



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
The Reverend James Russell Kendrick, Bishop-Elect

Vol. XXV, Issue 6

June 2015

FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

A friend of Julia's from her time at General Seminary preached the sermon at the Commencement Eucharist.

The gospel for the occasion came from Matthew, and was the Great Commission (MT 28:16-20):

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

Hershey Nallette focused on the last six words of Jesus to his disciples: to the close of the age.

She followed a repetition of those six words with, "If you leave here today, and remember nothing else that I have said, remember this: God Is Not A Microwave." She went on to remind us that God appears to seldom do anything instantaneously or rapidly. God didn't create the world in an instant; Abraham never lived to see his progeny become a great nation, didn't restore Jerusalem overnight.

God Is Not A Microwave.

As 21st century creatures, we seem to be governed by time. We all seem to need more time to do the things we think we need to do. Our concept of time is of a singular, always incrementing counter, never speeding up or slowing down, never pausing for a breath or a sigh. We divide it into smaller and smaller units. A femtosecond is one quadrillionth of a second. Even that won't be small enough.

Hershey's sermon to the graduating class keeps repeating that theme: God Is Not A Microwave. She does that to remind her hearers that we, too, are not the product of a microwave. We don't put a person in, push the button, and a few seconds later a fully-formed, mature person pops out. We don't work that way. Hershey was talking to soon-to-be clergy in the Episcopal Church and the future lay leadership of the church. They weren't formed to be priests in the twinkling of an eye; it took years of education, and years before that. (I have a copy of her complete sermon, if you'd like to read it.)

Why is it, do you suppose, that we have such great impatience for God? Perhaps it has something to do with our temporary nature—that we want to be around when God finally gets around to solving all of our problems.

But, there it is, what it's really all about: Solving all of our problems, most of which we've created ourselves.

When Jesus said to his disciples, "I am with you always, to the close of the age," I don't think it was so he could help us sort out our affairs or decide what furniture to keep when we downsize. I think Jesus was reassuring us that no matter what happens, we will not be alone. We're not microwaves, either. The work of living takes our entire lifetimes. God the Father knows that. Jesus knows that. The Holy Spirit knows that. What we have is their promise that we live our lives in community. Even if we are alone, the community of the Holy Trinity is with us, to support us, to love us, to heal us, and to urge us on to furthering the Kingdom of God. It's a lifetime of work; it's good that we're not microwaves.

—Thomas

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JUNE LITURGICAL CALENDAR

The Visitation

The Visitation (the short name for it) commemorates the visit of the Blessed Virgin to her cousin, Elizabeth. You will recall that Elizabeth is the mother of John the Baptist, and is also pregnant at the time of Mary's visit. Luke's gospel tells this story and is the source for the canticle Magnificat. We will celebrate this feast at 12:10PM on Monday, 1 June.

The Martyrs of Uganda

On Wednesday, 3 June, we will commemorate the Martyrs of Uganda at our regular Wednesday service. In 1886, 32 men were burned at Namugongo because they refused to renounce Christianity. In the months that followed, many more Christians met their deaths for their faith.

Ephrem of Edessa

The Syrian Church calls Ephrem "The harp of the Holy Spirit", and retains several hymns of his composition in its liturgy. His writings had a strong influence of the development of church doctrine. He may have been present at the Council of Nicaea in 325 and lived in his hometown of Nisibis until 363. He moved to a cave in the hills above Edessa, which, sustained by barley bread and dried herbs, is where he composed most of his writings. We will commemorate his life and work at our mass on Wednesday, 10 June at 10:00AM.

Saint Barnabas

Our first knowledge of Barnabas comes from Acts 4:36-37:

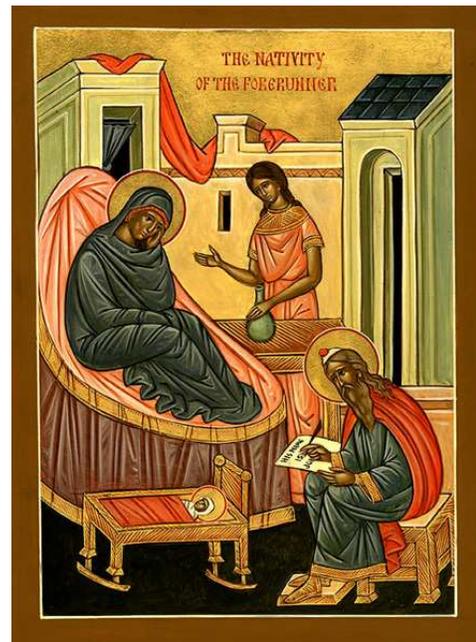
Thus Joseph who was surnamed by the apostles Barnabas (which means, Son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, sold a field which belonged to him, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

His missionary efforts earned him the title of Apostle. Barnabas was from Cyprus, a Jew of the Diaspora. It was Barnabas who brought Paul to the Apostles in Jerusalem, testifying to Paul's experiences. He later settled in Antioch and sent for Paul to assist in leading the church there. We will commemorate Barnabas' life at our Said Mass on Thursday, 11 June at 12:10PM.

