



The Song of Saint Francis



Saint Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church, Salter Path, NC May 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

*Sun, May 3, immediately following service-Red Letter Day

*Tues, May 5, 19, 11 a.m.-Meals on Wheels Prep

*Sat, May 16, 8 a.m.-MOSF

*Sat, May 16, 1 p.m.-3 p.m.-Farewell to Bishop Skirving at Trinity Center Pavilion

*Sat, May 23, 10 a.m.-Ordination and Consecration of The Rev. Sarah C. Fisher as Bishop of the Diocese of East Carolina, New Bern Convention Center

*Sat, May 30, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.-MOSF Grilled Chicken Plate Fundraiser



Alleluia! Christ is risen!

The Easter flowers have dried and we have joyfully reclaimed our alleluias. Our glorious Easter celebration is fading to memory. Now what? Back to normal? I don't think so. In this Eastertide season, we wrestle with questions about this new reality. What does the resurrection mean for us? How are our lives different because Jesus rose from the dead?

If we find that the answer to these questions are elusive, know that we are in good company. Even those who actually witnessed the risen Christ found the resurrection difficult to comprehend. What did this mean for their ministry? For their relationships? For how the world works? If death is not the end, how shall we live?

These questions are worthy of our pondering. Resurrection is not a one and done affair. We need to take time and be intentional in building our relationship with the risen Christ. We need to become Easter people.

How do we become Easter people?

Easter people learn from the example of Christ. The resurrection validates struggle and pain. Jesus' suffering sanctifies the struggles of the human condition and reminds us that faith is not an inoculation from trouble or pain. Jesus gives us a model of how to go through, not around suffering. He offers comfort and strength in our struggles and reminds us we are never alone.

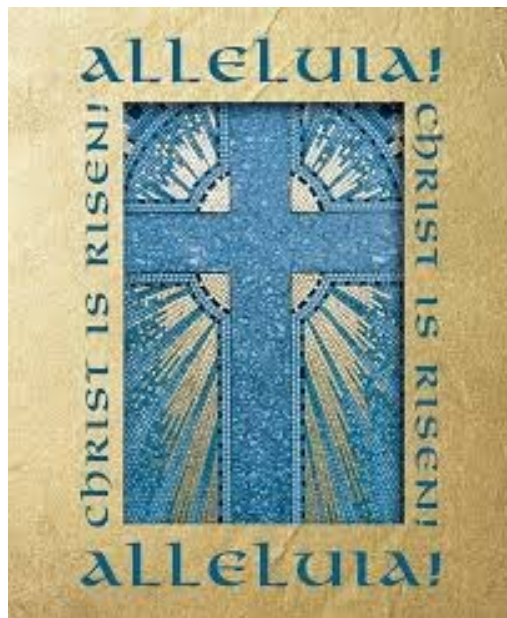
Easter people are people of hope. The resurrection reminds us that what appears to have died, whether that is a relationship, a dream, or a part of ourselves, can live again. Easter people are rooted in the reality that nothing is impossible for God. Jesus offers hope that healing, reconciliation, forgiveness, and peace are not only possible but happening now. God's love is stronger than anything, even death.

The question for us, as we grow into Easter people, is: Do we live like we believe this is true? Do we act as though we believe death is not the end? Are we conduits of hope? Do we trust that God is even now speaking and working for good? Do we act as though we expect healing, forgiveness and peace to be breaking out in ourselves, with each other, and all over the world?

Now what? Friends, we are Easter people. There's no going back to normal. The resurrection is not just a long ago historical event, but happening here and now, in and through us. The risen Christ calls us to live into this new identity as individuals and as the church.

The world needs Easter people, now more than ever. Let's help one another live into this resurrection hope. Alleluia! Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed!

Mary Kay+





VESTRY VIEW

2nd Annual Men of St. Francis Chicken Plate Sale – May 30

As Vestry members, we are assigned to at least one of three working groups: Worship, Engagement, and Finance, Facilities & Governance. Kathy Driver, John Clarke, and I are assigned to Engagement. Deacon Robin Smith is our advisor. Engagement covers many areas at St. Francis by the Sea including outreach, art/music and Men's Fellowship. I want to write today about the Men of St. Francis.

The 2nd Annual Men of St. Francis Chicken Plate Sale is set for Saturday, May 30. Chicken Plates will consist of one-half grilled barbecue chicken with potato salad, slaw, Hawaiian bread roll, and cookies. The chicken plates will be served take out only from 11 am to 2 pm. Men of St. Francis will be pre-selling 250 tickets during each Sunday in May at coffee hour. Last year we sold out chicken plate tickets. This year again we will provide 20 chicken plates to Indian Beach/Salter Path Fire Department and Police Department. Please consider purchasing extra ticket(s) for donation to thank our first responders.

