



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

Vol. XXIV, Issue 3

March 2014

FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

We humans are habitual creatures. We like things to be routine and predictable. Part of this is biologic and necessary to keep us going and healthy, but part of it is simply the comfort of something that is routine. It is reliable and it sets expectations in our minds. It affords us a pattern. Our patterns are usually developed, that is, they are not instinctive.

For example, one of my patterns is praying the Daily Office. I join others for Morning Prayer on Weekdays, but the balance of mornings and all of Evening Prayer I pray by myself. (The Communion of the Saints is looking over my shoulder, of course.) This was not pattern or habit I was born with; it is one that I consciously sought to develop. I think this pattern is a good one, at least for me.

Another of my patterns is my morning coffee. I certainly didn't start drinking coffee as an infant; it was not until college that this became a regular pattern. Along with this pattern developed something else: I am a caffeine addict. Maybe this pattern isn't as good for me, but I'm not inclined to change it.

Here's a pattern that we all share. You have noticed (not least because I've pointed it out several times) that we tend to sit in the same seats in church on Sunday morning. It is so rigorous that one might think we had rented pews! I do remind you that Saint John's never had pew rental; it was the first "Free Church" in Alabama.

In the past, I have suggested that folks should try out different places on Sunday Morning. I don't think I need to say how poor the response had been to that suggestion. There is a positive benefit to our pseudo-assigned seats: it's very easy for me to see who is missing from among us quickly, even into Monday morning.

Patterns and habits are the antithesis of change and adaptability. Our adherence to patterns and habits is both good and bad. Good because they satisfy our inner desires for comfort and predictability. Bad because they can prevent us from growing and encountering new experiences.

For example, I grew up in the Presbyterian Church and spent half my adult life in it. It was what I knew, everyone knew me, and I had "a place" there. Had it not been for an experience that disquieted me so greatly, I would never have become an Episcopalian. That event made me so uncomfortable that I sought to break my pattern and habit. It afforded me an opportunity to grow, to find something new, to experience transcendence. It was a change that led to a new way of thinking, perceiving and experiencing God.

Change can be very scary and, being creatures of pattern and habit, we tend to avoid it rather than seek it out. In the city where I grew up, the comics section of one of our newspapers carried a single cell strip called "Graffiti". The cell was an ordinary brick wall, with a different message on it every day. I remember one of those very clearly:

"If you're careful enough, nothing good or bad will ever happen to you."

Change is necessary for growth and maturing. It is as natural as breathing – and as necessary. If we actively maintain our patterns and habits, we are not likely to grow and we are likely to miss some "Ah ha" moments that might change our lives. What if Andrew had said "No" to Jesus' "Follow me."? Or how about Mary saying, "No, I don't think so."? How open are we to new opportunities to experience the divine?

—Thomas

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MARCH LITURGICAL CALENDAR



Vestry

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent and is a fast day. It gets its name from the practice of the imposition of ashes, made from the palm branches from the previous year. We hold the ashes to be sacramental (not a Sacrament), which serve as reminders of our repentance or turning from old ways to the Lord. In ancient times, dusting with ashes was one way for a penitent to express sorrow and regret for sins and faults.

We will hold the Ash Wednesday liturgy twice on 5 March. The first will be a Said service at 10:00AM and the second a Sung service at 6:30PM. Throughout the day, the church will be open for prayer, confession, and imposition of ashes

Gregory the Great

Gregory lived from about 540 until 12 March 604. He was elected pope in 590 and his 14 year papacy was quite vigorous. In addition to defending Rome from the Lombards, his work in refining the church's liturgy and chant is probably what earned him the popular title of Gregory the Great. English Christians owe thanks to Gregory for sending Augustine and other monks as missionaries to the Anglo-Saxons. The Venerable Bede calls him the "Apostle to the English." We will commemorate Gregory on Wednesday, 12 March at our 10:00AM Said Mass. This service will also offer Unction.

Saint Joseph

We will remember Joseph at a Said Mass at 10:00AM on Wednesday, March 19. Joseph was a pious Jew. He is counted as a descendent of King David and a carpenter by vocation. Joseph is considered to be the patron saint of working men and women. What we know of him is that he trusted in God, even when what God asked was to be a challenge to his daily life.

The Annunciation

The Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lord Jesus Christ to the Blessed Virgin Mary will be celebrated on 25 March at 12:10PM. This celebration commemorates the visit of the angel Gabriel to Our Lady and her assent to God's request to be *Theotokos*, or God-bearer. Her answer, like that of Abraham, was "Let it be to me according to your word."

The February meeting of the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of Saint John's Church was held on Sunday, 9 February in the Parlor at 11:30AM. The minutes of the 12 January meeting were approved as submitted.