The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist

On Wednesday, 24 June, we will observe the Feast of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist at a mass at 10:00AM. John the Baptist, one of the "Johns" commemorated in our main window in the chancel, is chronicled in all four of the Gospels. The son of Elizabeth and Zechariah, John was destined to be the herald of Jesus' ministry. John had his own crowd of disciples that followed him, calling people to repentance and baptizing them as a symbol of their new lives.

John is remembered in Advent as Prophet and in Epiphany as the baptizer of Our Lord. In the Gospel of John, John the Baptist is the figure who declares Jesus to be "The Lamb of God". We remember John also for his ascetic ways, dressing in camel's hair and eating wild honey and locusts, as well as his denunciation of Herod.



Saint Peter & Saint Paul

On Monday, 29 June at 12:10PM, we will observe the Feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. While sometimes at odds with each other, their joint leadership of the church is commemorated in remembering their martyrdom at Rome. Tradition holds that Peter was crucified head downward and Paul was beheaded, as befitted a Roman citizen.



Vestry

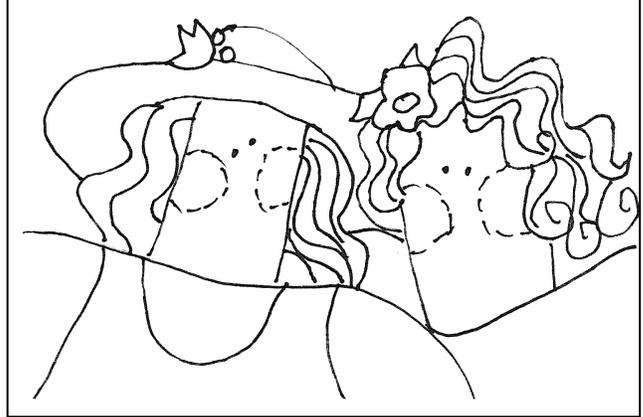
The regular meeting of the Vestry was called to order at 11:30 AM on Sunday, 10 May 2015. The minutes of the 12 April meeting were approved as distributed.

Reports

- Connie McLean reviewed the financial statements for April, noting that we had a positive cash flow. Fr. Heard reported that the distribution from the estate of Betty Plash has been received. A date for a presentation by the Episcopal Church Foundation has not been set. Fr. Heard was excused from the meeting while the vestry discussed compensation and the budget. The vestry voted to increase pay across the board by 5%, retroactive to 1 January. The budget for 2015 was approved with these changes.
- A copy of the Property Wish List was distributed. This is a starting point for gathering together all of the projects that need to be undertaken. The vestry will prioritize the list and estimates for each project will be added. We are still waiting for additional bids for the replacement of the Parlor ceiling. Repairs to the Narthex will be delayed until the new air handler is operational
- Fr. Heard presented the Parochial report which the vestry approved. The new air handler has been delayed and will be completed on 22 May. With respect to the dimmer system donated by Bob Sheffield, investigation into replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs has shown that we would save about \$500 per year if we change them out. These bulbs should last more than 5 years and will have paid for themselves in a little over 2 years.

The meeting adjourned at 12:47PM.

ST. JOHN'S ECW



Come Join Us! ECW Luncheon

Ladies, please mark your calendars

Date: June 13

Time: 11:30AM

Place: The Great Hall

Please join us and bring a friend.
Call Bootsie Cieutat so that we can set a place for you and your guest.

Please call by June 9.
251-438-1302



Please make the following changes to your 2015 St. John's directory:

Joan-Marie Elam phone number: 431-9279

Chick Wohlert

Section D, Rm 115

W.F. Green Veterans Home

300 Faulkner Dr.

Bay Minette, AL 36507

Don't have a new directory? Pick one up next Sunday in the Great Hall.



OUTREACH PLANS

The Outreach Committee met and reconfirmed plans for 2015. Although other projects may come up as need dictates, these are the plans for the next few months:

McKemie Place: St. John's continues to partner with Redeemer to provide the dinner meal on the fourth Thursday of every month. We provide the paper goods, beverages, and dessert, and Redeemer provides the entree and veggies.

Food Boxes: We continue our partnership with Mobile Community Action to provide boxes of food at Easter and Thanksgiving for families in need. We provided twenty families with lunch and breakfast food to help families with young children get through Spring break; we will be doing Thanksgiving boxes in November.



