



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

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

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## FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

We find ourselves on the cusp of Holy Week. I hope that your journey through Lent has brought you peace and some introspection and even a little “turning back” on things in your life that don’t seem quite as necessary as once they might. There’s a fancy word for this - *adiaphora* - which means ‘things indifferent’ or ‘non-essential’.

We begin Holy Week with the Last Sunday of Lent, or as more familiarly known, Palm Sunday. It is a bit of a mixed bag, perhaps owing to the realities of the world in which daily attendance at the liturgy of the day was impractical. Thus, we have both Jesus’ Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (with all of its tongue-in-cheek imagery) and The Passion of Our Lord. Until 1954, the Fifth Sunday of Lent was called Passion Sunday, and the season was known as Passiontide. The Sixth Sunday of Lent was known as the Second Sunday of the Passion or Palm Sunday.

A portion of [The Travels of Egeria](#), a long letter by a fourth century Galican pilgrim to the Holy Land survives for us today, thanks to its inclusion in the *Codex Aretinus* by a Monte Cassino monk in the eleventh century. The beginning and the end are lost, but what remains recounts her experiences in Jerusalem during the episcopate of Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 313-386). Cyril was a theologian, widely respected in Palestine, and was known for his care for the poor, even raiding the church’s treasury to accomplish it.

Cyril is also believed to have been the architect of what we know as the Triduum, or “three days” that chronicle the events of Our Lord’s Supper, his betrayal and arrest, his trial and Crucifixion, burial and resurrection. The familiar names of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Great Vigil of Easter come from this same era. It was in the Liturgical Renewal of the 1960s that these celebrations came into widespread use in the Church.

For us, they were included in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer for the first time.

As I have said many times before, the liturgy of the church is supposed to engage us wholly. That is, it should engage all of our senses and it should engage our emotions as well. Through the liturgies of Holy Week, we are transported back to experience along with Our Lord and his disciples the events of the last days of Jesus’ life and his resurrection.

As has been our custom, we will observe Maundy Thursday at an evening Mass. There will be an opportunity for each of us to kneel in Jesus’ place and wash the feet of a disciple. We will consecrate the elements for our Communion on Good Friday and reserve them at the Altar of Repose in the Chapel. A watch will be made over the elements and you are invited to take some time to watch and pray.

Good Friday will be observed twice. We will pray the Solemn Collects for Good Friday, read Saint John’s Passion together, have an opportunity to venerate the Cross, and share Communion in a simple, quiet way.

What is unique in these two days is that there is no blessing or dismissal: we simply go away to come back later for the next installment.

The final installment is The Great Vigil of Easter. Once again, we will begin in the Garden as the light of Saturday begins to fade, enter into the church and hear the stories of God’s Salvation for us. Our vigil will end with the first Alleluias since Epiphany as we declare again,

“Christ is risen!”

“He is risen indeed!”

-- Thomas

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE APRIL LITURGICAL CALENDAR

### HOLY DAYS

The major days in Holy Week are The Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday), Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. There will be a Said Mass on Monday and Tuesday at 12:10PM and on Wednesday at 10:00AM. The tradition of Holy Week comes to us from the writings of a mid to late 4<sup>th</sup> century pilgrim to the Holy Land. The *Travels of Egeria* records her experiences in Jerusalem in Holy Week. Beyond its depiction of Holy Week, it is a great read.

#### Sunday of the Passion or Palm Sunday

Holy Week begins on 1 April with the Liturgy of the Palms in the Garden at 10:00AM and processing into the church for the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharist. Palm Sunday is an odd mix: I think this happened to accommodate those who don't darken the door of the church except on Sundays, so we get the Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem and the Passion of Our Lord – Palm Sunday and Good Friday all rolled into one.

#### Maundy Thursday

The name comes from the Latin "*Mandatum*", meaning command. With our observance of Maundy Thursday on 5 April at 6:00PM, we will commemorate Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples and imitate Our Lord's washing of his disciples' feet. All who wish to participate will have their feet washed and then wash someone else's feet, becoming servants to each other. The Mass will conclude with the transfer of the Holy Sacrament to the Altar of Repose and the stripping of the Sanctuary and washing of the altar. At the end of the mass, the Watch over the Blessed Sacrament begins. This overnight vigil affords quiet time to spend in prayer and meditation.

#### Good Friday

We will offer the Good Friday liturgy twice, once at 12:00PM and again at 6:00PM. This liturgy features the Passion of Our Lord according to John. In the place of the Prayers of the People, the Solemn Collects are prayed, with the deacon saying the biddings and the celebrant saying the collects. In the Showing of the Cross, the deacon will bring a cross into the Nave. An opportunity to venerate the cross will be offered to all present. Following the veneration, Holy Communion will be prepared from the Sacrament reserved at the altar of repose.

