



# St. Francis Episcopal Church

3506 Lawndale Drive, Greensboro, NC 27408 • (336) 288-4721 • [www.stfrancisgreensboro.org](http://www.stfrancisgreensboro.org)

Dec. 2019

## The Franciscan

### *Actively Waiting for the Christmas Miracle*

Have you ever wished that you could stop the clock, stand in a place where time seemed to stand still, and after catching your breath, start life and that preverbal clock all over again? If you are willing to accept my honesty, that is what I am feeling right now. I wish, even if for a moment, that time would stand still so that I would feel less like I am being left behind as the world seems to move past me a frightening clip.

This coming Sunday, we here at Saint Francis, along with countless Christians around the world will celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent. As we did last Sunday, in lighting the first of four candles on the Advent wreath, this Sunday we will light the second of the Advent candles. Advent is that liturgical time and season of the year where God has blessed the church and the world with time and space to wait and prepare for the coming of Christ into the world again, as Christ did come to us in the First Advent, in the Incarnation in the form of a baby to humble parents, Mary and Joseph.

The season of Advent is all about waiting and marking time. When we light the four candles on the Advent wreath, one each week, I am able to see in real and tangible ways how time is moving. As the candles are lit from week to week, the first candle is shorter than the second and the second will be shorter than the third. As I watch the Advent candles lit and burn, I am aware that time is moving and that I am a part of that holy movement. As much as I wish the universe would stop and time would stand still, just for a moment, I know that that cannot be. I can however, choose to enter into a different time, a holy time, and a God time. When we choose to enter into God's time, and when we choose to accept the invitation of this Advent season to enter into a realm of joyful anticipation and active waiting, then, I believe we will be *in time* to witness the miracle of Christmas.

Faithfully,

Fr. Milton



THE REV. MILTON C. WILLIAMS, JR.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Message from Fr. Andrew Harmon	2
Christmas & Epiphany Services	2
Message from Children's & Youth Ministry	3
Holiday Youth Events	3
Day School Holiday Market	4
Give the Gift of Flowers	5
Around St. Francis	6
Message from the Outreach Committee	7

# FR. DREW HARMON

## ASSISTANT RECTOR

Dear Faithful Franciscans,

Blessed Advent to all of you! Advent might be my favorite liturgical season. These four weeks are brimming with symbolism, rich colors, and well-loved hymns. To me, Advent is hauntingly beautiful, a season in which we long for the Light of the world.

Advent, akin to Lent, is traditionally a time of intentional reflection. We are invited to focus on the places and spaces in our hearts, lives, and world, where we long for God's presence afresh. Each of the Sundays in Advent, as we hear stories and scriptures of a similar longing for renewal and restoration, we are encouraged to think on the character and purpose of waiting.



THE REV. DR.  
ANDREW HARMON

There are multiple opportunities for growth and fellowship and service this Advent. Starting this Sunday, December 8, Fr. Paul Crowell will lead a book study on Amy-Jill Levine's *Light of the World*. As a Jewish New Testament Professor, Levine's is a unique perspective, guiding her readers through the twists and turns of the nativity gospel narratives. This Sunday, too, all are invited to the Parish Hall at 5:30 p.m. for a holiday sing-along and pot-luck. This is a wonderful time to enjoy food and friends, as we sing well-worn songs to mark off this season. And finally, if you find your closets a bit too full this Advent, you can participate in our Outreach Committee's warm clothing drive to support our neighbors in need! Bring your gently loved coats, gloves/mittens, hats, and scarves for drop off any of the remaining Sundays in Advent (Dec. 8, 15, and 22).

The recurring call throughout Advent is to watch and wait—to attend to all the subtle ways in which God's love comes to us in the dark, as we prepare for the light of Christ's coming. So, watch and wait, dear friends. Watch and wait.

