



The Song of Saint Francis



Saint Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church, Salter Path, NC August 2026

Parish Office Hours:

Tues-Thurs: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Weekly Activities



Prayer Shawl-Wed, 10 a.m.

Celtic Eucharist Service-Wed, noon

"Be Still and Know" Prayer Group-
Tues, 10 a.m.

Other Activities

*Fri, August 7, 7 p.m.-Art Gallery
Opening

*Tues, August 11, 25, 10 a.m.-
Meals on Wheels Prep

*Wed, August 12, 6 p.m.-Potluck at
the Seale Pavilion

*Sat, August 15, 8 a.m.-MOSF

*Fri-Sun, August 21-23-Choir
Conference at Trinity Center



I am not a gardener, but every now and then I manage to keep a plant alive at my house. Granted, they are the hardiest plants, easiest to grow and hardest to kill. Still I am inordinately proud of my Christmas cactus, jade plants, and peace lily.

One thing I've learned is the necessity of regular repotting. I thought my cactus had reached its maximum size until it started to droop. Then I realized that it was seriously root bound. The pot was too small. It clearly needed a bigger pot to thrive. I swear, overnight that plant seemed to double in size, when I gave it room to grow.

People can become root bound. We think small, hang onto old ideas and limitations which may no longer apply. We adapt to our small pots because we think there are no alternatives. And we wonder why we don't thrive.

Our ideas about God may be root bound too. We may have images of God from childhood: God as old man in the sky, harsh critic, stern judge. We assume we know what God is capable of. We don't expect miracles or signs. We draw only limited amounts on what is an unlimited spiritual bank account. Our ideas of God are too small.

Here is the good news: our God cannot be contained or controlled. We serve a God who created the universe, all-powerful and all wise. This God knows every hair on our heads, knows our needs before we ask, and loves us unconditionally. God invites us, urges us to participate in the transformation of the world in the name of love. God wants us to thrive.

Like the root bound plant, God can take us out of our self-made small pot, break open our roots and set us free to grow in new and fruitful ways. Likewise we can expand our hearts and minds to ponder fresh new images of God. God as mother, wind, rock or water. We can marvel at how our wild, wonderful, creative God is at work in everything in and around us. No matter our circumstance, there is always room and hope for us to grow in God's presence and love.

Growth awaits. Happy gardening, my friends.
Mary Kay+



VESTRY VIEW

Among other important subjects, the vestry has been discussing our youth lately. We want to integrate them more into our regular Sunday services and into ministry work outside the church. We've started that process and plan to do more outside ministry activities.

We have amazingly talented youth and want them to share their talents with us, so hopefully, we can get them to do that over the coming months. We also want to encourage them to support each other's artistic endeavors outside the church.

I just spent a couple of hours with a young mother discussing the time she was spending with her children instead of returning to work right now. It seems like an old-fashioned concept these days, but, I told her what my mother told me: "You never get this time back so give them and yourself these days and the memories that go with them." I feel the same about our church youth. It's so critical to let our young people know they are loved, supported, and appreciated. We want to hear their voices and allow them avenues for expression. They need a safe, nurturing place to learn, but also a "spiritual headquarters" from which to grow...and prayerfully, as they do so, they'll remember the people who want them to succeed in their own walk with the good Lord.

We'd like everyone's help in keeping the door open for our youth and please let us know if you see a need we should be addressing.

Mary Kurek



Towel and Basin

By Deacon Robin

July has been a busy month in Outreach at St. Francis by the Sea, and August promises to be the same! With your generous support, our summer continues to be productive as we seek to serve others in our community.

On July 18, we served about 60 people a hearty lunch at Hope Mission in Morehead City. The Meals Ministry Team prepared ham (thanks to a generous donor!), potato casserole, green beans, and rolls, and parishioners provided desserts. Thanks to all who participated. Our next date to serve lunch at Hope Mission is September 12. That same week, on September 11, the Meals Ministry Team will partner with the Men of St. Francis to provide lunch for our First Responders in Salter Path/Indian Beach. This is an annual tradition and a small way to say thank you to those who serve our community.



Thank you for providing box fans for the elderly in our community who have no air conditioning in their homes. St. Francis by the Sea provided 13 fans, which are distributed by personnel at the Leo Mann Senior Center in Morehead City. These fans will provide some relief as the summer heat continues.

