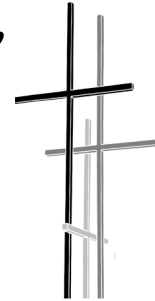


Saint Francis Journal

December 2025



A Loving Community, Serving God's Kingdom



Hope Peace Love Joy



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Tracing the Journey from Early Christian Saint to Western Icon of Generosity

St. Nicholas of Myra was a 4th-century bishop known for his devout faith, compassion, and acts of charity. Living in what is now modern-day Turkey, St. Nicholas was celebrated for his kindness, particularly towards children and the poor. One of the most famous stories recounts how he secretly provided dowries for three impoverished sisters, saving them from a life of hardship. His reputation for anonymous gift giving and helping the needy established him as a symbol of Christian charity and stewardship—a legacy that faith communities like St. Francis Episcopal strive to honor through their own acts of service and care.

At the heart of St. Nicholas's legacy is the Christian principle of charity. In Christian teaching, giving gifts, alms, and stewardship are fundamental expressions of faith. Charity is not merely a seasonal act but a daily commitment to care for others and share one's blessings. St. Nicholas's habit of secretly providing for those in need exemplifies the Christian ideal of giving without seeking recognition. The tradition of almsgiving—offering assistance to the poor—remains central to Christian practice, linking the spiritual value of generosity with tangible action.

St. Francis Episcopal Church embodies its values through monthly outreach

programs like making sandwiches for Church Under a Bridge and collecting essentials such as shoes and coats. The Young at Heart Program also contributes by visiting food pantries, sorting, and delivering items weekly. Nearly half of our congregation is involved in these efforts, demonstrating our commitment to supporting those in need year-round.

The transformation of St. Nicholas into Santa Claus in the Western Hemisphere is the result of centuries of cultural adaptation. In Europe, St. Nicholas Day (December 6) was traditionally celebrated with the giving of small gifts, particularly to children. Dutch settlers brought the tradition to America, referring to him as "Sinterklaas," which eventually morphed into "Santa Claus." Over time, the celebration shifted from December 6 to Christmas Eve, merging with other holiday customs.

By the 19th and 20th centuries, literature and popular media reshaped the image of Santa Claus. Clement Clarke Moore's 1823 poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas" ("Twas the Night Before Christmas) and Thomas Nast's illustrations helped cement the modern depiction of Santa as a rotund, cheerful man in a red suit. Despite these changes, the core message remained: Santa is a figure who embodies generosity, kindness, and stewardship, echoing the Christian values of St. Nicholas. These values find a home and expression in churches like St. Francis Episcopal, where the spirit of generous giving is celebrated year after year.

Christian stewardship teaches that possessions are gifts from God to be used for others' benefit. Santa Claus, inspired by St. Nicholas, encourages both material giving and sharing love and hope—especially at Christmas—as a reflection of gratitude and care. At St. Francis Episcopal Church, stewardship is seen as a sacred duty shown through community ministries, continuing St. Nicholas's legacy of charity and service. Gift giving during Christmas recalls this tradition, inspiring generosity and goodwill within the congregation and beyond. Despite secular influences, Santa Claus still symbolizes the spirit of caring central to Christmas and Christian values.



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For His Sake
Jay DeOrnellas
Senior Warden



**CHRISTMAS
BLESSINGS!**

PEACE
JOY
LOVE
HOPE



Prayer for a New Rector

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Prayer 13, BCP, pg. 818

Sat Dec 6th

*Breakfast for All * 8:30a

Men's Group * 9a * Join us!

DOK Meeting * 9am *

All Women Welcome

CUB Lunch Prep *10a *



Book Club

1st & 3rd Mondays

6:30p * Parish Hall



Out-to-Lunch Bunch

No meeting in December



Thrive

20 & 30 Somethings

Connection * Growth * Belonging

Sat. Dec. 20 * 6 to 8 pm

Youth Basement

CUB Coat Collection

Thanks to everyone who contributed

Coats, hats, gloves, socks and tents



NO

Conversations Exploring Cultural Perspective

in December

Due to Holiday Scheduling Conflicts

Got questions? See Roy

Help DOK Decorate the Chrismon Tree

Sat. Dec. 6th 9a-10a
Parish Hall



Women's Christmas Tea

All Women Welcome

Bring a friend

Sun. Dec 14th

2-4pm * Parish Hall*

Bring a savory or sweet snack to share

'Crazy' Christmas Item Exchange

\$10-\$15 limit



Post-Christmas Day Liturgy of the Word & Luncheon

* Fri. Dec 26th *

11am—1pm

Sponsored by Cole/Bridges
Ham & Turkey Provided
Sign up for Sides/Desserts



Christmas Eve

Wed. Dec. 24th

Music Prelude—3:30pm

Eucharist—4:00pm

Celebrant

The Rt. Rev. Jeff Fisher

Barbie Haynes 90th Birthday Celebration

Fri. Dec 26th * 1p—2p

All things PINK & BARBIE



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Penny Streufert (12/2)

