



St. John Baptiste de LaSalle Catholic Church
 275 C.C. Wright
 New

STEWARDSHIP of TREASURE
 Your 2024 Envelopes are on the lobby table.
 If you wish to use envelopes and don't have
 an assigned box, contact S. Janis



St. Stephen Catholic Church
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 Website: www.ststephennc.org

Fr. John D. Hanic 704-763-2475
Rev. Mr. Harold Markle 336-466-4173
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Fr. Jose Rebaque 203-954-7134
Mr. Cuauhdemoc (Temoc) Herrejon 828-773-2353

St. John

Mary Buran, Karen Huffman Music Ministry
Sabrina Caudill Parish Accountant
 336-957-1295
Laura Yanas Bookkeeper, Census
Ann Stone RCIA

St. Stephen

Theresa Martin Music Ministry
Natalie Lopez Youth Faith Formation
Peggy Reikowsky Youth Faith Formation
Phillip Parriah RCIA

Worship Times

Saturday Vigil Mass, 4:00p
Sunday Mass 11:15a; En español, 1:00p
Daily Mass, Holy Days Consult bulletin
Sacrament of Reconciliation
 Saturdays, 3:00-4:00p

Sunday Mass 9:00a
Communion Service Tuesdays, 12:15p
Holy Days 7:00p
Sacrament of Reconciliation
 By appointment

Welcome, New Parishioners

We are a Stewardship Community, sharing our time, talent, and treasure, in the most life-giving ways possible. Parishioners are expected to participate in weekly worship, in our community life, and in our service among our dear neighbors.

Sacramental Life ~ Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Matrimony

For Sacrament preparation, you must be a registered, active member and attend preparation sessions.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

For those who desire to explore the Catholic Faith, spirituality, customs, and practices.

Anointing of the Sick

For those with chronic illness or who are pre-surgery, contact Father John or Sister Janis

Feast of the Epiphany
January 7, 2023

Morning Church!

I don't know about you, but I believe we can get this right. We need to get this right, once and for all. The most meaningful present we can give another is presence. The quality and sincerity of our presence is more enduring, more life-giving than any purchased gift ~ no matter how phenomenal it looks.

We need to get this right ~ a lifestyle where a commercialized Christmas is replaced with a lasting, consequential expression of unconditional love. For some gift givers fall way short of the *presence* and are merely "seasonal" givers.

The Magi did not attach strings or conditions, nor did they give their gold, frankincense, and myrrh with mixed motives. They got it right. Unlike them, our gift-giving can be tainted by control and unrealistic expectations.

Presence is other-centered.

We all remember our graced encounters of presence.

Being Presence is more costly than a present you buy, wrap, and give to the receiver.

Presence is the *almsgiving* of the heart,

it's the unexpected grace that *never* expects a reward.

Presence or Presents?

Staying present, despite our own flaws and limits, is an intentional, selfless choice.

Presence is sacrificial.

It requires an attentiveness to others and being empathetic and compassionate with them.

It's much more than *giving things*, it's *giving your very self*.

Presence is light.

Presence is God-With-Us purposely and abundantly shared with those close to us and our Dear Neighbors all around us.

The *Light of Presence* radiating from within us is evidenced in our goodness, generosity, and is beyond price.

Presence is becoming a star.

Our presence can serve and guide as visible grace to the Divine.

Presence can lead others of the darkness of depression, grief, hopelessness, brokenness and illness of every kind, to The Light of the World.



The Epiphany, "Little Christmas", is no sentimental Christmas tale.

It is the very Word of God.

This feast's gospel calls us to be Wise, to be Presence, to be Stars whose lives give witness to deep faith in The Light of the World. Look for and pay attention to all the signs Christ gives as we continue our faithjourneys. We need to get this right, right now.

Blessings

in this New Year of Grace, 2024!

Janis

For Those Who Have Far to Travel: An Epiphany Blessing ~ Jan Richardson

If you could see the journey whole, you might never undertake it, might never dare the first step that propels you from the place you have known toward the place you know not.

Call it one of the mercies of the road: that we see it only by stages as it opens before us,

as it comes into our keeping, step by single step.

There is nothing for it but to go, and by our going take the vows the pilgrim takes:

to be faithful to the next step; to rely on more than the map; to heed the signposts of intuition and dream; to follow the star that only you will recognize;

to keep an open eye for the wonders that attend the path; to press on beyond distractions, beyond fatigue, beyond what would tempt you from the way.

