

---

# ST. MARGARET'S

ECUMENICAL & RETREAT CENTER

---

*November &  
December  
2022*



# November & December 2022

## On-Going Weekly Activities

### Worship Services Wednesdays at Noon

Zoom and In-Person Worship Services - All Welcome!

Zoom.us ID: 842 3057 0175 Passcode: SMH

### Wednesday Lunches at 12:30pm

Includes main + veggies, salad, bread, and dessert

*Please make a reservation by the Friday before 315-724-2324*

*Suggested donation \$13 per person*

## On-Going Monthly Activities

### Friends of Emmaus House Meetings

2nd Wednesdays at 10AM - **Emmaus House**

New Members Welcome!

We will begin meeting at Emmaus House -

Please note the place change!

### Conversations with Rev. Gillett

2nd Wednesdays at 1:30pm

Group discussion about Matters of Faith

## What's Cooking with Irene

*\*\* Third Wednesdays at 5:00pm (take out) and 6:00pm (dine in) \*\**

*Please make a reservation by the Friday before 315-724-2324*

*\*\* Suggested donation \$17 per person \*\**

### November 16th Monthly Dinner

Meatloaf with Mashed Potatoes, Veggie, Salad, and Dessert

### December 21st Monthly Dinner

Chicken Broccoli Alfredo with Pasta, Salad, Bread, and Dessert



## All Welcome!

Having just turned the calendar to November, we begin a couple months of what should be reflective and contemplative, but more times than not become a time of rushing from one event to the next leaving oneself feeling tired, worn out, and haggard. Might I suggest, and I'm saying this as much to myself and to each of you, that you take just a bit of time each day to do something that fills you up spiritually. Take time to sit, reflect, pray, take a walk in the crisp air and breathe in all of the smells of the season.

The holidays are difficult for a lot of people; maybe they are for you as well. Give yourself space to be. If you or someone you know has experienced a loss of a loved one, consider coming to the workshop on Tools for Working Through Holiday Grief. Come spend some time here at St. Margaret's in the peace and tranquility that emanates through the house.

I know that there are very few things that I need, and the last thing that I want is more clutter around my home. Lots of us are in that same boat. Consider giving experiences, making a dinner for people in need, or donating to causes that are near and dear to the person for whom you wish to honor with a gift. All of these are far more meaningful, at least to me, than one more thing that I truly don't need.

If you or a group that you belong to wishes to think of the women and children at Emmaus House, you might consider giving board games that can be enjoyed by all ages, craft kits/projects, gift cards for places such as Boscov's, Target, or Wal-Mart, gift certificates for local pizza shops, twin sheet sets, bath towels, and Amazon gift cards that can be utilized for the needs of the House.

Our It Takes a Village group will meet on November 1st and December 6th to make meals for the guests of The Morrow Center. Please join us at noon if you would like to help.

No matter how you spend the next two months, make them memorable. Hoping to see you at any of the upcoming events, and wishing you the peace and comfort that comes only from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

All the best,

Judy

Executive Director

# **Special Events**

## **PSALMS AND THEIR PSUBTLE PSECRETS - October 26th and Nov. 9th**

Back by popular demand! Ever wonder why so many great historic names in religious history praised the Psalms in superlative terms while you only find certain lines important, as you read them? They seem simple enough. You know how to read other parts of the Bible – why do Psalms seem so stubborn?

Approached largely by the questions, frustrations and experiences you and others bring with you, and orchestrated under the guidance of the Reverend John LaVoe. Please join us on October 29th and November 9th at 1:30pm.

## **It Takes A Village - November 1st and December 6th**

As we wind out the year, our It Takes a Village group will be meeting to prepare meals for The Morrow Center. All are invited to join us for lunch at Noon and to help prepare meals for our community members in need.

