



THE FOURTH EPISTLE SAINT JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH MOBILE, ALABAMA

The Right Reverend Philip Duncan, Bishop,
Protestant Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast
The Reverend Thomas Heard, Rector

Vol. XIX, Issue 2

February 2009

FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

It seems like only yesterday that we were beginning Lent in 2008.

While we're not quite there yet, the opening of "Mardi Gras Season" in Mobile means that it's just around corner. At this writing, we've already had the first parade (on Dauphin Island) and I think the first Mobile parade is on 6 February. Being an "outsider", that is, not a native Mobilian, the concept of a "Mardi Gras Season" is pretty foreign. I know that many take part in the season to varying degrees – it's OK.

The original idea behind *Mardi Gras* or "Fat Tuesday" is one of cleaning house, so to speak. The Tuesday before Ash Wednesday was the last opportunity to use up the extravagant things in the pantry. If you didn't, then you'd have all those tempting things calling to you throughout Lent.

Herein lies the origins of giving something up for Lent. It is an old tradition and its effects can also be seen in our liturgy. First, the opening acclamation changes to "Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins./His mercy endures for ever." We don't use *Gloria in excelsis* as the Song of Praise, substituting the *Kyrie eleison* or *Trisagion* instead. Of course, the big one is: No *Alleluias* in liturgies from Ash Wednesday to Easter. For me, that's the hardest one!

The reason for this, of course, is that Lent is a season of preparation. Through penance and prayer, we seek to move closer to God. Some will take on additional disciplines of fasting, abstinence and almsgiving in Lent. Yet others make an annual auricular confession (that is, private confession to a priest).

The Forty Days of Lent begin on Ash Wednesday and end on Holy Saturday, and excludes Sundays. (Sundays are regarded as mini-Easters). The number "40" recalls Moses' days on Mt. Sinai, the Israelites wandering in the wilderness,

Elijah's nights on Mt. Horeb, the length of the rain in the Noah story, and Jesus' time in the wilderness being tempted by Satan.

In the middle ages, Lent was a particularly lean time. In some places, fasting meant no animal products in food and a fast was for a full twenty-four hours each Friday. As an aside, our word "breakfast" finds its roots in this kind of fast: the morning meal following a day of fasting, to "break the fast." The most common practice allowed fish and eggs at a meal at the end of the day.

Fridays in Lent seem to be the most common fast days. A day of abstinence until evening and then a good dinner. Some parishes observe the Stations of the Cross, serving as the marker for the end of the day.

Most Anglicans that observe fasts skip breakfast and lunch and eat dinner. During Lent, avoiding meat is pretty normative, though I know a few who are strict vegetarians when they fast. I think the one thing that isn't avoided in a fast is coffee. Most of us that have caffeine addictions seem to think that coffee is another sacrament!

What anyone chooses to do in their observance of Lent is a personal decision. You might choose to add on something or you might choose to give up something. "Adding on" might be being intentional about taking time during your day to pray or read scripture (or both!). "Giving up" might be to set aside something you really like for the 40 days of Lent.

Once again, we will have a Lenten Series on Wednesday evenings. The Women of the Church have planned our vegetarian menu for the five weeks beginning on 1 March. We will again offer Stations of the Cross at 6:00PM with dinner to follow immediately after. We'll have a brief study time together. Stay tuned for more details in the March edition of *The Fourth Epistle*.

Thomas



Vestry

The regular meeting of the Vestry was held on 13 January. The Vestry confirmed the Rector's appointment of Howard Yeager as Senior Warden and elected William Sundie as Junior Warden. Cindy Gass was re-elected as Treasurer. No one was elected as Clerk of the Vestry; Eugene Johnston served as Clerk *pro tempore*. The Vestry heard reports from Outreach, Evangelism, Communications, Parish Life, Stewardship, and Finance committees.

The Rector asked the Vestry to call the Annual Meeting of the Parish for 15 February, after the 10:00 Mass. The Vestry approved the request. Fr. Heard reported that the church will be switching telephone service to Comcast, resulting in a savings of \$50 per month. A wedding has been scheduled for 13 June and Fr. Heard distributed draft copies of an updated wedding customary for review.

Pat Pritchard reported a net profit of \$2,170 in Thee Store for the past year. The Vestry thanked Pat Pritchard and James Christiansen for their efforts.