Treasurer Connie McLean reviewed the income and expense figures for January. The Senior Warden and Treasurer proposed a budget for 2014, keeping line items as in 2013 and adjusting only those for which we knew there would be changes. In accordance with diocesan guidelines, the Vestry voted to give 1.5% pay increases to all employees.

Fr. Heard reviewed the current status of the Commitment Campaign. At the time of the meeting, we had 46 pledges totaling \$138,594 and expect to receive an additional 8 pledges. In past years, these additional pledges have totaled \$21,420. This would bring our pledge income to \$160,014 for the year. This would still leave us with a significant deficit. The Vestry voted to fund the deficit from the remaining balance of the Merrill Lynch account, the earnings from the T. Rowe Price account and appreciation of the Endowment Fund.

Based on the estimated sale price for the 256 Weinacker lot and recalling the conversation the Vestry had concerning it last month, Fr. Heard asked and the Vestry voted to suspend any activities toward selling the lot for the present time.

Fr. Heard reported that the proposal for new lighting for the Chancel has been received from Showbiz Theatrical Services, Inc. The proposal would add eight fixtures, 4 in the Chancel and 4 mounted on the first beam in the Nave. The cost of the equipment, installation, and aiming is \$3,322. Fr. Heard asked and the Vestry approved his request to seek funding for this project by an appeal to the congregation.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with prayer at 12:35PM

LENTEN STUDY AND SIMPLE SUPPER

As part of our observance of the Lenten season Saint John's will again be having a study series and simple meal on Wednesdays during Lent. We will start the week after Ash Wednesday.

Fr. Heard will conduct the Stations of the Cross at 5:30 PM. The **meal will start at 6 PM** and be followed by discussion led by Fr. Heard. Don't worry, choir members, we'll be finished in time for rehearsal at 7!

The meals will have a meatless entre and include salad, bread and dessert. We will need volunteers to bring/prepare parts of the suppers. The sign up is on the bulletin board.

Payment for the meals will be \$5.00 per meal or, if you buy your tickets all at once, \$20.00 for five meals (What a deal!!). See Connie McLean for tickets after church on Sundays. Tickets will be also be available in the church office during the week.

The money raised from the ticket sales will go to McKemie Place, the homeless shelter for women. The ECW has pledged to match the amount of money raised through the supper ticket sales. So a good turnout will ensure a nice donation to McKemie Place.

Lenten Suppers Schedule

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Wednesday, March 19, 2014

Wednesday, March 26, 2014

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Wednesday, April 9, 2014



VOLUNTEERING AT THE FOOD BANK

The Outreach Committee is going to schedule a **volunteer day** at the Food Bank for a Saturday morning or a weekday evening during March. Look for more information on the bulletin board and in the bulletin.

Last time we volunteered we had two different tasks: one group sorted, cleaned and categorized food donations and the other group assisted the staff in getting the newsletter stamped and addressed. This time we may even be packing food boxes—whatever is needed: that's what volunteering is all about!!

We always have lots of conversation, fellowship and fun.

- Since 1981, the Bay Area Food Bank has distributed over 100 million pounds of food!
- Programs of the Food Bank include, Summer Lunch, Kids Cafe, Senior Nutrition, Disaster Relief and Community Food Assistance

Outreach Committee

TOILETRIES NEEDED FOR MURRAY HOUSE

The ECW is collecting travel-sized toiletries for the residents of Murray House. Soaps, bottles of shampoo and hand lotion in the littlest size are used as prizes in their bi-weekly Bingo games. The residents enjoy winning the different toiletries that they can then use!

There is a box in the Great Hall for your contributions. See Donna Waites if you have questions.





This is a summary of the January and February meetings of the Episcopal Church Women of Saint John's.

Joyce Lee and Audrey Garner are undertaking a review of the bylaws of the ECW and will make recommendations for amendment at a future meeting.

Tina Cieutat will serve as chair of the Sunshine Committee. Janet Buckley will chair the 4th Sunday Potluck Committee. Irene Yeager and Paula Ross will co-chair the Family Support Committee.

Paula Ross has agreed to send email notices reminding parishioners of events, special happenings and notices. Since not all of our parishioners use email, Thelma Lomers will handle conveying this information to folks that don't use email.

The Lenten Supper series will be supported by the ECW. There will be five suppers at a cost of \$5.00 each, with the option of buying tickets for all of them for \$20.00. The proceeds from the Lenten Suppers will go to McKemie place.

A Saint John's Cookbook was discussed. Connie McLean and Mary Jones will co-chair the project; Janet Buckley will coordinate typing the recipes.