#### The Great Vigil of Easter

Holy Week reaches its peak with the Great Vigil of Easter at 7:30PM on Saturday, 7 April. The service begins in the garden (weather permitting) where the Pascal Candle is prepared and lighted and we process into the church. The liturgy continues with readings from the Old Testament, taking us from creation through all of our salvation history. In the early church, this was the liturgy where catechumens were baptized, becoming full members of the community. I believe we will have a baptism at our Vigil observance. Following baptism and renewal of our Baptismal Covenant, the proclamation of Easter is made: bells are rung, candles are lit, the lights come up and we celebrate the first Mass of Easter.

#### Saint Mark the Evangelist

We will commemorate the life and work of Saint Mark the Evangelist on Wednesday, 25 April at 10:00AM. Mark, as the author of the Gospel bearing his name, is not precisely identified. Various traditions have him filling roles ranging from being one of Jesus' disciples to being the cousin of Barnabas in Paul's letters. The Church of Alexandria claims that Mark was its first bishop and a martyr, killed while on a missionary journey. It is Mark's Gospel that gives us the shortest account of Jesus ministry, but we must be careful not to equate short with simple. Mark's Gospel leaves us with many questions, but gives us many clues to the answers.



### SIGN UP FOR EASTER LILIES

Please look for cards by the doors to the church to sign up for Easter lilies. As in past years, Easter lilies may be given in memory or in honor of loved ones, whose names will appear in the Easter service bulletins. Suggested donation is \$20 per plant. The deadline to sign up is Palm Sunday.

# ❖ *Holy Week* ❖

Sunday, 1 April 2012

## Palm Sunday

### The Sunday of the Passion

Blessing of Palms, Procession and  
Solemn Mass at 10:00AM  
Sermon by the Rector

Thursday, 5 April 2012

## Maundy Thursday

Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper at 6:00PM  
Sermon by the Rector

Friday, 6 April 2012

## Good Friday

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ  
Said Liturgy at 12:00PM  
Sung Liturgy at 6:00PM  
Sermon by the Rector

Saturday, 7 April 2012

## Holy Saturday

The Great Vigil of Easter at 7:30PM  
Sermon by the Rector

Sunday, 8 April 2012

## The Sunday of the Resurrection

Solemn Mass at 10:00AM  
Sermon by the Rector  
Easter Egg Hunt for the Children after Mass



## *Easter Egg Hunt following the service*

Sunday, April 8

Bring baskets for your children!



## Vestry

### VESTRY SUMMARY

The regular meeting of the Vestry and Wardens of Saint John's Church was held on 11 March 2012. The meeting was convened by Fr. Heard with prayer at 11:35AM. Minutes from the meetings of 22 January 2012 and 12 February 2012 were approved.

Cindy Gass reviewed the current budget performance. Janet Buckley reminded everyone of the Annual Meeting and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Potluck on 25 March. Fr. Heard reminded the members that reports from committees are due by next Sunday.

James Christiansen reported that Thee Store was broken into on 23 February at 1:30AM. Minimal merchandise and no money were taken. Jerry Fulford has volunteered to weld bars for the inside of the door since the burglar pushed in the glass to gain access.

Fr. Heard distributed a pledge status update. There was discussion concerning the missing pledges and follow-up.

Fr. Heard presented the Parochial Report that is filed with The Episcopal Church and the diocese. Our number of communicants has remained the same, in spite of the number of deaths during the year. This is primarily due to baptisms of folks we will likely never see again, so it really means that we're shrinking.

The Vestry voted to send the Good Friday Offering to the Episcopal-Anglican Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 12:20PM.



Eleven women attended the March 18 meeting of St. John's ECW. Lorraine Murray opened the meeting with a prayer followed by the "thought for the day" by Paula Ross. November meeting minutes were accepted without correction. Paula advised that Joyce Lee is struggling with her health right now and has asked that Marie find a replacement for her as Secretary. There was no Treasurer's Report.

Marie spoke to the group about Sam Escobio's courtyard project. After much discussion, the group decided that they wanted to help financially with this project, but would wait to see what Sam's needs were after the vestry agreed on the scope of the project.

There was discussion about the United Thank Offering ingathering. A suggestion was made that Mother's Day would be a good day to have an ingathering, and it was decided that the UTO boxes could be distributed three weeks before the ingathering, with a letter explaining about this worthwhile project. Irene Yeager is the UTO representative, and she will be working on this.

Several members indicated an interest in attending the diocesan Spring Day Away at St. Paul's (Daphne) on April 21<sup>st</sup>. Audrey Garner agreed to collect registration forms and fees and mail them to St. Paul's.

