



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 4

April 2014

FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

Unless you've been hiding under a rock for the past few months, you know that the wheels are now in motion for the diocese to elect its fourth bishop. It is an arduous, complex, and lengthy process. I know some folks who think it is simply a hiring process. I've been quick to point out that our theology of a bishop makes hiring a president or CEO look like child's play, because of the complexity of the role.

The opportunities for participation in information sharing and gathering events in our area have come and gone. We had three folks that answered the survey in hardcopy and another dozen or so that completed the online version.

Last Saturday (4/22), St. Luke's hosted the last Focus Group meeting in Mobile. I didn't count, but I'd guess there were about 40 people in attendance, including five clergy and seven parishes represented. In 90 minutes, I think we did a lot of work. Chatting with the facilitator afterward, he indicated that our group arrived at just about the same place as the other groups.

I think we all agreed that we don't feel a lot of connection with each other (parishes) or the diocese and that this needs to change. We're looking for a bishop who will lead us, challenge us, teach us, and love us. Interestingly, that's pretty much what our ordinal says a bishop should do. Stay tuned.

The format we used in the focus group was Appreciative Inquiry. We each spent a few minutes answering a few questions and then the balance of the time was spent in sharing our experiences. The questions focused us on our good experiences in the diocese, what we valued, and what we most wished for.

In Sunday's Adult Sunday School, we spent 40 minutes on an hour-and-a-half project of Appreciative Interview in a Congregation. Given how well it worked on

Saturday, I wanted to see if it would work for us. It did. There were four basic questions.

The first question asked us to recall a time when we felt most alive, involved, and spiritually touched.

The second question asked us about what we value deeply about ourselves, being a parishioner, the parish, and the Episcopal Church. For ourselves, we value: Stability, Loyalty, Friendly, and Caring.

As parishioners, we value: Helpful, Service, Active, and Family.

As a parish, we value: Family, Strong, Committed, Loyal, Inclusive, Loving, Closeness to God, and Helping.

As TEC, we value: Mixed styles, Interactive, Eucharist-centered, BCP, and Grey Area (not black and white.)

Due to time constraints, we skipped the third question which asked us about the core value of our church. I'd like to take this one on, but we'll need to use the intended structure of the interview to make it work.

The last question was, "If you had three wishes for your church, what would they be?" Being good Episcopalians, we couldn't be limited to three. We settled on: Growth, Younger involvement, Financial Stability, Active Youth Group, Financially Endowed, and Expanded Outreach.

The first five are probably shared with every other Episcopal parish.

I'm not sure the last one is. I am honored to be your rector in a parish that wants to expand its outreach. We may be small, but we have strength unlike others. We get it. We don't usually think first of ourselves.

-Thomas

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE APRIL LITURGICAL CALENDAR

James Lloyd Breck

Fr. Breck was one of the most significant missionaries of the 19th century and is called “the Apostle of the Wilderness.” Breck was born in 1818 in Philadelphia. He was greatly influenced by William Augustus Muhlenberg and decided to dedicate his life to mission work at the age of 16. He and three classmates from the General Theological Seminary founded a religious community at Nashotah, WI in 1844. This community, on the edge of the frontier, was a center for liturgy, pastoral care and education. This community was the impetus for founding Nashotah House as a seminary. We will commemorate his life and work at our Said Mass on Wednesday, 2 April at 10:00AM.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Born in 1906, Bonhoeffer studied at the universities of Berlin and Tübingen. Beginning in 1933 with the Nazi accession, Bonhoeffer became active in protest activities and was the spokesperson for the Confessing Church, a center of resistance. After 1939, Bonhoeffer became more involved with resistance, even to become part of a group seeking to overthrow Hitler. He was arrested in April 1943. When documents linked Bonhoeffer to a failed attempt to assassinate Hitler, he was sent to Buchenwald concentration camp. Less than one month before the German surrender, Bonhoeffer was hanged at Flossenburg Prison on 9 April 1945. We will commemorate Dietrich Bonhoeffer at our Said Mass on Wednesday, 9 April at 10:00AM.

Holy Week

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 4th 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 13 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 17 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. 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.