The Vestry adopted a set of "house rules" to govern its life, including eligibility for election and requirements for continued membership.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Rector and Vestry have called the Annual Meeting of Saint John's to be held on Sunday, 15 February 2009. Following the 10:00AM Mass, we will retire to the Great Hall for a Pot Luck lunch and our meeting.

A booklet of reports of the various committees of the parish will be available for you to review and take home, and we'll hear abbreviated reports from the committees.

Please see the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board to indicate what type of dish you'll be bringing. Hope to see you there!

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FEBRUARY LITURGICAL CALENDAR

The Presentation of Our Lord Jesus Christ

This remembrance encompasses several different traditions: Our Lord meeting Simeon at the Temple, the purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Candlemas, and the traditional dedication of a first-born to God. For Episcopalians, it is somewhat of a combination of the first and last of the above. Tradition holds that Mary placed her infant son into the arms of old Simeon. Simeon had been promised that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah that God had long promised. The Evensong canticle *Nunc Dimittis* commemorates this meeting of the Old and the New, changing the world for ever. We will celebrate the Feast of the Presentation on Monday, 2 February with a Said Mass at 12:15PM.

Cornelius the Centurion

On Wednesday, 4 February at 10:00AM, we will remember Cornelius at a Said Mass. A Roman Centurion commanding 100 men, he was responsible for their discipline both on the field of battle and off. Acts 10-11 recounts Cornelius' conversion to Christianity, along with his entire family. This was an important foothold in the Gentile world. Tradition holds that Cornelius became the first bishop of Caesarea and metropolitan of Palestine.

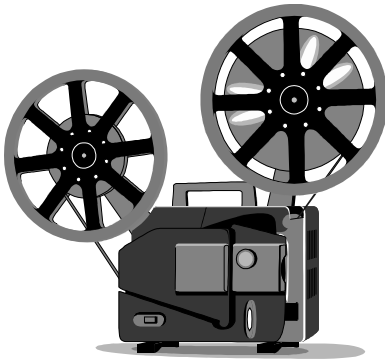
Martin Luther

At our Wednesday Said Mass on 18 February, we will commemorate the life of Martin Luther and his contributions to the Protestant Reformation. Luther is best remembered for his 95 Theses nailed to the door of the castle church of Wittenberg, Germany, his talking points about what he thought was wrong with the Roman Catholic Church. Luther never intended to start a new denomination, but we are richer for his protests.

Saint Matthias

After Judas' death, the disciples met and decided that they needed to replace him. They met, prayed and finally chose Matthias as the new twelfth disciple. We know nothing more of Matthias, where his mission field was, what he was like, or where he came from. We commemorate his life on Tuesday, 24 February at a Said Mass at 12:15PM.

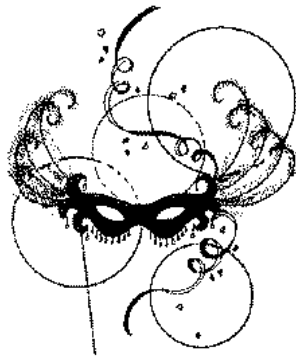
PARISH LIFE



The movie for the 2nd Saturday in February is *Inherit the Wind*, a fictionalized account of the 1925 Scopes "Monkey" Trial, which resulted in John T. Scopes' conviction for teaching

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution to a high school science class, contrary to a Tennessee state law that prohibited the teaching of anything besides creationism. This is a rerun of the movie planned for January, since so few people got to see it then. Join us for a great film and our traditional refreshments of popcorn and something sweet.

January's supper club was in the Great Hall with *Mardi Gras* as the theme. The meal was a home-cooked style buffet (Joyce Lee's greens, James Christiansen's Mama's carrot casserole, Betty Taylor's carrot soufflé, Alice Schablinski's stoup, Pat Thomas' tater tot casserole, Connie McLean's deviled eggs, among many, many other great dishes) and was greatly enjoyed by all.