Paula M. Ross

## ATTENTION ST. JOHN'S LADIES:

### ECW SPRING DAY AWAY

April 21, 2012

The ECW of the diocese has planned its annual "Spring Day Away" for April 21, 2012 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Daphne, Alabama. The gathering will feature Sister Schubert, famous for Sister Schubert's rolls, and author of the cookbook, "Cast Your Bread Upon the Waters."

Schedule for the day:

9:00 – 10:00 Registration and coffee

10:00 -10:15 Welcome

10:15 – 12:00 Sister Schubert will speak

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 1:45 Book signing

2:00 Holy Communion

Registration fee is \$10. Registration forms and fliers are in the back of the church. Anyone who would like to attend is welcome and may elect to carpool with other St. John's members who are attending. Contact Marie Brown or Audrey Garner for more information.

## *Parish Life*

### GARDEN CLEAN UP MORNING SATURDAY, MARCH 31



We'll be having Garden Cleanup morning on Saturday, March 31 starting at 8 AM. We want to get the court yard and all of the church grounds looking "Easter ready". We'll weed, replace the plants in the planters, remove the dead leaves, trim the shrubbery and cut the grass. The more hands helping the faster the task will go! There will be coffee and goodies but the real reward will be how beautiful Saint John's will look. Bring your gardening gloves, gardening tools and lots of energy: Sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

## TWO GRADUATE EfM IN JUNE

Two members of Saint John's will graduate in June from the Education for Ministry course held every Tuesday evening in the EfM room. Cheryl Winters-Heard and Deacon Jayne Carson have completed four years of Scripture, Church History and various Theologies. They will receive their certificates during a Sunday service in June.

Father Thomas and Kathe Gieseler co-mentor the group, which also includes Nikki Shaw finishing up Year Two (Christian Scriptures), and Lee Dorsey and John Goff (Church of the Redeemer) who tackled Hebrew Scriptures.

Every baptized person is called to ministry and EfM provides people with an opportunity to discover how to respond to that call. Although EfM is required in our diocese for those interested in ordination, that is not the goal. Lay persons face the difficult task of interpreting the richness of the church's faith in a complex world. They need a theological education which supports their faith in day-to-day events. EfM is a program of theological education by extension from the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee.

Graduate Cheryl Winters-Heard says, "EfM has been a discovery for me. I've especially enjoyed the third and fourth years with their overview of church history and theology. This has introduced me to the writings of scholars that inspired me to read more. At Saint John's EfM, we have the privilege of having classmates who are in different years. We are not all studying the same things, but it's amazing how congruent the topics are. This makes for some great conversations. When I first

started EfM, I thought that four years sounded like a long time and a huge commitment, but it hasn't been. It's honed my thinking skills. I'm learning how to read the Bible with a better understanding of why something was written as it was, the cultural as well as the historical context, and the intention of the writer."

Nikki Shaw, who finishes up two years of studying the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, says "I have learned a different way to read the Scriptures with a more contextual eye rather than the way my Dutch Reformed background taught me."

At the end of Lee Dorsey's first year (Hebrew Scriptures), she says "Several people talked to me about EfM, but not until I began the class did I get a glimpse of what a wonder EfM is. There is no way to describe the experience. I have learned more than I thought possible, and with that learning comes a growing relationship with God. The group/class experience has been a special gift. The support, encouragement and fellowship shared is something I wish everyone could experience."

Speak with Father Thomas or Kathe Gieseler if you want to know more. There is a tuition fee each year. Classes for 2012/2013 start in September. Current members of Saint John's who are EfM graduates are: Bootsie Cieutat, Mary Sheffield, Leah Betts, David Thompson, Eugene Johnston, Scott Escobio, Ron Waites, Ron Brown, Mary Gieseler, Kathe Gieseler, and Joan-Marie Elam.

Joan-Marie Elam

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## CAPT. SEBRA LEMUEL "S.L." STONG



"Capt. Strong" entered into new life on Monday, 23 January. A presence at Saint John's for many years, Sebra was confirmed by Bishop Carpenter in 1956. The river was a second home to the captain; he'd work a couple of months and take three weeks off. About a week before he was to go back, a package with new charts for the rivers would arrive and he'd begin studying "how she'd changed since I left her." One of the last of the sternwheeler towboat pilots, he worked the Mississippi river to St. Louis, the Tombigbee, and the Intracoastal Waterway. The thing I remember most about the captain was how big his heart was and how present he was whenever I was with him. Just 2-1/2 months shy of his 98<sup>th</sup> birthday, his passing leaves a big hole in many lives.



This Easter, why not honor those you love with a paschal gift that transforms the lives of those in need and helps empower entire communities to build a better future. Bring healing to the world and hope to our sisters and brothers with the gift of lasting change.