Making Prayer Shawls was discussed and there seemed to be a lot of interest. It was decided to wait until the conclusion of the Paper Collage classes before starting this up.

Fr. Heard has volunteered to create packets for the ECW meetings containing the agenda, financial report, minutes and any additional materials for each meeting.

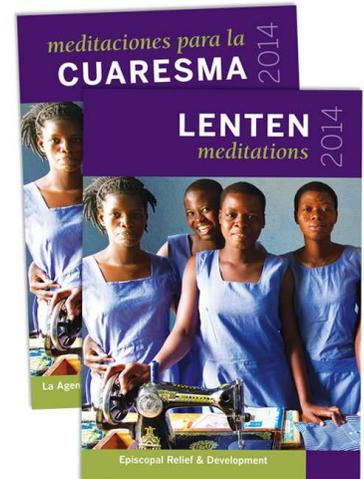


LENTEN MEDITATIONS

St. John's will again offer the Episcopal Relief & Development's Lenten Meditations. They will be available at the Church beginning Sunday, February 28th. To help you prepare for your Lenten journey, we encourage you to pick one up. This year's meditations focus on creating economic opportunities and strengthening communities, with a particular focus on empowering women. The daily readings are co-authored by a group of leaders from across the Anglican Communion, who bring a range of perspectives as they reflect on Scripture and other sources of spiritual wisdom.

You can get the Mediations sent to you daily via email by signing up: [2014 Lenten Meditations](#)

The Lenten Mediations will inspire and challenge you to reflect on life and how you can live out your Baptismal Covenant by helping to heal a hurting world.



LENTEN SUPPER PROGRAM

In our time together after supper on Wednesdays during Lent, we'll be taking a look at the Psalms in our prayer book. We pray psalms every Sunday and in the Daily Office. Our Sunday readings don't include all of the psalms, and not always all of a given psalm. We will look at the history behind the psalms, the different kinds of psalms and their function in the ancient liturgy. We'll also look at how we can use the psalms as our own anchors and expressions of our individual feelings.

Since we're all good Episcopalians, please bring your prayer book with you.

EPISCOPAL SEARCH



Bishop Philip Duncan, 3rd bishop of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, announced this past July that he is calling for the election of a new bishop and that he plans to retire in July, 2015. The search committee and transition committees have been

formed and they are asking for your input.

In order to attract the best candidates to serve as the 4th bishop of our diocese, the search committee is developing a Diocesan profile to reflect who we are, what we desire and who we hope to call as our Bishop. They will utilize two tools that rely on your deliberate participation – an Online Survey and Focus Group Gatherings.

ONLINE SURVEY: All members of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast are encouraged to complete the online survey by visiting:

<http://bishopsearch.diocgc.com>

If you do not have access to a computer, please use the one that will be set up in the parish house after both services for the next few Sundays. Someone will be available to assist you in completing the survey. Alternately, you may complete a written version of the

survey and someone will enter your input for you. Surveys must be completed by March 16th, 5:00 p.m. CDT.

FOCUS GROUPS: The focus group meetings in Mobile will be held at Christ Church Cathedral (March 13, 5:30 p.m.) and St. Luke's Episcopal Church (March 22, 10:30 a.m.). Each Focus Group gathering will last approximately 1 ½ hours. The same format will be used in each gathering to initiate constructive conversation to identify themes and trends of the Diocese as a whole. Watch for a sign up list on the bulletin board to carpool to one of these sessions.

The search committee hopes to have a slate of candidates by December 5 so that the vote for the new bishop can occur at the next convention, which will be held at Trinity Episcopal Church in Mobile, February 19-21, 2015. The consecration of the new bishop will be on July 25, 2015, at Christ Church Cathedral.



HELP SHINE NEW LIGHT ON OUR WORSHIP

In 1988, Sam Mason, then rector of Saint John's met with Bob Sheffield of Showbiz Theatrical Services to investigate improving the lighting in the chancel of the church. The goal was to provide more light on the pulpit and the lectern as well as the rest of the chancel. Bob Sheffield is our own Mary Sheffield's husband and the go-to guy when it comes to lighting in Mobile. Bob's proposal was for 12 light fixtures and some dimmer units for a little over \$2,000. Obviously, the project was never undertaken.



Saint John's hosted the Mobile Christian-Jewish Dialogue some months ago. At that event, your rector had the opportunity to sit in the nave for the program. What he saw then moved him to refresh the proposal from Bob Sheffield. Bob has temporarily installed two fixtures in the chancel to give a hint as to what the future could look like and has updated his proposal. He has proposed the installation of 8 fixtures and no dimmers for just over \$3,000.

The Vestry has approved an appeal to the congregation to fund this work. If you are interested in letting your light shine, please speak with Fr. Heard.