In August, the Meals Ministry Team will convene on the 11th to prepare hash brown casserole with vegetables, baked apples, and dessert. On the 25th, we will make chicken pot pie and dessert. Join us every other Tuesday at 11:00 AM as we prepare meals for 90 recipients of Meals on Wheels, as well as parishioners and others who enjoy having a meal. If you would like to provide ingredients, signup sheets are on the Meals Ministry Team table in the parish hall. Thanks to your support, we have served thousands of delicious, filling meals to Meals on Wheels recipients in our community!



Stay tuned for more information about how we will partner with Carteret Preschool in the upcoming school year and for the kick-off of our Lobsterfest food drive - one of the largest Outreach events of our church year.

Mark your calendars for August 22, when our Diocese choir, Schola Cantorum, will sing Evensong at St. Francis by the Sea at 5:00 PM. Then, on Sunday, August 23, the annual Diocese Music Conference concludes as participants join our worship service with special music.

So many exciting things are happening at St. Francis by the Sea! It is a joy to serve with you in this community.



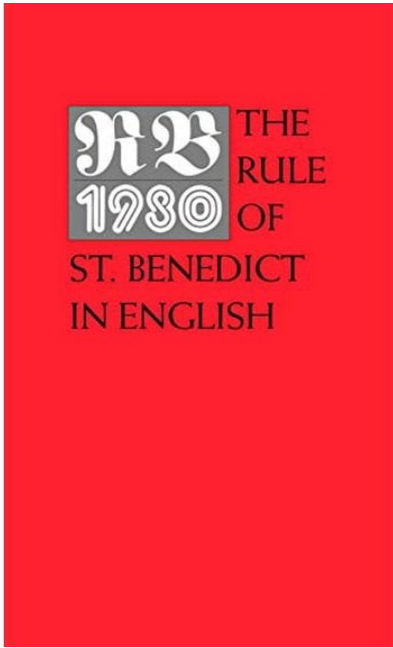
DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Our chapter of the Daughters of the King is currently studying "The Monastic Heart - 50 Simple Practices for a Contemplative and Fulfilling Life" by Joan Chittister. Sister Joan is a Benedictine nun who believes we can all benefit from incorporating monastic practices into our everyday lives, preparing ourselves to do God's work by bringing the wisdom of the Benedictine tradition into the 21st century. Two of the spiritual practices highlighted early in the book are Hospitality and Choir.

Hospitality

If, like me, you have the image of a monastery as a place cloistered away from the community surrounding it, you'll be surprised to learn that hospitality is central to life in a Benedictine monastery. The Rule of St. Benedict devotes a whole section to describing how monastery guests should be treated. The Rule says, "Guests are to be received as Christ", and instructs, "Let an old monastic be placed at the door of the monastery, one who cannot run around, so that when any person comes, the gatekeeper will say '*Benedicite*', or 'God bless you'". This type of hospitality, Sister Joan says, is the model of inclusion, of welcoming and serving all human beings, without regard to their social status, nationality, race, or religion. As we incorporate this practice into our lives, we free ourselves from the stress and fear that comes from dividing people into "us" and "them", and viewing those who are not like us as threatening.

The image shows the front cover of a book titled 'THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT IN ENGLISH'. The cover is a solid, vibrant red. In the upper left corner, there is a small, square, greyish-white emblem containing the letters 'RB' in a stylized font, with the year '1980' below it. To the right of this emblem, the title 'THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT IN ENGLISH' is printed in a white, serif, all-caps font, arranged in four lines: 'THE', 'RULE', 'OF', and 'ST. BENEDICT IN ENGLISH'.

Choir

I was a bit disappointed to discover that in a monastic community, choir doesn't necessarily involve singing, but instead describes their call-and-response style of communal prayer. Sister Joan recounts asking young sisters why they go to prayer with the community every day, and surprising them with the answer that they go to pray because the bell rings, signaling them that it is time to pray together. This choral practice carries them to prayer even when they do not want to go. I have found in my own life that when I most need to pray, I feel the least like praying. Being part of a praying community, a choir, like St. Francis by the Sea, can lift us up and keep our soul growing even when we can't find the words or motivation to form prayers on our own.

Our chapter of the Daughters of the King is committed to praying for the needs of our St. Francis parish. We maintain a box in the back of our sanctuary where you can place your prayer requests, which will be added to our confidential prayer list. You can also simply contact one of us with your requests. The St. Francis Daughters are Pam Ball, Kay Brackins, Sarah Criddle, Kathy Driver, Joan Gracie, Carol Holland, Susan Johnson, Laura Leslie, Marion Morris, Lisa Park, Beth Parker, Robin Smith, and Rosemary Unger.