Peace,  
Drew+

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## CHISTMAS & EPIPHANY SERVICES

**DEC. 22**

**10:30 a.m. Christmas Pageant**

**12 p.m. Greening of the church**

**DEC. 24 CHRISTMAS EVE**

**6 p.m. Christmas music prelude**

**6:30 p.m. First service**

**11 p.m. Second Service**

**DEC. 25 CHRISTMAS DAY**

**10 a.m. Christmas service and Blessing of the Toys**

**JAN. 5**

**10:30 a.m. Lessons and Carols (no Eucharist)**

**5 p.m. Epiphany service and dinner (Parish Hall)**

# Ms. FELICIA COLE CHILDREN'S & YOUTH MINISTRY

Hello Franciscans!

Believe it or not, we're officially in the season of Advent. December means a lot of different things to a lot of different people. December brings Advent and Christmas, it brings Winter and (hopefully) snow, it brings tacky sweaters and holiday parties, and it brings the closing of another year.

As we enter Advent and begin reflecting on the birth of our Savior, I can't help but to be reminded of my favorite part of the Nativity Story: how messy it is. When you really think about it, every major part leading up to Jesus' birth is a "yikes" moment. God chose Mary and Joseph, an unwed, young, and scared couple, to bring Jesus into the world. Herod wanted all the young males killed. Mary gave birth in a manger surrounded by livestock. Everything about this story seems messy. But out of that messiness and darkness, the ultimate light was born.]



FELICIA COLE

I invite your family and yourself to reflect on the messiness of the Nativity this year. I love using this season as a reminder that Jesus embraced the messy since the womb. To me that feels like a living, breathing reminder to invite Jesus into our messiness and our darkness day to day. I pray that you sit with Him in the middle of it all and listen for hints of a brighter future. Then, ultimately, I pray that we hope to be surprised by the light of the world that is to come.

Peace to you this holiday season,  
Felicia

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## HOLIDAY YOUTH EVENTS

### *Holiday Sing-a-Long & Parish Potluck*

On **Sunday, Dec. 8**, at 5:30 p.m., join us in the Parish Hall for some pre-Christmas singing and eating festivities. Members of our Heaven Help Us band will lead a Seasonal Sing-Along. Come wearing your finest holiday outfit as our youth will be judging a Christmas Outfit Contest during the sing-along. Our younger members (in age or at heart) can participate with provided rhythm instruments, and you are welcome to bring your own instruments if you wish. Each family should bring a main dish and a side to share that can feed 8-10 people, along with a serving utensil. The Fellowship Committee will provide dessert, paper products and beverages. This is a family event -- all ages are encouraged to attend!

### *EYC Christmas Party*

**Sunday, Dec. 15**, is our EYC Christmas Party! The whole family is invited to join us for a time of games, food, and fun. You can sign up to bring food on our website. We'll also be playing a game of White Elephant, so bring a gift (no more than \$10) if you want to participate. Come help us have an awesome last EYC of the year!

### *Christmas Pageant*

This year's Children's Christmas Pageant will be **Sunday, Dec. 22**, during our 10:30 service. If your child(ren) plan to participate, please sign up online or by emailing [Felicia Cole](#) and help us get an idea of how many children to prepare costumes for.

SUPPORTS THE DAY SCHOOL!



# ST. FRANCIS HOLIDAY MARKET

Saturday, Dec. 7  
10 a.m.-3 p.m.

St. Francis Parish Hall

Free Admission & Parking

## NEW THIS YEAR: Basket Raffles!

Unique arts & crafts, pottery, jewelry, gourmet food, quilts, original art, stationery, hand crafted furniture, home décor, ornaments, tote bags, photography, chicken pies, used books & more!

Check out these excellent participating vendors!

[Handmade by Kirsten](#), [Initial Outfitters](#), [The Mad Hatter's Follies](#), [Author Mary Flinn](#), [Noonday Collection](#), [Pretty Shabby Design](#), [West & Co. Outdoor Decor](#), Rascal Books, [Ten Thousand Villages](#), and [Wheels4Hope](#).

And click [HERE](#) to preview the baskets up for raffle!

**New Outreach Christmas cards**, blank inside, will also be available at the Holiday Market!  
Prices are \$3 each and sets of five for \$10.