### Mosquito Nets and Training

*Squash the threat of malaria.*



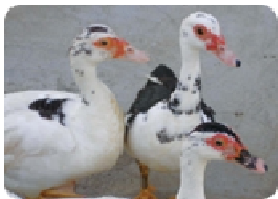
A simple insecticide-treated net can protect children and families from a needless, preventable death. Your gift provides both nets and vital community-based training in how to effectively use the

nets, as well as critical care to people suffering from malaria.

**\$12 for one net**

### Ducks and Geese

*Provide an ongoing source of protein and income.*



Your gift of ducks and geese provides families with a continuous source of protein and income. Duck eggs hatch in large numbers and ducks are more resistant to disease than other birds, making them

invaluable household livestock worldwide.

**\$35 for one duck or goose**

### Providing Food for the Littlest Scholars

*Feed tomorrow's minds today.*



In places devastated by poverty, children often go hungry. By establishing school canteens that serve two hot, nutritious meals per day, your gift ensures that children will be fed - giving them the

strength to learn and create a better future.

**\$15 per child**

## MAKE THIS EASTER SPECIAL

### *Give Gifts for Life.*

### Drought-Resistant Seeds

*Help sow a stronger future.*



Help communities enjoy a better life with your gift of drought-resistant seeds, as well as the important agricultural training and education needed to grow, harvest and market crops.

**\$20 for 10 seedling trays**

### Clean Water

*Save hundreds of lives with a well.*



Over a billion people lack access to clean drinking water and over 2.6 million people lack access to adequate sanitation. Your gift will provide both a water system and training in basic sanitation

- helping secure access to one of life's necessities and allowing families to grow.

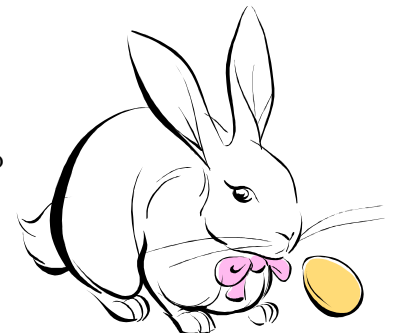
**\$215 per family**

### Your gift can make a real difference.

Honor someone you love with a gift that celebrates the resurrection of Christ and the season of Easter. Your generous tax-deductible gift will save lives, bringing assistance to those who need it most around the world.

### Let them know how much you care.

You can easily order *Gifts for Life* online at <http://www.er-d.org/GiftsForLife/> or pick up a catalog in the church office. For every gift you purchase, you will receive a card to personalize and send to everyone on your list.





Jessica Dennis	04/05
Mike Johnson	04/13
Betty Taylor	04/14
Mary Lou Varnes	04/14
Joyce Lee	04/18
Frances Barbour	04/22



Richard & Doris Cunningham 04/09



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

Violet Moore, Dot Wohler, Mac Pearce, Marion Wallace, Paula Ross, Christopher Shine, Caitlyn Bryan, Joyce Lee, LaVerne Foster, Alice Schablinski, Ashley Garris, Alice Walker

**For our Homebound:**

Ray Campbell, Mae Dunn, Will Elam, Corinne Faust, Lois Hamby, Gwen Johnson, Nell Kirk, Violet Kosko, Margie Mattoon, Angela McGuire, Jane Tate Moore, Betty Plash, Mary Lou Varnes, Catherine Warren, Dot & Chick Wohler

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

Eric Mattoon, Cheryl Garner, Michael Brabner

**For our Friends and Family:**

Tom Ford, Jim Cieutat, Robby Shelton, Libby Croft, Michael Stewart, LaBraughn Doorman, John & Pat Cranston, Dot & Herbert Trehern, Gabe Pippin, Tom Dabney, Steve & Muriel Donald, William & Barbara Dorsey, Erich Albrecht, Steven Garner, Joy Russ, Andrea Murray, Anna Marie Brown, Betty & Gayle Chenoweth, Mark Stiber, Maddie West



Saint John's wishes to extend a sincere thank you to those who made memorial donations honoring Sebra L. Strong:

Kathlyn & Charles Wadleigh  
Thelma Lomers  
James Christiansen  
Ernest F. Ladd

## Contact Us

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Ron Brown

Janet Buckley

James Christiansen

Bootsie Cieutat

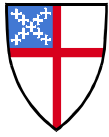
Jan Dabney

Chris Gass

Cindy Gass

Nikki Shaw

Butch Yeager



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### **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 1<sup>st</sup>  
Wednesday of the month.

Other Feasts and Holy Days are  
observed throughout the year; please  
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](http://www.stjohnsmobile.org)

### **Thee Store Episcopal Books**

Monday

Wednesday

Thursday

9 a.m.-1 p.m.

and by appointment

Telephone: 251-479-5086

SAINT JOHN'S: THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN MIDTOWN MOBILE  
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to be the hands of Our Lord.