Elsewhere in the Diocese

FRIDAY FISH FRIES IN LENT



Episcopal Church of the Redeemer will be hosting a fish fry every Friday in Lent. Join them in the Parish House for an \$8 plate of fried fish, grits, coleslaw and hush puppies. They will be serving every Friday, from 5:30– 7:00 p.m., March 7 through April 11. Redeemer is located at 7125 Hitt Road (corner of Cody and Hitt).

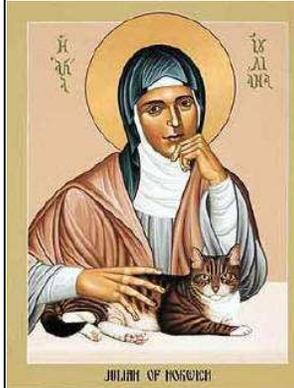
LENTEN MUSIC SERIES AT CHRIST CATHEDRAL

Christ Church Cathedral will host a Lenten Music Series on Wednesdays in Lent from March 12 through April 9. The program will include:

- 11:30 AM Holy Eucharist in the Chapel
- 12:05 PM Meditation and Music in the Church
- 12:30 PM Luncheon in the Chapter House (\$8 donation requested)

JULIAN OF NORWICH WORKSHOP

Fr. William Meninger will lead a half-day workshop on 14th- century English mystic Julian of Norwich, Saturday, March 8, at Christ Church, Pensacola. The event is sponsored by Christ Church and Contemplative Outreach of NW Florida.



A Trappist monk, author, and internationally known teacher and retreat leader, Meninger has been studying, practicing, and teaching forms of contemplative prayer and spiritual disciplines for over 40 years. He lives most of the year at St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, Colorado,

leaving only a few times a year for special teaching engagements.

The cost for the workshop is \$20.00, which includes a continental breakfast. Breakfast will be served from 8:30 to 9:00 am. The workshop will run from 9:00 am until 12:30 pm. Register as early as possible to ensure your seat at this special event. Register online at www.centeringprayernwf.com and pay with credit card, or register online and pay at the door (no credit cards). If you do not have online access, call (850) 572-0967.



DON'T FORGET —

Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 9. Set your clocks forward one hour before you go to bed Saturday night.

Happy Birthday

Bessie Southall	03/05
Howard Yeager	03/10
Marian Boykin	03/12
Bud McLean	03/18
Courtney Bryan	03/19
Jean Brown	03/20
Charles Wohlert	03/24
Sandra Wilson	03/27

PLEDGE SUMMARY

As this newsletter goes to print, we have received commitments from 47 pledge units, compared to 53 last year. Our total for 2014 stands at \$144,054, compared to \$151,910.

If you plan to pledge to the 2014 operating budget, please turn in a pledge card as soon as possible. Extra cards are available in the church office.



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

David Rich, Tina Cieutat, Ray Campbell, Andrew Lee, Ben Schmerbauch, Lois Hamby, Lorraine Murray, Matt Mattoon, Bud McLean, Joyce Lee, Ashley Garris

For our Homebound:

Doris Cunningham, Mae Dunn, Corinne Faust, Nell Kirk, Violet Kosko, Margie Mattoon, Jane Moore, Mary Lou Varnes, Catherine Warren, Chick Wohlert

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

Eric Mattoon, Cheryl Garner

For our Friends and Family:

Sheila Gerhardt, Bill Jones, Jeffery Garner, Ann Hall, Joni O'Jard, Susan Lloyd, Evia Daniel, Dennis McCants, Angela White, Sandy & Ray Michel, Preston Stevens, Carol Hubbard, Emily Steiner, Larry Kent, Warren Bishop, Robby Shelton, John & Pat Cranton, Dot Trehern, Gabe Pippin, William & Barbara Dorsey, Steven Garner, Andrea Murray, Anna Marie Brown, Betty Chenoweth, Mark Stiber, James Henry LeBatard [*deacon*], Jayne Carson [*deacon*], C.I. Jones [*bishop*]

Contact Us

Staff:

The Reverend Thomas Heard, *rector*
rector@stjohnsmobile.org

Louis Daniel
 Organist & Choir Director
music@stjohnsmobile.org

Lella Lowe
 Financial Secretary
finance@stjohnsmobile.org

Jack Ruppe
 Sexton

Vestry:

Connie Anderson

Janet Buckley

Bootsie Cieutat

Jan Dabney, *clerk*

Cindy Gass, *senior warden*

Jim Hayward, *junior warden*

David Jones

Wilmer Mayson

Connie McLean, *treasurer*



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; 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

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
Grounded in shared sacramental life and moving into the world
to be the hands of Our Lord.