floor of House of Grace to discuss pages 150-300 in *The Help*. For further info, contact Celia McElhany at (816) 537-0205.

Benedictine Study

Monthly discussion will be at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, July 13 at House of Grace. All are welcome. For information about this meeting contact Cori Pursell at (913) 661-0642.

Summer Youth Event

Come swim, eat and paddle your feet on Sun., July 25, after Sunday worship. We'll gather at the residence of Ron McGee and Regina Behrens who have graciously offered their swimming pool and home at 8502 W 115th Street, Overland Park, KS 66210. If you need information or a ride to or from the event, contact the SMM Youth Ministry leader, Wendy Wilson, at (816) 506-8272 or at wenplus3@comcast.net.



Carpenters were installing woodwork on the sanctuary walls and on the pilasters in the nave on June 16. The windows were in place, the lighting had been installed, and seating for 300 worshipers was on the premises, ready to be set in place for consecration when the bishop comes on Sat., July 31.

Mary Mag helping provide summer food assistance for local children

As an extension of the BackSnack program we've done through this past school year, our church is reaching out to 38 families through the Martin City Elementary and Junior High School. School leaders have identified these families as having children with the greatest food-critical need. As we hear from these families throughout the summer regarding their needs, we will be putting together bags of food. Although we will not need to put bags

of food together on a weekly basis, there will be some weeks during the summer that we'll be putting together large amounts of food.

Want to help with this? Listen each Sunday during our coffee/social time following the service. If you hear the kids ringing the bell, come over to the side of the foyer and help bag up the food. Contact Julie Sponagel for more information at sponagels@yahoo.com or (913) 940-9089.

You're invited to seek respite at House of Grace

By Cori Purcell

During this summer season of green growth and church opening festivities, we invite all parishioners to take a cool rest inside the House of Grace. We are located right across the parking lot from the new St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church building at 16808 Holmes Road. The church offices are located to your left as you enter the front foyer and you are welcome in the chapel for daily prayer or a visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

For this summer's offerings, please visit our new Fabric Art panels created by our Resident Artist Karen Hansen in the lower level Conference Room. They depict the stages of the Spiritual Journey and you can sit in front of each one for contemplation or walk the journey. A notebook has been left for you to leave your comments about your experience with each piece. An evening with the artist has been scheduled for the first Friday in September. Another offering this summer is a new book written by Rev. Jerry Skillicorn entitled *Our Dance With Grace: Spending the Day With God*, which is now on the shelves in the chapel. Fr. Jerry has graciously given these books and they are available for \$10 each with all proceeds benefitting the House of Grace.

Last, we are looking for any parish members who

are interested in volunteering to be on the Labyrinth Committee. This committee will be working with the Landscape Committee as we plan, create, and implement a Labyrinth on the grounds behind the House of Grace, to be used for meditation and contemplation. We are gathering materials this summer and hope to develop a working plot to install in spring 2011. Most of this committees work will take place in the fall and winter months. Celia McElhaney is heading up this committee. If you are interested, please contact either her or Cori Pursell at spiritcompanioncori@gmail.com.

In your travels this summer or in your home projects, please check your bookshelves for any books on spirituality, prayer, scripture that you are ready to pass along to another reader through the House of Grace Library. There will be a box in the upper hallway marked Library for you to leave them in. We appreciate your continued support of the House of Grace Retreat House and hope to see you in the fall at one of our conferences for the 2010-2011 year. Keep watching the St. Mary Magdalene website in July for new postings and information. For those of you who enjoy blogging from your summer destination, you can keep up with us at www.Spiritfriendcori.WordPress.com.

St. Mary's Kitchen

Serving food to Kansas City's homeless and working poor

We had been serving food once a month to people in need through St. Mary's Episcopal Church at 13th and Holmes. Due to a kitchen renovation they've been going through at St. Mary's, we have skipped the last few months. Their renovations have taken longer than planned, so they will not be serving food again until late July or August. We are back on the serving schedule starting in September.

Our remaining 2010 service dates, all Saturdays, are Sept. 18, Oct. 23 and Dec. 25. Sign-up sheets and more details are available in the narthex. For further information, get in touch with Julie Sponagel at sponagels@yahoo.com or (913) 940-9089.

Disc Golf Tournament & Hunger Action Day

On Sat., Aug. 28, St. Mary Magdalene Church will host the second annual Disc Golf Tournament and Hunger Action Day, in partnership with Episcopal Community Services and Thornfield Disc Golf Course. All proceeds from this event will help feed the hungry in the Kansas City area.