(Continued on page 3)

LITURGICAL HIGHLIGHTS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The Great Vigil of Easter

Holy Week reaches its peak with the Great Vigil of Easter at 7:30PM on Saturday, 19 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 Monday, 28 April at 12:10PM. 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.

Holy Week

Sunday, 13 April 2014

Palm Sunday

The Sunday of the Passion

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

Friday, 18 April 2014

Good Friday

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

Thursday, 17 April 2014

Maundy Thursday

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

Saturday, 19 April 2014

Holy Saturday

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

Sunday, 20 April 2014

The Sunday of the Resurrection

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





Vestry

The February meeting of the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of Saint John's Church was held on Sunday, 9 March in the Parlor at 11:45AM. The minutes of the 12 January meeting were approved as submitted.

Connie McLean reviewed February performance, noting no significant changes from the previous month. Fr. Heard asked the vestry to consider adding an Insurance line item to the Sexton budget, providing \$50 per month toward medical insurance premium. This was approved.

Janet Buckley reported that Outreach has organized a Food Basket collection to be distributed at Easter. MCA will identify the recipients and handle delivery. The baskets will need to be completed by 6 April.

Fr. Heard reported that 1706 Church St. will be coming on the market soon. Containing two apartments, the building should be self-supporting should Saint John's choose to invest in it. He also reported that two-thirds of the Shining New Light funding has been committed.

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

UTO INGATHERING IS SET FOR MAY 11, 2014

The UTO ingathering is coming up in May. Why not take a few minutes each day to offer prayers of Thanksgiving and set some of your change aside to give to this ministry? Combining our prayers with a monetary gift will strengthen our spiritual life and also help the less fortunate.

Our diocese raised over \$19,000 last year, and we are hoping to increase that amount this year. The diocese will again apply for a grant, and the more we are able to raise the better the chances are to receive a grant. If

PALMS AND PSALMS

Ever wonder where the palms for Palm Sunday come from? For the past few years, they have come from the gardens of our parishioners. In order to make them "presentable" for the Palm Sunday service, these garden palm fronds need to be washed and split apart.

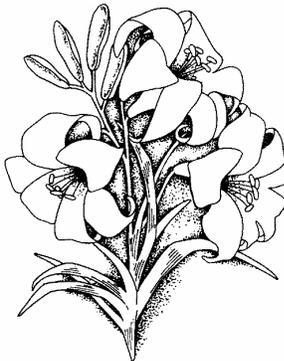
Join us for the final Lenten Supper on Wednesday, April 9th to learn more about the psalms and help prepare the palms for Palm Sunday.

Lenten supper starts at 6pm in the Great Hall with Stations of the Cross at 5:30 in the church. If you just want to help with the palms, come at 6:30.



-Janet Buckley

EASTER LILIES



Easter Lily sign up cards are in the Narthex and the Great Hall. Cards are due by Palm Sunday, April 13.

you are interested in seeing how the money raised is spent, please go to utochange.org and there is a complete list of grants awarded last year.

Saint John's has been a leader in UTO Ingathering. We may be small in numbers, but we have big hearts when it comes to the UTO challenge. Again, the date will be May 11...Mothers' Day.



Donna Waites
UTO Coordinator



LENTEN FOOD DRIVE: FOOD BOXES FOR FAMILIES IN NEED



This year's Lenten food drive will have a specific goal: we are going to fill twelve boxes with non-perishable food and have them delivered to twelve families who are in need. The Outreach committee will be providing a ham to go in each box. The families have been chosen by Mobile Community Action, a social services agency that serves low income clients. All of the families have young children; many are grandparents raising their grandchildren.

The MCA social workers will be picking up and delivering the boxes to the families on Thursday, April 10th. We want to have the boxes filled by Sunday, April 6. Please have your contributions to the church by that time.

Our goal is to provide a box of food that will be an Easter celebration for these families. Take this shopping list to remind you what we want to provide in each box.