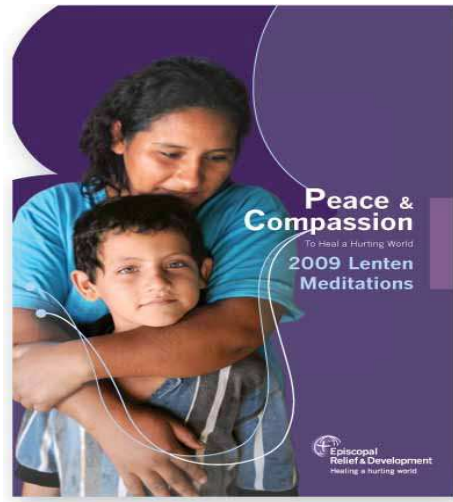


There will be no supper club in February or March because of the annual meeting potluck on February 15th and the Wednesday night suppers starting in Lent. Supper club will recommence in April at Jerry and Pat Fulford's house.

-Pat Pritchard

ASH
WEDNESDAY

On February 25, we will observe Ash Wednesday with Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes at 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM.



EPISCOPAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT OFFERS LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

Episcopal Relief & Development's Lenten Devotional, *Peace & Compassion: To Heal a Hurting World* offers daily meditations based on the Rev. Barbara C. Crafton's Almost-Daily Emos. The booklet encourages us to reflect on our lives, our neighbors and our role in the world. As you embark on your spiritual journey this season, Episcopal Relief & Development asks you to remember your neighbors in need.

Working to achieve the Millennium Development Goals is one way to practice the Lenten discipline of almsgiving and a powerful way to renew your commitment to aid our suffering sisters and brothers. This Lent, consider how you can help your neighbors around the world who are sick, hungry or living in poverty. Use this Lenten Devotional to reflect on your faith and the ways in which you can help Episcopal Relief & Development empower vulnerable people to be agents of their own positive change.

The Hope Chest can be used during or after the Lenten Season for family or individual offerings to Episcopal Relief & Development.

Both will be available at St John's beginning Sunday February 22 (the Sunday before Ash Wednesday).



STEWARDSHIP AS A DAILY LIFESTYLE

Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion looks out on the world; yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good; and yours are the hands with which to bless us now.

-Mother Teresa of Calcutta

When churches address the stewardship of their congregation's time and talent, they are generally concerned with how members can help with the ministries of the church, such as altar guild, choir, Sunday school teachers, and other "churchly" activities. What churches often fail to emphasize is that our main ministries as Christ's hands, feet and eyes occur in the world beyond the church doors.

We exercise ministry *wherever we are...* in the home, on the job, at school, during recreational activities, as a volunteer, as a retiree. When we declare each week that we are going "into the world to love and serve the Lord" we are saying we will go forth beyond the church doors and be good stewards of our unique, God-given skills, talents and strengths by ministering to others in Christ's name.

Our experience together in church for an hour or two each Sunday is merely a jumping off point for the work of ministry we are to do in the world the rest of the week. The Sabbath time on Sundays should equip us to look at the world with the compassionate eyes of Christ and ask ourselves, in all situations, how our hands and feet can do the work of Christ while our voices speak the words that Christ would have us say to share his compassion with all we meet. What can we do in our daily

lives and work to share the Kingdom of God with others?

The discernment process can begin with the following two questions: What was an experience when I felt someone ministered to me? When was a time when I felt I ministered to someone else? The chances are good that what you were actually doing or experiencing at such times was listening, caring, helping or confronting in places such as at home, at the ball game, at school, around the water fountain at work and even at church. We are all ministering and being ministered to all of the time. Our goal, as good stewards of our time and talent, is to more consciously act as Christ's ministers when such opportunities arise.

We all have qualities and strengths that equip us for our ministries in the world. The work of the church is to help each of us identify our unique configuration of skills and talents and then to help us discern how we can use these personal resources for ministry. Plan on participating in the upcoming Wednesday evening Lenten series offered by Father Thomas and begin exploring your daily ministry opportunities, asking such questions as "What is, and where is, my ministry?" and "What is it to be the Church of Jesus Christ in my daily work?"

The center of Christianity is not the church - it is the world. As the body of Christ it is our responsibility to be good stewards of our God-given talents, acting as the eyes, ears, mouth, hands and feet of Christ as we go about our daily lives.

-Lella Lowe

THEE STORE



Thee Store has been very busy getting ready for convention on February 5-7. We are also preparing to travel to St. Jude's in Niceville on February 22 and the Men's Conference at Beckwith on March 6 -8. In between those times, come on by and check out our new shipment of calendars and summer fun items, like Episcopal flip flops!!