Rosemary Unger



Spring and Fall (1880)

Gerard Manley Hopkins

to a young child

Margaret, are you grieving
Over Goldengrove unleaving?
Leaves, like the things of man, you
With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?
Ah! as the heart grows older
It will come to such sights colder
By and by, nor spare a sigh
Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;
And yet you *will* weep and know why.
Now no matter, child, the name:
Sorrow's springs are the same.
Nor mouth had, no nor mind, expressed
What héart héard of, ghóst guéssed:
It is the blight man was born for,
It is Margaret you mourn for.

(I think you should read every poem both on the page and aloud. I dare you to read this poem aloud. Feel your mouth move around the syllables. What does it mean? You tell me.)



Lay Ministry Schedule

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	August 2	August 9	August 16	August 23 Choir Conference	August 30
Lector	Beth Beswick	Joey Mossor	Elise Phillip	Nora Web	Libba Shelton
Prayers	Marion Morris	Mollie Mossor	Elizabeth Sheeks	Katherine Parrish	Kay Brackins
Altar Guild	Gay Lea	Betsy Randall	Laura Leslie	Frances Jenkins	Carol Holland
Chalice	Sarah Criddle Jami Turner	Libba Shelton Scott Shelton	Vicki Blanchard Stover Morris	Terry Parrish Marion Morris	Sarah Criddle Terry Smith
Crucifer	Stover Morris	Terry Smith	Bill Blanchard	Tim Owens	Scott Shelton
Torchbearers	Kay Brackins Frances Jenkins	Jami Turner Tim Owens	George Grigg Scott Shelton	Sarah Criddle Terry Smith	Liam Mossor Martha Edwards
Greeters	Lisa Park Cecile Shenkan	Melanie Hum Scott Hum	Ann Hines Jean Smith	TBD Cecile Shenkan	Robin Miner Ed Minder
Audio	Larry Castle	Stover Morris	Larry Castle	Stover Morris	Larry Castle
Video	Skip Kemp	Skip Kemp	David Stroud	John Clarke	John Clarke
Coffee Hour	Ann/George Grigg	Betsy/Jay Randall	Martha/Clark Edwards	NONE	Kathy Driver/ Frances Jenkins
Vestry of the Day	Sharon Birmingham	Pam Ball	Kathy Driver	Bruce Jobe	Mary Kurek



August Birthdays

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Sterling Williams–1
Clara Shertzer - 5
Korin Gagnon – 7
Sarah Lawrence–7
Tom Atz - 4
Poole Lawrence – 9
Chris Carlin – 10
Denise Chase - 12
Catherine Olander - 12
Bill Bottlinger-14
Brad Jenkins–14

Jackson Westbrook–15
Carl Ragsdale–16
Tyler Westbrook–21
Amanda Whitehurst -21
Linda Cumberland–22
Patty Gares–23
Mollie Mossor–24
Lisa Park – 25
Joe Nelson-29
Meredith Westbrook–29

* If you don't see your name above and would like to be added to our birthday list, please email or call the church office.

Art and Music Ministries



Our choir rehearses each Wednesday, from 4:30-5:30 p.m., and again on Sundays, at 9:15 a.m. prior to the beginning of our 10 a.m. Worship Service. We are always looking for additional choir members. Please join us at any time with no musical audition. All are welcome!





St. Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church
920 Salter Path Road
Salter Path, NC 28512

First Class Mail

Worship Service begins at 10 a.m., casual dress welcome
Sunday school for ages 6-12 begins at 9:45 a.m.

If unable to attend, please visit <https://stfrancisbythesea.org/live> at 10 a.m. to view our worship service online or visit our website at www.stfrancisbythesea.org for additional information and viewing options.

St. Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church is a parish in the Diocese of East Carolina
The Right Reverend Sarah Fisher, Bishop

Rector

The Rev. Mary Kay Brown

Priest in Residence

The Rev. Chris Carlin

Deacon

The Rev. Deacon Robin Smith

Parish Manager

Stover Morris

Financial Administrator

Peggy Quinn

Treasurer

Dave Phillips

Sexton

Donald Johnson

Vestry Class of 2026

Pam Ball, Senior Warden

Sharon Birmingham

Terry Smith

Vestry Class of 2027

John Clarke, Junior Warden

Terry Parrish

Laura Leslie

Vestry Class of 2028

Bruce Jobe

Mary Kurek

Kathy Driver

Clerk of the Vestry

Korin Gagnon

Music Director

Craig Everett

Art Gallery Director

Tim Bradford

Vergers

Marion Morris

Communications

Penn Perry



The Song of St. Francis is a monthly publication of
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Sound side of NC Hwy. 58, between Mile Marker 10 and 10½
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