## **Grief Group - November 8th and December 13th**

St. Margaret's continues to host a facilitated grief group to support anyone experiencing loss - new members are welcome to join. The group meets monthly on second Tuesdays from 6:30 to 8:00pm. *Please call if you have any questions.*

## **Tools For Working Through Holiday Grief - November 10th**

The holidays are challenging times for individuals grieving the loss of loved ones. This workshop is designed to provide hope, support, comfort, and tools to help those working through holiday grief. Dave Roberts, MSW, LMSW, will be facilitating the workshop with guest panelists, to be held at St. Margaret's on November 10th from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. *Please register by November 4th. Donations graciously accepted.*

## **Harvest Luncheon for Clergy - November 15th**

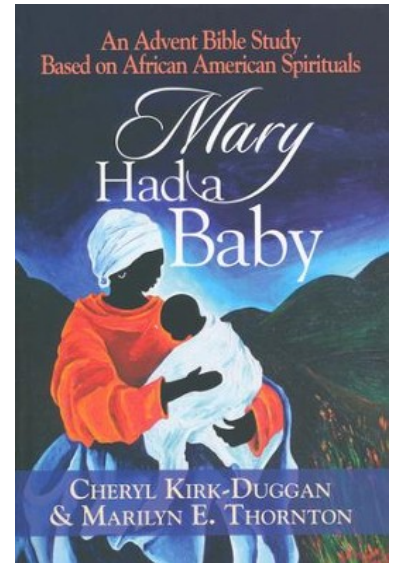
Please join us for an ecumenical Thanksgiving service at Noon followed by a delicious and homemade turkey luncheon. *Donations graciously accepted. Please call or email to register by November 7th. Limited to 25 people.*



# Special Events

## **Mary Had a Baby: An Advent Bible Study Based on African American Spirituals - November 29th, December 6th, 13th, and 20th**

Join Deacon Barbara Groves for this interesting Advent Bible Study. Sessions begin November 29, December 6, 13, and 20th. Sessions will begin at 2:00PM and will be offered in person and via Zoom. Please register by November 21st and if participating via Zoom, a link can be emailed to you. Donations gladly accepted. The book, by Cheryl Kirk-Duggan & Marilyn E. Thornton, is not required to participate, but would be wonderful to read if you are able.



## **Wreathmaking Workshop - November 30th**

This year we will be having a wreath making workshop, November 30th from 1:30pm to 3:30pm. Guests will have materials to make a wreath for themselves and one that will be gifted to a local community agency. All materials are included. Suggested donation is \$25.00.

## **The Joy of Christmas: Music of the Season - December 8th**

Come and enjoy music and songs by friends of St. Margaret's House from 2:00pm to 3:30pm! Seasonal refreshments and time for wonderful conversations included. Donations gladly accepted for the ministries of the House.

Please also see information regarding the Overnight Advent Retreat hosted by Reverend Elizabeth Gillett on December 4th and 5th on page 10.

*With Best Wishes to You and Yours*

*For a Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!*

*From All of Us at St. Margaret's and Emmaus House*

# FALLING ON GOD:

## Experiencing Advent and Christmas More Profoundly

In September, I had the privilege of participating in a pilgrimage to holy places in the south of England. Meeting with two published poets enhanced that unique experience.

One was Malcolm Guite (pronounced "gite" like "kite"), lauded as "England's greatest living poet," and the other was Mark Oakley, the dean of St. John's College, Cambridge. Both are Anglican clergy as well as poets.

Our pilgrimage group met with Mark Oakley in the St. John's College 500-year-old dining hall for a delicious catered dinner. Then we enjoyed an after-dinner talk from Mark on Poetry and Faith. Some of the connections that he made included:

"If I said, 'Here is the news,' you would probably sit up and expect to hear the facts of the day. But if I said, 'Once upon a time,' you would probably be equally expectant for truth, but you'd tune in differently and be ready to receive it in a different form, namely story. ... When you walk into a church, how do you tune in? Do you use your newsroom ears? Have you walked into a Google temple of facts-on-tap? Or have you walked into a poem? Have you walked into a space that is celebrating the fact that **God is not the object of our knowledge but the cause of our wonder?** You see, to walk in with the wrong expectations might mean that you miss something very important. It might even make you think that the whole thing is implausible. Category errors like this cause a lot of frustration in the brain -- and in the heart."

"Certainly, in a Christian service you have walked into poetry in motion. You stand and sing a poem (called a hymn or worship song), then you recite an ancient poem (called a psalm), then Prayers full of images, metaphors, similes come along. [Any] gestures become poetic, arms go into the vocative as [you] seek a physical and sensual language to praise the mystery and reality of God. ... Poetry is the language of the lover, the language of love. And that, simply, is why it must be the language of the Church, the language of faith, as we... [try] to do some justice with our words to the truth of God and the truth of ourselves. When you are in love, truth is far too important to be literalistic."