The Men of St. Francis (MOSF) group was formed in 2024 to promote fellowship among the men of the parish and to be an avenue to organize and perform service projects. All men of the church are welcome to participate. The group is managed by a fundraising/steering committee that accepts requests for support and manages the group finances. MOSF generally meets at the church at 8 am on the third Saturday of the month for breakfast. Immediately following the meal, the group may discuss upcoming MOSF or church activities, hear a presentation by a local nonprofit organization or perform a service project.





VESTRY VIEW

Service is a core tenant of MOSF. The group performs both volunteer service projects and fund-raising activities throughout the year to support St. Francis by the Sea and two of its outreach mission organizations, Trinity Center and Martha's Mission. Some examples of past projects include:

St. Francis by the Sea – area grounds clean up and tree trimming/removal, set up tables and prepare cooker for Lobsterfest, host coffee hour twice annually, prepare a Lenten supper, provide grilled meat for several functions annually, augment the choir for All Saints Sunday, clear sanctuary for light bulb replacement/fixture repair, and cut plywood for windows as part of hurricane season preparedness.

Trinity Center – host an annual BBQ chicken plate sale in May to raise funds for camper scholarships, tree trimming around building walkways, painting the exterior of a newly renovated camp counselor dorm, and removal and replacement of over 200 mattresses and boxsprings in camp dorms and lodges.

Martha's Mission – donate funds to either support daily operations or new building fund, delivery and installation of donated vegetable coolers, and unloading of NC Food Bank delivery trucks.

Current leaders of Men of St. Francis are Andy Mullins – group leader, John Clarke – Secretary/Treasurer, fundraising/steering committee members, Scott Shelton, George Grigg, and Bruce Jobe. For more information or to be added to MOSF email list, please contact Andy Mullins at mulljam@aol.com

Bruce Jobe





VESTRY VIEW



Towel and Basin

By Deacon Robin

Happy Eastertide! As the days grow warmer, we will see more visitors on the island and in our Sunday worship services. It's always a treat to see our cottagers and those who visit us during their vacations. Our hospitality makes a difference, so thank you for welcoming our guests. We got so many positive comments at Easter about the children's table in the sanctuary that we will continue making it available for children attending our services. Special thanks to Laura Leslie for helping with this project.

We have continued our spring food collection for Martha's Mission Cupboard while there were some repairs being made to the building. We will deliver your gifts to MM the first part of May to supplement the spring and summer distributions. Thank you for your generosity as we help provide for our neighbors in need. These gifts make a big difference for our neighbors who struggle to feed themselves and their families.

In May we collect items to support children at Camp Trinity who arrive at camp without some of the things they need to have a great experience. Water shoes, sunscreen, goggles, and beach towels are some of the things needed most often. Please bring your donations to the parish hall, and we will deliver them as camp gets underway.



The Meals Ministry Team will cook twice in May, on the 5th and the 19th. On May 5, we will prepare baked pasta, green beans, and dessert. On the 19th, the menu includes chicken broccoli casserole with carrots and dessert. If you would like to be part of this effort, you can donate ingredients on the signup sheets in the parish hall, and/or you can join us to cook at 11:00 AM either of those days. We work hard, but we also have a good time together. Thank you for your ongoing support of this ministry.

Teacher Appreciation Week is the first week of May, and we will be providing coffee and donuts for the staff at Carteret Preschool Center on Friday, May 8. These folks make preschool a wonderful learning experience for these precious children in our community, and it is our privilege to say thank you for their hard work!



This summer we will continue to cook for Meals on Wheels, and in July, September, and November we will also prepare and serve lunch on a Saturday at Hope Mission. If you would like to join the Meals Ministry Team for this effort, just let me know.

Desmond Tutu said, *"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."* Let's keep doing our little bits of good. It's good to be givers!



Let's Paint the Door Red!!

Thirty-four years ago four families felt they needed to make a change in their spiritual life and began meeting together in Scott and Libba Shelton's home for morning prayer. They quickly outgrew the Shelton's home and moved to the Trinity Center Chapel. Word kept spreading that the Holy Spirit was in this place and this new community continued to grow, moving to the Salter Path Methodist Church parish hall. Six years later after a few years in what is now the Food Lion Atlantic Beach, we bought land for our future church and initiated a capital campaign that we called Life Raft 2000. Dozens of people from many denominations and locations stepped up and made contributions, enough to enable us to get a loan for the balance that was needed.

On May 3 we are celebrating an enormous accomplishment that has been made possible by the dedicated members and very skilled financial stewards and Vestry leaders who have supported Saint Francis and served over the last three decades. As of last week our mortgage has been completely paid off!

We will celebrate with a burning of the mortgage papers and painting the doors red. This is a medieval custom signifying the debt or mortgage on the church building has been paid off. In medieval times a red door also represented the church as a place of safety and refuge, both physical and spiritual and we always want St. Francis to be seen as a place of refuge! Red is also the liturgical color that represents the "fire" of the Holy Spirit.



We will take time to honor those who participated in Life Raft 2000, the capital campaign that allowed us to build the church as well as all the amazing clergy who have nurtured us spiritually, emotionally and intellectually. Please save the date and RSVP on the sign-up sheet at church. We look forward to seeing you there!