Reggie Carlyon (12/11)

Ethan Hartman (12/12)

Paul Streufert (12/13)

Connie Wilson (12/14)

Edward Tabri (12/15)

Jeff Streeter (12/17)

Betty Taylor (12/22)

Dan Amy (12/26)

Barbie Haynes (12/26)

Julie Yeargain (12/26)

Norma Gagliano (12/27)

Chance Lee (12/30) Maggie Taliaferro (12/31)

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Dorothy & Rick Clutter (12/8) Julie & Jeff Streeter (12/11)

Claire & Cullen Edwards (12/18) Polly & Gerry Kuklewicz (12/28)



Dia de los Muertos

Remembering our departed loved ones



Old Friends — Susan Kohler

*Margaret Faulk
Moving to Boston to be close to family
We Will Miss You*

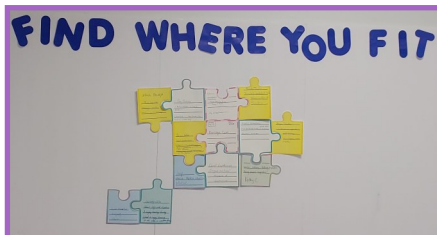


New Friends— Nancy Crawford



Ministry Fair

Find Your Joy



CHURCH
It is not the same w/o U



Jeane Brown's 95th Birthday
Received blessing from Jeremy

Men's Turkey Smoke
Thanks, Guys! Delicious!!



Justine & Rogan Jones enjoying their
first snowfall in New York!

Hope they still feel the same in April!



Balance Class Graduates
Can get up when they fall!

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Web site: www.stfrancist Tyler.org

facebook

www.facebook.com/StFrancisTyler



WEEKLY RECURRING EVENTS FOR DECEMBER

The Rev. Robert Odom, Celebrant

Sunday

Nursery available on request

- 8:30 am Rite I—No music
- 9:30 am Adult Gospel Lectionary Discussion
[Children/Youth Sunday School * On Request](#)
- 10:45 am Rite II—Traditional Music
[Live-Stream on FaceBook & YouTube](#)

Wednesday

- Noon Morning Prayer — Lay Led — Sanctuary
- 12:30 pm Bible Study — Parish Hall
- 2:00 pm Grief Support Group — Parish Hall
- 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary

Thursday

- 5:30 pm Handbell Practice—Music Room

Happy New Year

December Special Events

Sun. November 30
Advent Begins

Mon. December 1, 6:30pm
Book Club - Parish Hall

Sat. December 6th
Breakfast for All - 8:30am
Men's Group Meeting - 9:00am
Church Under a Bridge Lunch Prep - 10:00am

Sat. December 6th
DOK Meeting - 9:00am
Decorate the Chrismon Tree * All Welcome*

Sun. December 14, 2:00pm—4:00pm
Women's Christmas Tea * All Women Welcome*

Mon. December 15, 6:30pm
Book Club - Parish Hall

Sat. December 16, 6:00pm
Vestry Meeting

Sat. December 20, 6:00-8:00pm
Thrive—Youth Basement

Wed. December 24th
Christmas Eve Music Prelude: 3:30pm
Christmas Eve Eucharist: 4:00pm

Thurs. December 25—Thurs. January 1st
Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
Office Closed

Fri. December 26, 11:00am – 1:00pm
Post-Christmas Morning Prayer & Luncheon

Fri. December 26, 1:00pm—2:00pm
Barbie Haynes 90th Birthday Celebration

Stewardship

**SFEC still needs your
Time * Talent * Treasure**



Mission Statement

*Why do we exist?
What is our purpose?*

St. Francis is a community of Christians whose mission is to love one another, serving God's kingdom on earth through

- Developing discipleship through worship, prayer, education, and fellowship,
- Ministering to one another
- Offering ourselves as servants in God's world.

Vision Statement

The parish we aim to become

The vision of St. Francis is to

- Promote spiritual growth through education and worship,
- Reach out in service to the community,
- Increase diverse music ministries to create a joyful sound in celebration,
- Provide vibrant children's, youth, and campus ministries,
- Create a variety of ministries and programs for everyone.

VESTRY

Jay DeOrnellas
Senior Warden (2026)
Andy Wells
Junior Warden (2026)
Jeremy Cole (2025)
Claire Hodges (2025)
Lisa Kraus (2025)
Gipsy Schneider (2025)
Dan Amy (2026)
Dominique Lucas (2027)
Sallie McDaris (2027)
Carol Lanthrum, Clerk

CHURCH STAFF

Rector, In Transition
Dr. Cameron Rose
Director of Music
Carol Lanthrum
Parish Administrator
Susan Kohler
Treasurer
Alberto Cruz
Sexton

We want to know!

What are your concerns?
We want to answer your questions, & hear your suggestions!