Saint John's Lenten Food Drive List

- canned green beans
- canned corn
- canned yams
- canned sweet potatoes
- canned fruit cocktail
- pudding cups
- small boxes/cups of cereal
- grits
- canned peaches
- dried beans
- rice
- boxed macaroni & cheese

EfM REUNION

On Sunday afternoon, February 23, Saint John's EfM graduates from 1994 to the present time met in the parish hall to reminisce and remember. EfM – Education for Ministry – is a challenging, four-year program on Bible study, Bible history, theology, and philosophy that is sponsored by Sewanee, The University of the South. Beginning in 1995, EfM was mentored by Joan-Marie Elam, and since 2009 by Kathe Gieseler. Those present at the recent gathering include Mary Sheffield, Susan Crowson, Leah Betts, Scott Escobio, Beverly Whatley, Mary Rodning, David Thompson, Ron Waites, Ron Brown, Kathy Gieseler, Cheryl Winters-Heard, and Joan-Marie Elam.

A lively discussion of class time fun, text books and authors, Joan-Marie's egg timer (we only had 2 or 3 minutes for assignment reports), Joan-Marie's question placards, and everyone's favorite...TR's (those ever-lovin' Theological Reflections). These were the round table discussions and white board diagramming of theological topics, where new meaning was given to "metaphor."

Each person talked briefly about themselves, their family, and how EfM had affected them. Kathy Fieseler shared the new EfM curriculum and text books. A moment was taken to remember those eight graduates who have passed into glory.



-Ron Waites

IN DEFENSE OF SAME-PEW-RITY

It bugs our good Rector, Father Thomas, that we at Saint John's are such creatures of habit that we sit in the same pews every Sunday...religiously. He says that we act like we pay Pew Rental.

Well, in a way we do. We support our parish with money as well as good works and when we come to church services we want to sit (and kneel and stand) in our pew!

It makes us feel secure and comfortable...we have a place.

Come on, we have places in other areas of our lives: at the family table, the recliner that is mine...even our side of the bed.

Now I have to admit I don't understand those "back pew folks." Do they sit there to check out who attends (and who doesn't) or maybe to look over our choice of attire? Just saying.

Father says change is necessary for growth and maturing. I agree with that. At age 84, I hope I don't act like I did at 12 (I may because I can't even remember when I was 12).

But I have grown and learned and matured so much that if you want to sit with me in my pew, I wouldn't object.

Give it up, Father. WE'RE THERE.

Joan-Marie Elam

Mary Gieseler is interested in gathering information about who made our beautiful needlework cushions in the altar area. If you participated or remember who did, please speak with her. Call her at (601) 394-7256 or see her around church.

Elsewhere in the Diocese

Wilmer Hall Children's Home

7th Annual Pancake Breakfast

April 5th, 2014

7 am til 11am

\$5.00

Pancakes
Conecuh Sausage
Carpe Diem Coffee
Milk/Juice
Eat-in or Carry-out

Activities

Homemade Pastry, Cookies, Cakes by
GEMS

Pancake Toss Face Painting
Inflatable Jumps

Special Guests

University of South Alabama Football
Head Coach Joey Jones,
Assistant Coaches and players
Plus the Azalea Trail Maids!

3811 Old Shell Road Mobile, AL 36608



Happy Birthday

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



Saint John's wishes to extend a sincere thank you to John Christiansen, who made a donation in memory of Helen Clements.



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

Mary Gieseler [*deacon*], Audrey Garner, David Rich, Andrew Lee, Ben Schmerbauch, Lois Hamby, Lorraine Murray, Matt Mattoon, Bud McLean, Joyce Lee, Ashley Garris

For our Homebound:

Ray Campbell, Doris Cunningham, Mae Dunn, Corinne Faust, Nell Kirk, Violet Kosko, Margie Mattoon, Jane Moore, Bessie Southall, Mary Lou Varnes, Catherine Warren, Chick Wohlet

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:

Frances & Sonny Bridges, Sheila Gerhardt, Bill Jones, Jeffery Garner, Ann Hall, 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*], C.I. Jones [*bishop*]



It's time for a church directory update. So that we may get the best information to you, please make sure that we have all the latest in address, e-mail and telephone changes turned in to the church office by Sunday, May 11. New parish directories will be available by the end of May.

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.