Beth Beswick



The Daughters of the King Chapter at St Francis rejoice and give thanks for Bishop-Elect Sarah. We ask the Lord daily to provide her with wisdom and guidance as she prepares to lead our diocese. Prayer and Service are what our Chapter is called to do within the life of our Parish. We welcome the prayer requests of anyone who needs them and they will always be confidential within our group.

In honor of Reverend Sarah Fisher, bishop-elect, who will be ordained and installed on May 23, 2026, in New Bern, I offer the poem on the following page by Jan Richardson from her book "How The Stars Get in Your Bones."

Carol Holland



FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

for the women bishops

Oh my sisters----
you who make
a home for God
within the space
of yourself;
you who have accepted
outrageous invitations
from the hand
of the Divine;
you who have spoken
an audacious
“let it be”
that propels you still
onto a road
with no map,
no markers,
no compass but
a fierce and tender faith:

May you know
The blessing that you bear,
The blessing that you are,
The blessing that has been
inscribed upon you,
laid down like your life
in words
emblazoned by fire,
traced with tears,
and marked by
an aching joy.

May you see how,
like Mary,
your life sings
of a world turned right,
how your being proclaims
the hope you have carried
like a child
beneath your heart.

May you rejoice
in the sanctuary
of your sisters
present and seen
and remember
the unseen hands
that lay themselves----
still----
upon your head
in a continual blessing
and consecration,

bearing you up,
offering secret manna,
sustaining you
and sending you forth
for such a time
as this.

Jan Richardson



[anyone lived in a pretty how town]
by E.E. Cummings

anyone lived in a pretty how town
(with up so floating many bells down)
spring summer autumn winter
he sang his didn't he danced his did.

Women and men(both little and small)
cared for anyone not at all
they sowed their isn't they reaped their same
sun moon stars rain

children guessed(but only a few
and down they forgot as up they grew
autumn winter spring summer)
that noone loved him more by more

when by now and tree by leaf
she laughed his joy she cried his grief
bird by snow and stir by still
anyone's any was all to her

someones married their everyones
laughed their cryings and did their dance
(sleep wake hope and then)they
said their nevers they slept their dream

stars rain sun moon
(and only the snow can begin to explain
how children are apt to forget to remember
with up so floating many bells down)

one day anyone died i guess
(and noone stooped to kiss his face)
busy folk buried them side by side
little by little and was by was

all by all and deep by deep
and more by more they dream their sleep
noone and anyone earth by april
wish by spirit and if by yes.

Women and men(both dong and ding)
summer autumn winter spring
reaped their sowing and went their came
sun moon stars rain



Lay Ministry Schedule

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	May 3	May 10	May 17	May 24	May 31
Lector	Mary Kurek	Nora Webb	Terry Smith	Stover Morris	Jami Turner
Prayers	Elizabeth Sheeks	Katherine Parrish	Betsy Randall	Marion Morris	Marian Goetzinger
Altar Guild	Betsy Randall	Carol Holland	Frances Jenkins	Elizabeth Sheeks	Jean Smith
Chalice	Terry Smith Sarah Criddle	Elizabeth Sheeks Kelly Sheeks	Marian Goetzinger Marion Morris	Libba Shelton Scott Shelton	Frances Jenkins Terry Parrish
Crucifer	Jami Turner	Scott Shelton	Tim Owens	Kelly Sheeks	Donald Johnson
Torchbearers	Tim Owens Marian Goetzinger	Stover Morris Martha Edwards	George Grigg Kay Brackins	Sarah Criddle Donald Johnson	Don Sparrow Rosemary Unger
Audio	Stover Morris	Larry Castle	Stover Morris	Larry Castle	Stover Morris
Video	Skip Kemp	John Clarke	Skip Kemp	John Clarke	Skip Kemp
Coffee Hour	NONE-Mortgage Payoff Celebration	"Saints and Sinners"	Daughters of the King	Wayne/Sue Perry	Outreach-Trinity Sunday
Vestry of the Day	Terry Parrish	Laura Leslie	John Clarke	Terry Smith	Sharon Birmingham



May Birthdays

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Sharon Culpepper-1
Kieran Venable - 1
Beverly Davison - 2
Bob Gallo-4
Kyle Venable - 4
Meg Bradford-6
Craig Everett-8
Bob Hunt-8

Rachel Kemp-12
Betsy Randall-14
Roger Hahn-16
Lavonda Van Benthuisen-21
Wilton Burns-25
Jolene McCann-27
Heather Perry-31

* 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 Robert Skirving, Bishop

Priest

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

George Grigg

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 Job

Mary Kurek

Kathy Driver

Clerk of the Vestry

Korin Gagnon

Music Director

Craig Everett

Art Gallery Director

Tim Bradford

Vergers

Tim Bradford, Marion Morris

Communications

Penn Perry



The Song of St. Francis is a monthly publication of
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