There are vows that only you will know: the secret promises for your particular path and the new ones you will need to make when the road is revealed by turns

you could not have foreseen.

Keep them, break them, make them again; each promise becomes part of the path, each choice creates the road that will take you to the place where at last you will kneel

**to offer the gift most needed—
the gift that only you can give—
before turning to go home by another way.**

07	Feast of the Epiphany ~ Mass, 9a	
 08	Ladies Guild, 5p	
 09	Communion Service, 12:15p; The Chosen, 10a & 6p	
 10	RCIA, 6p; Choir, 7p 	
 11	SSJ ZOOM, 3:00-5:30P	
 12	SSJA Gathering Charlotte, 10a	
 14	2nd Sun OT Family Faith Formation, 10:30-12N	
15	Dr. Martin Luther King Day Ministerial Assoc. Prayer, 3:00p (see p. 4)	
 16	Communion Service, 12:15p The Chosen, 10a & 6p	
 17	RCIA, 6p; Choir, 7p 	
 18	Wise Ones, 1p Host: Lou Stackhouse Cedarbrook C.C.	
 20	Men's Breakfast, Cracker Barrel, 8:30a	
 21	3rd Sun OT Family Faith Formation, 10:30-12N	
 23	Communion Service, 12:15p The Chosen, 10a & 6p	
 24	RCIA, 6p; Choir, 7p 	
 28	4th Sun OT Faith Formation, 10:30-12N	
 30	Communion Service, 12:15p The Chosen, 10a & 6p	
 31	RCIA, 6p; Choir, 7p 	

Christian Unity Week

Darkness cannot drive out darkness;
only **LIGHT** can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate;
only **LOVE** can do that.
~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



 **HEARTwork**

~ Reflecting and Acting on The Word ~

Identify ways you will be a life-giving presence in 2024?

Readings <https://bible.usccb.org/>



...Jacquie Darcey, who'll lead our parish women in a Lenten Prayer this Good Friday, called, "Women of Jerusalem" ...

...to John Darcey for coaching me in a new tech skill: fillable response forms ~ whoo-hoo!...to the Ladies Guild, Faith Formation parents and all who made our annual Epiphany dinner a wonderful parish gathering...and to all whose generosity continues to build on our parish spirit of hospitality and generous service...

God's blessing you for this and so much more.

🕯️ Mass Intentions	
07	Fr. J.W. Hines; Familias de Cortez y Parral
14	End to racism and gun violence

Birthdays & Anniversaries

31 Crystal & Francisco Fuentes

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 08 Francisco Fuentes | 20 Ceceila Jones |
| 10 Anahi Parral | 21 Inez Trejo |
| 11 Rosa Parral | 22 Sonia Rodgiguez |
| 13 Luis Martinez | 23 Lou Stackhouse |
| 16 Jenny Ardizzola | 25 Braulio Mata |
| 16 Barry Blackburn | 20 Marta Lopez |
| 16 Epi Cortez | 31 Dolores Spicer |
| 20 Isabella Estrada | |



+S. Anne Winkelmann, SSJ

Born	October 21, 1941
Born to Eternal Life	January 1, 2024
in the 65 th year of religious life	

Pope Francis New Year's Day Message on Women:

Every society needs to accept the gift that is woman, every woman: to respect, defend and esteem women, in the knowledge that whosoever harms a single woman profanes God, who was 'born of a woman'...

Pope Francis' defense of women comes at a time in Italy when violence against women is increasing, and several brutal femicides have sparked outrage across that nation.

He closely follows situations of war, in which women have suffered: more than 6,500 women have already been killed in the Israeli bombardment in Gaza, while others were killed or suffered violence in the Hamas attack on Oct. 7, and in the wars being waged in Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, and other places.

Everyone is invited and welcome!