"Jesus was a poet. He used similes, metaphors, and parabolic riddles all the time. His stories were not designed to make easy sense; they were designed to make you, and re-make you, with some difficulty. ... His poetry defied dogma. What we know is, when he finished his poetry, he said 'If you have ears to hear, then hear.' This is not the news, this is the **good** news -- and his language went into a state of emergency -- to help get **us** to the kingdom. The poet Hafiz described it as pulling out the chair beneath your mind and watching yourself fall on God!

God is a poet and the tragedy is that the troubles begin when people of faith

become cursed with literalism, simmering down the richness, the ambiguities, the resonances, into something black and white, and then even occasionally weaponized, as Biblical bullets that we fire off. When we decide to control poetry, to decide what its one meaning must be, we set ourselves against other insights and responses. Language that danced around the divine flame becomes pedestrian, banal, and cheapened like so much else.

The early theologian, John Chrysostom, said that when we read the Scriptures... we should read them as a letter from a friend, **reading the love latent in the words and between the lines**. Any interpretation of Scripture where you cannot discern the love is not one to pursue. The poetic ear helps us read the love not only in the Bible, but also of our lives.

That is why faith should be interested in poetry or, more than that, should be unapologetically poetic, celebrating the poetry of faith. ... Religion must not be prosaic. It needs to put the 'odd' back into 'God'. It needs to change us. God loves us just as we are but **so much** that he doesn't want us to stay like that."

As we look ahead to the seasons of Advent and Christmas, we are blessed by the abundance of poetic meaning in the appointed Scriptures. In Advent, we have the images of the crooked made straight, the rough made smooth, the lion lying down with the lamb, the desert fertile with water, and the anticipation of a virgin giving birth to a unique baby. The love of Emmanuel, God-with-Us.

Our Christmas Gospels are redolent with images of light, darkness, angels, dreams, stars, stables, that unique baby lying in the straw of a manger, exotic Wise Men from the East, shepherds, and sheep. We also have the drama of an evil king whose murderous intent forces the holy family to flee. The blazing divine flame of Love all mixed up together with the dust and dirt, joys and sorrows, life and death of our mundane and yet wondrous lives.

So I invite you to approach Advent and Christmas with your story-telling ears, with the openness of the child you used to be. Open to the "love latent in the words and between the lines," open to "God as the cause of our wonder," open to that wonder "pulling out the chair beneath your mind and watching yourself fall on God!" Reflect upon Mark Oakley's words and apply them to your own faith and experience.

For those of you who might be interested in exploring poetry as an Advent and Christmas discipline, the American poet Mary Oliver has published many books of poetry with a spiritual dimension. You might start with "New and Selected Poems, Volume One," published by Beacon Press. Also worth exploring: Malcolm Guite's "Love, Remember," and Mark Oakley's, "A Splash of Words," both published by Canterbury Press, Norwich (England).

*With best wishes for a poetically growthful Advent and joyful Christmas*

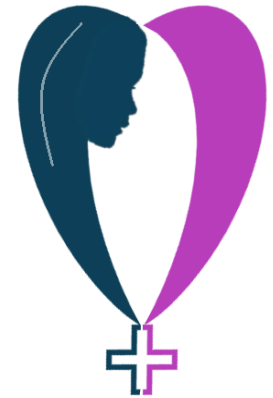
-- Elizabeth+ (The Rev. Elizabeth Gillett, Chaplain)

# Emmaus House

Thank you to all who donate necessities and niceties to the women and children staying at Emmaus House! New Home Welcome Kits and Hygiene Supplies are always in need. *Donations may be brought to St. Margaret's or directly to Emmaus House. Thank you for your kindness.*

## **Friends of Emmaus House**

Friends of Emmaus House is a group of volunteers who provide support to help meet the needs of the house & guests. This is done through various donations, fundraisers, and our annual Open House. We typically meet the 2nd Wednesday of each month to determine the needs and find solutions to those needs. Upcoming meeting dates are November 9th and December 14th at 10am at Emmaus House. New Members Welcome!