FEBRUARY 2009 AT SAINT JOHN'S

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10A HE-II Epiphany 4 11:30 Evangelism	2 8:30A MP 12:15P HE-II Presentation of Our Lord	3 8:30A MP	4 8:30A MP 10A HE-II+Unction Cornelius the Centurion 6:45P Choir	5 8:30A MP 5:30P EfM	6 8:30A MP	7 10A ECW+ELON
8 8:20A Breakfast 10A HE-II Epiphany 5 Bishop David Reed	9 8:30A MP 10:30A Stewardship	10 8:30A MP 12P DoK 7P Vestry	11 8:30A MP 10A HE-II 6:45P Choir	12 8:30A MP 5:30P EfM	13 8:30A MP	14 1-4P Saturday Afternoon at the Movies
15 10A HE-II Epiphany 6 11A Potluck & Annual Meeting 5P Evensong	16 8:30A MP OFFICE CLOSED	17 8:30A MP	18 8:30A MP 10A HE-II Martin Luther 6:45P Choir	19 8:30A MP 5:30P EfM	20 8:30A MP	21
22 10A HE-II Last Epiphany	23 8:30A MP	24 8:30A MP 12:15P HE-II Saint Matthias	25 8:30A MP 10A HE-II 6P HE-II ASH WEDNESDAY	26 8:30A MP 5:30P EfM	27 8:30A MP	28
MP = Morning Prayer HE = Holy Eucharist The Office will be closed on 16 February The Rector will be in Pensacola on 19 February.						

LECTIONARY AND ROTA FOR FEBRUARY 2009

Date	1 February HE-II	8 February HE-II	15 February HE-II	15 February Evensong	22 February HE-II
Lectionary Day	B Epiphany 4	B Epiphany 5 Baptism of our Lord	B Epiphany 6	1 Epiphany 6	B Last Epiphany
Lessons	Deuteronomy 18:15-20 Psalm 111 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Mark 1:21-28	Isaiah 40:21-3 Psalm 147:1-12,21c 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 Mark 1:29-39	2 Kings 5:1-14 Psalm 30 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Mark 1:40-45	Psalm 19, 46 Isaiah 62:6-12 John 8:12-19	2 Kings 2:1-12 Psalm 50:1-6 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 Mark 9:2-9
Greeters	Scott Escobio	Connie McLean	Bessie & Bill Southall		Paula & Bob Ross
Lectors	Paula Ross Scott Escobio	Ron Brown Geri Moulton	Denise Dunham Janet Buckley	Ron Waites Cheryl Winters-Heard	Connie Anderson Ron Brown
Incessor	Pat Fulford	Mary Sheffield	Cheryl Winters-Heard	--	Paula Ross
Eucharistic Ministers	Ron Brown Connie Anderson	Paula Ross Ron Waites	Mary Sheffield Connie Anderson	--	Connie McLean Geri Moulton
Eucharistic Visitor	Eugene Johnston	Ron Brown	Paula Ross	--	Ron Waites
Altar Guild	Neva Bache & Donna Waites	Neva Bache & Donna Waites	Kim Partsch & Irene Yeager		Kim Partsch & Irene Yeager
Vestry Tellers	Eugene Johnston & Connie McLean	Connie McLean & Pat Pritchard	Pat Pritchard & Bill Sundie		Bill Sundie & Howard Yeager

If you are unable to serve as scheduled, please arrange a swap and let the Church Office know of the arrangements.