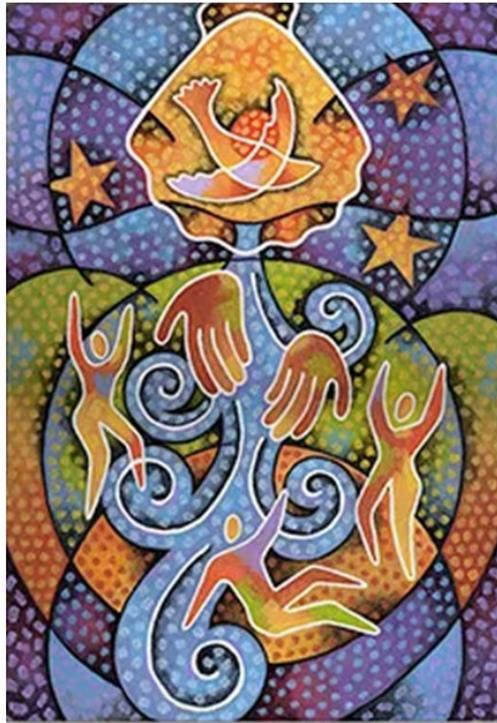
**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Community Worship Service**

Sunday, January 14, 2024 – 3:00 PM

Union Grove Baptist Church

6768 Old 60

Roaring River, North Carolina



**“Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness
like an ever-flowing stream” ~ Amos 5:24**

This worship service is sponsored and led by **CommUNITY Connections,
a group of Elkin and Jonesville clergy who are seeking
to dismantle racism one relationship at a time**



Joyful Reflection Questions

*Thank you, LORD, for a good, full year. One of memories and laughter and tears.
Stamp in our minds memories of Your faithfulness that we will pass down
to generations to come and carry with us into eternity.
Keep us close to You – in the deep rivers of the Holy Spirit – as we joyfully reflect. Amen.*

1. Who is someone you'd like to say "thank you" to – for making this year easier/happier/ lovelier?
2. How did you see the LORD's goodness in your life this year?
3. What did the LORD prune off of you this year?
4. Winter – What was one of your favorite things?
How did you see the LORD's faithfulness?
5. Spring – What was one of your favorite things?
How did you see the LORD's faithfulness?
6. Summer – What was one of your favorite things?
How did you see the LORD's faithfulness?
7. Fall – What was one of your favorite things?
How did you see the LORD's faithfulness?
8. What's one way you could draw nearer to God in 2024?

LORD, you are so good to us.

Thank You for our years – we are so full of hope for the things to come.

*~ Painting, Prayers, and Joyful Reflection Questions
by my friend, Caroline Hand*

The Magi Come to Worship Jesus

Today we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany, which is when the Magi, or wise men, of the East came to find and worship Baby Jesus. They travelled for many weeks across harsh country to find the new King, bringing their best treasures to give to Him.



Where did these men find the baby King? Not in Jerusalem in the palace, with riches and servants! They found Him in a little town, in a house with just His mother, Mary. But they still knew Who the Baby was, so they bowed down to Him and gave Him their treasures.

The wise men teach us that we can honour God in all sorts of places. Jesus is there when you help ordinary people and poor people. He is honoured when you pray at a little nativity scene. Like the wise men, we should give our very best to Jesus no matter where He is.



Answers to Cross-Word: Across: 4.myrrh 6.to 8.East 9.star 11.find 14.secretly 15.king 16.gold 18.Bethlehem Down: 1.frankincense 2.Jesus 3.at 4.Mary 5.Herod 7.overjoyed 10.they 12.as 13.its 17.the

The Kids' Bulletin

**Epiphany Sunday
January 7th, 2024**

*Here is the story of the Wise Men,
with pictures to make it fun to read!*

Long ago,  saw a special  in the

sky. They followed it to find the

 newborn. But first they came to

Herod, and asked him if he knew where the

 would be born. He asked the priests,

who told him the  would be born in

Bethlehem. So the  went, and found the

 where the  and His mother,

 were staying. They knelt before the

baby  and gave him their  of gold,

frankincense and myrrh.

Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys

January 12

MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS WAS BORN IN 1620 IN TROYES, FRANCE. SHE WAS THE SIXTH OF TWELVE CHILDREN IN A MIDDLE CLASS FAMILY.

She says: "We have a new baby sister!"

WHEN SHE WAS 20, SHE WAS IN A PROCESSION IN HONOUR OF OUR LADY WHEN SHE FELT CALLED TO THE SERVICE OF GOD.

She says: "I want to give my life to God like her..."

SHE JOINED A GROUP OF WOMEN THAT TAUGHT THE POOR CHILDREN OF TROYES.

She says: "Time for catechism!"

IT WILL BE A LONG TRIP.