**Serving Women & Children  
Since 1983**

## ↻ **Donation Drive for Hope House** ↻

**It Takes a Village** members are asking for your assistance in gathering donations for Hope House. Needs include diapers (ten pounds and up), baby formula, toilet paper, toothbrushes / paste, shampoo and conditioner for all hair types and ethnicities, and coffee. Donations can be dropped off at St. Margaret's or directly at Hope House.

### **Altar Flower Donations in the Memory of Loved Ones & Prayer Requests**

If you would like to donate altar flowers in the memory of your loved ones, please contact St. Margaret's by phone or email to make arrangements. Flowers are obtained through local florists and the average cost is \$30.00. We will make an acknowledgement of your loved one during the service.

If you have a prayer request, you can submit it to St. Margaret's by phone or email - or fill out a card at St. Margaret's.

Tel. 315-724-2324  
Email [info@stmargarethshouseny.org](mailto:info@stmargarethshouseny.org)



# St. Margarets, Friends, & Events!



Photos: Receiving Excellus Community Award, August Group Tour at St. Kateri Shrine in Fonda, Dahlias in Bloom, Concert with Pastor Kevin Bailey, Deacon Barb Groves study group on Mary Magdalene, A Conversation with Janet Stengel, and scenes from our group tour of Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION & EVENT RESERVATIONS:**

Phone: 315-724-2324 | Email: [info@stmargarethouseny.org](mailto:info@stmargarethouseny.org)



# Special Events

## **OVERNIGHT ADVENT RETREAT - December 4th & 5th**

I will be leading an overnight Advent retreat beginning at 3:00PM on Sunday, December 4th and concluding at 3:00PM on Monday, December 5th. Its purpose will be to help us to be more open to the deeper meaning of Advent and Christmas through presented meditations, silence, worship, and discussion. I also will be available for spiritual guidance/conversation during the periods of silence.

While participants will be free to go home at night, if you wish, I recommend staying overnight if you are able. Maintaining the atmosphere of the retreat overnight is more conducive to a deeper experience the following day.

Please sign-up with Adrienne at St. Margaret's for meals and your own room. Suggested donations are as follows: "commuter" is \$45, while the overnight fee is \$100. Confidential scholarships are available for those who would like to participate but who may not be able to personally cover the cost. Please make use of them if you need to. **All** are welcome.

More information on the focus of the retreat will be sent to those who sign-up. Any questions may be directed to Adrienne or me. We hope that you will join us!

-- Elizabeth+ (Chaplain)



# Proclamation—Armistice Day, 1926

November 03, 1926

*By the President of the United States of America*

A Proclamation

*Whereas* the 11th of November, 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far-reaching war in human annals; and

*Whereas* it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and

*Whereas*, by a concurrent resolution, passed by the Senate on May 25, 1926, and by the House of Representatives on June 4, 1926, the President was requested to issue a proclamation "calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11th, and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches or other places, with appropriate ceremonies expressive of our gratitude for peace and our desire for the continuance of friendly relations with all other peoples":

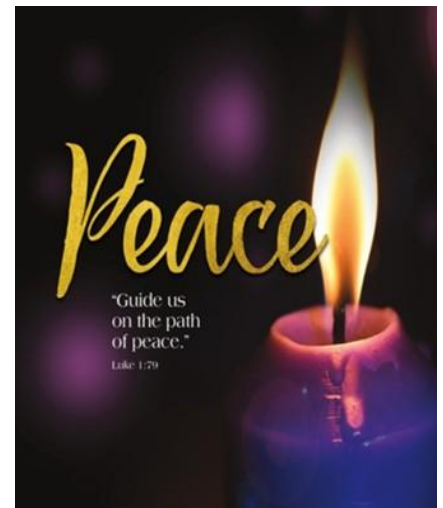
*Now, Therefore, I, Calvin Coolidge*, President of the United States of America, in pursuance of the said concurrent resolution, do hereby order that the flag of the United States be displayed on all Government buildings on November 11, 1926, and do invite the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies expressive of our gratitude for peace and our desire for the continuance of friendly relations with all other peoples.

*In witness whereof*, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the great seal of the United States.

*Done* at the City of Washington this 3rd day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and twenty-six, and of the Independence of the United States, the one hundred and fifty-first.



CALVIN COOLIDGE





**ST. MARGARET'S**  
ECUMENICAL & RETREAT CENTER

47 Jordan Rd - New Hartford NY - 13413