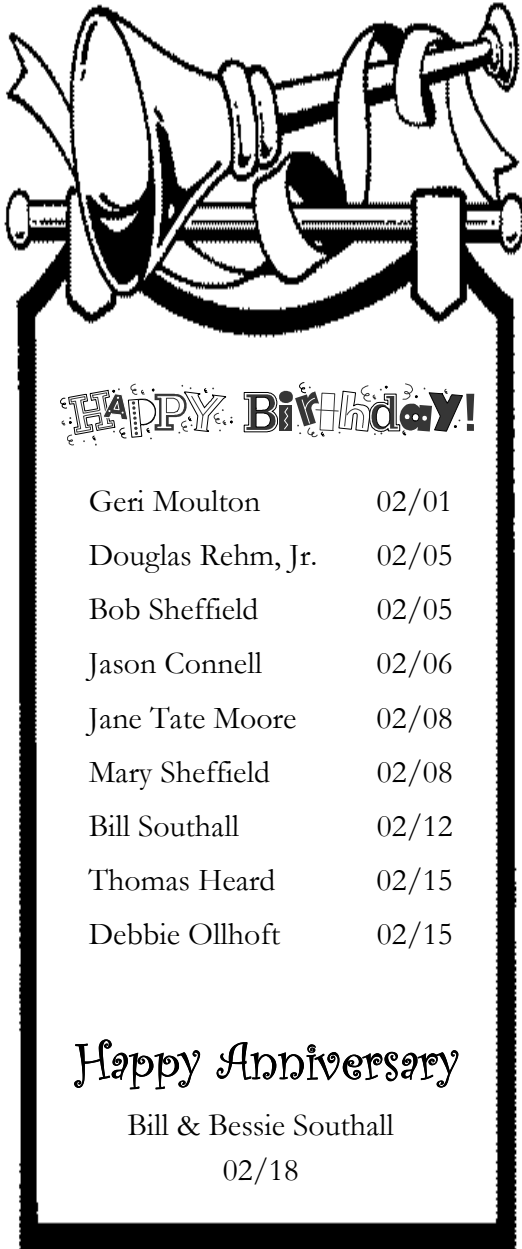
Prayer List

For healing grace and continued strength, we pray for our members:

Leah Betts, Marion Wallace, Stephen Lee,
Earl Garner, Shannon Newberry, Ashley Garris,
Gloria Lee

For our Homebound:

Alice Cieutat, Nellie Doyle, Mae Dunn, Will Elam,
Corinne Faust, Gwen Johnson, Violet Kosko,
Vevia Lund, Lillian Mayson, Angela McGuire,
Audrey Meador, Jane Tate Moore, Betty Plash,
Chick & Dot Wohler



For our Friends and Family:

Sam Pearson, Jim Qualls, Mary Lou Johnston,
Robert McClure, Jim Owens, Maddie West, Idela
Rye, Ronnie Davis, Jake Nelson, Vieve Steele, Joe
Stroecker, Cheryl Garner, Michael Wilson,
Helen Baker, Robbie Hinson, Gracie Stroecker,
Jo-Alice Christenberry, Shirley Mayson,
Barry Aiken, Mary Alice Stiber, Julie Stiber,
Olga Hauge

For victims of war and their families, and members of our Armed Forces and their families:

Steven Garris, Jeffery Yeager, Lee-J Benson,
Ellis Eugene Garner, Eric Mattoon, Brian Kane

Contact Us

Staff:

The Reverend Thomas Heard
Rector
rector@stjohnsmobile.org

John L. Hobbs, Jr.
Organist/Choirmaster
music@stjohnsmobile.org

Lella Lowe
Financial Secretary
finance@stjohnsmobile.org

Jack Ruppe
Sexton

Vestry:

Steve Brown

Bill Duke

Pat Fulford

Cindy Gass

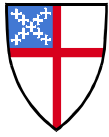
Eugene Johnston

Connie McLean

Pat Pritchard

Bill Sundie

Howard (Butch) Yeager



Saint John's Episcopal Church
1707 Government Street
Mobile, Alabama 36604

Nonprofit Organization
U.S.POSTAGE PAID
Mobile, Alabama
Permit No. 607

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Come Worship With Us!

Monday—Friday:

8:30AM Morning Prayer

Sunday:

9:00AM Adult and Youth Christian
Formation

10:00AM Holy Eucharist

Wednesday:

10:00AM Holy Eucharist; Healing on
the 1st Wednesday of the
month.

Other Feasts and Holy Days are
observed throughout the year; see our
website for the latest schedule.

Parish Office

Monday-Thursday

9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Telephone: 251-479-5474

Fax: 251-473-1230

www.stjohnsmobile.org

Thee Store Episcopal Books

Mon-Wed & Fri:

10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Sundays after church
and by appointment

Telephone: 251-479-5086

SAINT JOHN'S: THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN MIDTOWN MOBILE
A parish finding its center in shared sacramental life and
expanding to include the surrounding community.