She says: "I'll come!"

SOON SHE WAS ASKED TO HELP AT A NEW SETTLEMENT, NOW MONTREAL.

THERE SHE HELPED WITH BUILDING A CHAPEL AND HAD THE CROSS ON MOUNT-ROYAL REBUILT.

SHE TAUGHT THE YOUNG WOMEN WHO CAME TO CANADA TO MARRY AND RAISE FAMILIES.

She says: "Very good!"

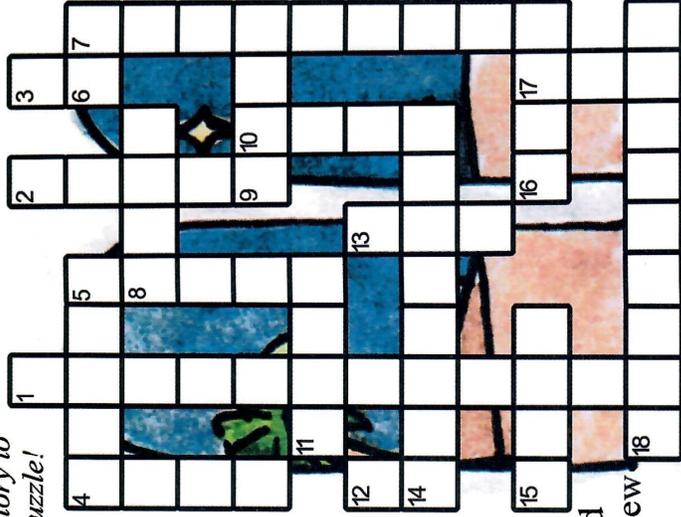
MANY OTHER WOMEN JOINED HER WORK. AFTER MARGUERITE RETIRED, THE CONGREGATION OF NOTRE-DAME WAS GIVEN OFFICIAL APPROVAL.

She says: "Mother, we've been approved!"

SAINTE MARGUERITE DIED AT THE AGE OF 80. SHE HAD HELPED THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW SETTLEMENT SO MUCH THAT THEY CALLED HER "THE MOTHER OF THE COLONY." SHE TAUGHT THE FAITH TO THE MOTHERS BECAUSE SHE KNEW THAT THEY WOULD BE THE FIRST ONES TO TEACH THE FAITH TO THEIR CHILDREN.

EPIPHANY CROSS-WORD

Fill in the blanks in the story to find the words for the puzzle!



Around the time that _____ (2d) was born, some wise men from the _____ (8a) saw in the sky a special _____ (9a) at _____ (13d) rising, and followed it to _____ (11a) the new-born Saviour. First they came to Jerusalem where _____ (10d) went to ask _____ (15a) Herod if he knew where the new _____ (12d) King would be born.

_____ (18a) Herod did not know, he called the priests and scribes, who told them that the Baby would be born in _____ (17d) and _____ (18a). Then Herod told a _____ (17d) and said that he wanted to go and honour the Baby King too, and told the men to return once they had found him and tell him where the Baby was. The men were _____ (7d) when they found Jesus with his mother _____ (4d), and they did him homage, giving their gifts of _____ (16a), _____ (1d) and _____ (4a). But _____ (3d) _____ (6a) _____ (6a) night an angel appeared _____ (6a) _____ (6a) them and told them to _____ (14a) go home by another road, since King _____ (5d) wanted to kill Baby Jesus.



We pray
 for our sisters and brothers
 in Maui, Morocco,
 Middle East, (Oct. 7, 2023)
 and Libya... and the 32 places
 where war is being waged now.



Our Lady of Protection
 Ukrainian Madonna

FEBRUARY 24, 2022
 22 months

Ukrainian Catholics dedicate their country
 to *Our Lady of Protection*,
 interceding to Mary to wrap their country
 with her mantle of loving protection.

**Our Lady of Protection,
 pray for us!**

Tri-C Almsgiving

Thank you so much !!

JAN	Canned tomatoes, Spaghetti sauce
FEB	Corn meal
MAR	Small laundry soap

CARE for CREATION
 RECYCLE INK CARTRIDGES
 LOBBY CONTAINERS

Thank you!



Do you know the number of
 U.S. Mass shootings and
 gun-related deaths
 so far in 2023?



**WHEN IS
 ENOUGH,
 ENOUGH?**