# ***GIVE THE GIFT OF FLOWERS***



## ***CHRISTMAS FLOWER DEADLINE IS SUNDAY, DEC. 15***

Each year at Christmas, it is a tradition that the Poinsettias and Christmas greenery are given in honor, celebration and memory of those we hold dear. The green envelopes can be found in the pews. Please mark your check in the amount you choose to give, with "Flower Fund," and place it in the offertory plate or bring it to the church office. **The deadline is Sunday, Dec. 15, so don't delay!**

## ***2020 ALTAR FLOWER CHART IS UP!***

The 2020 Flower Chart is posted in the hallway beside the Sacristy. Altar flowers, given to the glory of God, are provided each Sunday through your generous gifts made in memory of, in celebration or honor of the important people or events in our lives, and we are grateful for this beautiful support of St. Francis worship.

### **Guidelines:**

- The donation is \$65.00. Specific flower requests may be honored for an additional fee. Local and seasonal flowers will be the preferred choice. More than one family may sign up for each Sunday. (Please no more than two families.) The donation is \$35.00 each when sharing.
- Please use your first and last name when signing up.
- Please note that as the flowers are a gift given to the glory of God, arrangements will be broken down at the end of the service and distributed to those in need in the parish family by loving volunteers, and therefore will not be available to be taken home by the donor.

The wording of the flower dedications are requested from the donor the Monday before the Sunday which you are giving flowers. Editing may occur with the wording. Final flower arrangement decisions will be made to be consistent with Church tradition. Special Flower Days: Palm Sunday - Palms; Easter Sunday - many dedications; Pentecost - Red Flowers - people can dedicate; Sunday before School Starts - Day School and Church; and Christmas Flowers - many dedications.

# AROUND ST. FRANCIS

## NEWS AND EVENTS

### ***HEAVEN HELP US NEEDS YOU***

Heaven Help Us is, as Drew put it recently, is St. Francis' "House Band."

Music is a great ministry and deeply connected to our liturgy. Heaven Help Us steps outside the traditional worship music to offer a contemporary worship style and feel, incorporating a wide variety of instruments and musicians of all ages. It is truly an intergenerational ministry.

Sometimes young people may feel a bit intimidated by the number of adults – that's understandable. What you may not know is that Heaven Help Us was created years ago by some talented youth at St. Francis. Thankfully, there were adults that believed in them and supported them by playing music with them and thus began the Parish Hall Worship Service, now known as the Contemporary Worship Service. Over time, those young people grew up, graduated and moved on leaving primarily adults behind to continue.

Some people, youth specifically, may not know they can volunteer for Heaven Help Us, so let me formally invite you! If you play an instrument, or if your voice is your instrument, you are invited to join us. You may feel called to a certain time of year for one service, or you may want to be a regular. Either is fine and we are glad to have you. You may contact [Duana Cisney](#) or [Sonia Haslam](#) to express your interest.

-- *Duana Cisney*

### **NEW PICS FOR PHOTO DIRECTORY**

Need or want a new photo for a fresh St. Francis Directory? Photo dates are set for Friday, Dec. 13, (2 p.m.-9 p.m.) and Saturday, Dec. 14, (10 a.m.-5 p.m.) Click [here](#) to sign up online. Offline sign up is available by calling the office. However, signing up online guarantees availability and signing up offline may require rescheduling depending on any conflicts with the online scheduling.

### ***ST. CLARE WOMEN MEET DEC. 18***

Join the St. Clare Women for our annual Champagne Christmas Concert Luncheon featuring the Greensboro Community Chorus. Meeting begins at 11 a.m. in the Parish Hall. Bring a friend!

### ***MARY MAGS IS BACK!***

Mary Mags is a social group that will meet once on month in the evening. All women over 18 are welcome to be involved and join us each month for some fellowship and fun! Our first gathering will be sometime in January. If you are interested in being included, call or email [Pat Russell](#) (336-420-2804).

# THE REACH

## FROM OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Thanks to all who participated in Shea's Chase and supported the Mental Health Association of Greensboro!