How can you help? See the event flyers and sign-up sheets which are available in the Narthex in July. We'll have flyers available so you can sign up to play disc golf, get others registered to play disc golf, volunteer for the event, eat lunch, put car care kits together, be an individual or corporate sponsor, etc. So, whether you want to play disc golf, help with the event or just come for the lunch, we've got a spot for you. All ages are welcome! For more information contact Julie Sponagel at sponagels@yahoo.com or (913) 940-9089.

Children's Ministry



In July we continue with our Rainforest-Children's program.

In August we take a break from Children's Chapel and our classes, but we will have a craft room for our youngest children (pre-k to lower elementary). Our Lectionary-based curriculum along with Children's Chapel starts again in September.

Please be patient with us as we get our bearings in the new church building; we will need to adjust to all that wonderful space!

Your children are a joy!

Your Children's Ministry Committee,
Marilou Hart, Denise Koch, Gudrun Neumann, Ali Wormington



Adult Christian Formation



By Linda Keith

July is here and summer is in full swing! This year July presents us with new beginnings. We will worship in a new sanctuary; drink coffee in new fellowship areas; study scripture and discuss where and how life intersects theology in new classrooms. Everything about this move presents us with new opportunities! It is a time to hold onto all that is good and to embrace the chance to breathe freshness into what has become stale. It is much like the restoration we feel from a lazy afternoon in the sun thinking through the 'stuff' of life. So many elements try to form who we are. Expectations from our jobs and families; our friends; politics; what we read or watch on TV; and all we come in contact with affects who we are. The difficulty is discernment. What do I need to hold on to? What do I need to change? And, what needs some tweaking?

Our Adult Christian Formation opportunities are all about growing in faith together so we can live the life God created us for and so we can feel safe to question when we find ourselves faced with doubts. Our baptismal covenant asks several questions focused on renouncing sin; turning toward Christ; and seeking and serving others (pages 302-305 in the *Book of Common Prayer*). The questions are familiar—but the answers are not so easy. How do I recognize sin—not the big and obvious things, rather the little moments that dull my soul? What does turning toward Christ really mean? Where is God calling me to serve others? The basic question is, who is this person God has created me to be and how do I find that person in the midst of life?

These are tough questions that don't have formulated answers. What I do know is we can walk this path of faith together by entering into discussions about life, scripture, doubts and joys.

Our Adult Formation Opportunities offer a venue for these conversations. Sessions vary and will be posted in future newsletters and the weekly bulletins. These sessions will continue to be on pause until early September. Meanwhile we will be breathing new life into our offerings: what stays, what goes and what needs tweaking? Our framework question will be, "How do I live as the person God created me to be?"

What stays: All opportunities will be grounded in scripture and tradition.

What goes: Watch for new topics, places and times.

What needs tweaking: This is where *you* fit in! So many of you have gifts and experiences that will help others—even if you don't know it now! I welcome your ideas, input and participation in our planning and in leading programs.

Contact me at (816) 331-1428 or dblck05@gmail.com.

As the band of believers

who are St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, we seek to be—

Real

We aim to live out our faith with authenticity. We don't claim to have all the answers, but we are committed to faithfully searching for them together in the boundless truth of Christ while honoring one another in the process.

Rooted

We honor the beauty and the mystery of the Episcopal tradition, while remaining open to the Holy Spirit's call to worship today. We thank God for all the faithful followers of Jesus who through the ages conveyed his message of hope to us. In their steps, St. Mary Magdalene looks to take our place in Christ's one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

Relevant

Our faith must intersect with the center of our lives to be meaningful to us and useful to others. When God decided to come into the middle of our world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, he showed us that he wants to meet people where they are, in the places they live and in all of life's circumstances. Whatever your life situation might be, St. Mary Magdalene is ready to assist you in the pursuit of a dynamic faith in Jesus Christ.

Birthdays

- July 2 Carrie Bye
- July 4 Emily Gamel
- July 8 Maria Lewis
- July 10 Don Gerhardt
- July 10 Bennett Gamel
- July 11 Amy McCrabb
- July 11 Wendy Wilson
- July 14 Karen Woods
- July 17 Holly Barling
- July 18 Ben Barling
- July.19 Bill Stevens
- July 19 Thomas Wormington
- July 21 Liz VanNote
- July 22 Sebastian Hernandez
- July 29 James Steffen
- July 30 Emily Coleman
- July 30 Jason Lewis
- July 31 Andrew Gerhardt

Anniversaries

- July 9 Dwight & Julie Sponagel
- July 16 Rev. Marshall Scott & Sr. Karen Woods
- July 23 Todd & Alexandra Wormington
- July 27 Matthew & Jessica Smalley
- July 29 Ian & Jennifer Coleman



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