***Congratulations to Community Housing Solutions for being named Guilford County Nonprofit of the Year!***  
"Rebuilding Homes. Restoring Hope."

Last year, the award went to our other community partner, Sanctuary House, so you can rest assured that we have chosen our partners in outreach wisely. At the CHS Ambassadors breakfast last week, there were over 370 volunteers, staff, and board members in attendance. They reported that 740 CHS volunteers have served 150 families and completed their 1000<sup>th</sup> home repair in 2019. We are proud to partner with them in their Aging Gracefully in Place program. For more information on supporting Community Housing Solutions, contact Cheryl Brandberg at 336-553-2721 or [cbrandberg@chshousing.org](mailto:cbrandberg@chshousing.org).

### ***Warm Clothing Drive for Holy Spirit***

Collection dates are **Sundays, Dec. 8 and 15**, following the 10:30 a.m. services.

Help us collect adult sizes of new or gently worn: sweatshirts, warm leggings, coats, thick socks, hats, gloves, scarves, sleeping bags/blankets. Questions? Contact Jenna Danis at [jennadanis@northstate.net](mailto:jennadanis@northstate.net)

### ***Cooks Needed!***

If you would like to help prepare a meal for the Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit Tuesday Community Dinners, please contact Jenna Danis at [jennadanis@northstate.net](mailto:jennadanis@northstate.net).

All you need to do is prepare the meals and drop them off. The church will do the rest!

### ***Want to Donate Your Car?***

Wheels 4 Hope will rebuild and refurbish your donated vehicle for someone in need. W4H is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in North Carolina. They have placed 2000 donated cars with those in need! **They need your help as they roll into this holiday season. With over 60 people currently waiting for a Wheels4Hope vehicle, they need your support more than ever!**

**What they need: Cars, minivans, trucks: We accept any year, make, model, condition, running or not! (Yes! We will pick it up....for FREE.)**

To donate your car, click on this link: <https://wheels4hope.org/donate/>.

### ***Outreach Meeting Updates:***

At the November meeting the Outreach Commission voted to send funds to the East Carolina Diocese for assistance to Ocracoke as the residents there continue to recover from Hurricane Dorian's impact. We also voted to fund the EYC's Christmas Meals of Hope meal packaging program this December. The Outreach Commission continues to hold mission reserve funds from Book Sale proceeds for the good work being done by our community partners, Sanctuary House and Community Housing Solutions. Please pray for us and these ministries.

Contact us with questions or comments at [outreach@stfrancisgreensboro.org](mailto:outreach@stfrancisgreensboro.org).

# ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A Parish of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina

The Rt. Rev. Samuel Rodman, Bishop

The Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple, Bishop Suffragan

## PARISH STAFF

*Rector:* The Very Rev. Milton C. Williams, Jr.

*Assistant Rector:* The Rev. Dr. Andrew Harmon

*Choir Director:* Sam Doyle

*Junior Choir Director:* Jane Woody

*Assistant Choir Director:* Benita McFarland

*St. Francis Day School Director:* Kit Hargett

*Parish Administrator:* Linda Allgood

*Communications Coordinator:* Michelle Hines

*Director of Children and Youth Ministry:* Felicia Cole

*Book Sale Manager and*

*Membership Coordinator:* Mark Hamby

*Bookkeeper:* Blair Barnett

*Facilities Coordinator:* Morgan Adams

*Sexton:* Bo Edwards

**ST. FRANCIS VESTRY:** *Senior Warden:* Jim Woody, *Junior Warden:* Chris Relos, *Clerk:* Kathie Huff, *Treasurer:* Rick Saunders, Laura Ambler, Betty Barry, Duana Cisney, Sonia Haslam, Robert Koehler, Dana Koval, Melinda Madtes, David Reich, Lynn Sandlin

**St. Francis Church: 336-288-4721, [www.stfrancisgreensboro.org](http://www.stfrancisgreensboro.org); St. Francis Day School: 336-288-4740**