The **food pantry** continues to be a source of support for those individuals in our immediate community who are in need of food. Look for a "Stock the Pantry" drive soon.

Books for Head Start children: We will be providing 1,000 books for the Head Start 3 and 4 year olds again this year. These books go home with the children to positively impact the literacy of the whole family.

The Outreach Committee matched the proceeds for the Lenten Suppers and a check for \$500 went to **Penelope House** from St. John's.



The **Angel Tree** will be part of our Christmas celebrations again this year.

Most recently, the Outreach Committee responded to **Episcopal Relief and Development's** appeal for contributions to their earthquake relief efforts in Nepal with a check for \$500.

Outreach funds come from you: our St. John's budget allocates five percent of plate and pledge to Outreach activities and projects. If you have any ideas for additional projects, please contact an Outreach Committee member, or attend the next Outreach Committee meeting. We usually meet on the first Sunday of the month.

Thank you for all your support and hard work.

-Janet Buckley

HOSPICE & ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

As promised in his May 2015 column, Fr. Heard has organized a special Sunday School class to talk in detail about Hospice Care and Advance Directives for **Sunday, 7 June 2015 at 9:00AM.**

Hospice is not unknown in our community; several of our members have been cared for by Hospice before they died. While there are several hospice organizations in our area, our own Leslie Johnson is part of Covenant Hospice and she will talk with us about the multi-aspect approach that her organization uses. Fr. Heard will follow her to present ways to approach the decision making needed to make an Advance Directive for Health Care.

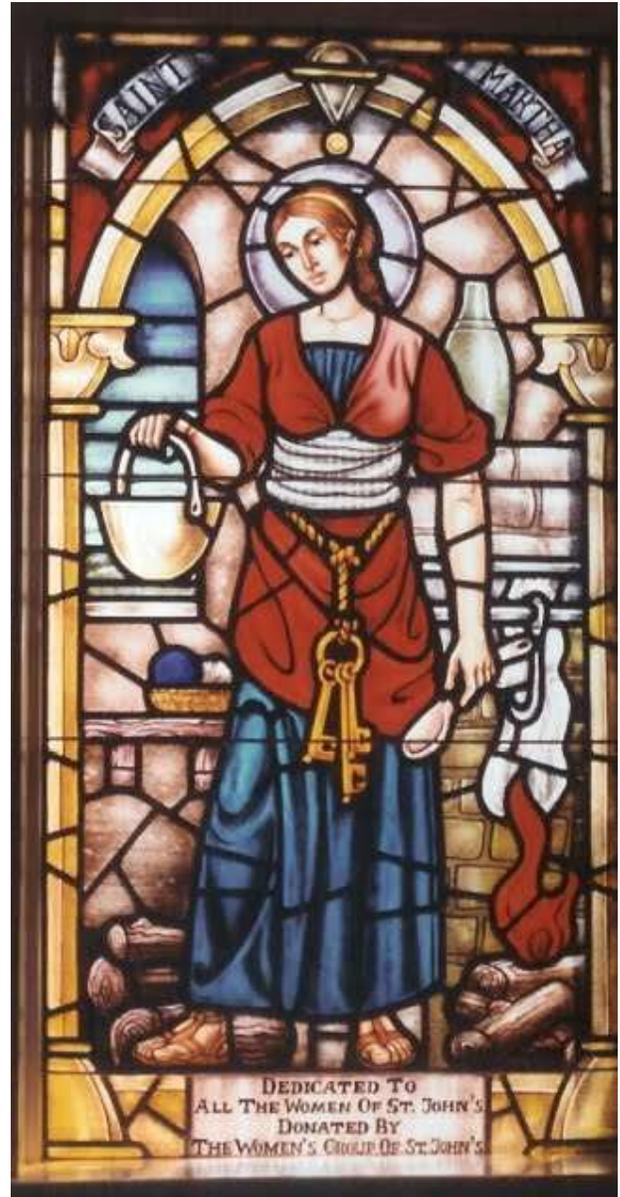
There will be copies of the Alabama Advance Directive form available for your reference and use.

GUILD OF ST. MARTHA

While Mary may have chosen the wiser path in remaining with Jesus to listen and learn, someone still has to do the laundry. That someone who remained in the kitchen and saw to the mundane tasks was, of course, Martha. In recognition of Martha's contribution, and in acknowledgement of St. John's needs to have a continued supply of clean kitchen and dining linens, a new guild was formed. We will call ourselves the "Guild of St. Martha", and make ourselves responsible for ensuring that dirty dish towels, tablecloths, and table skirts are cleaned as needed. We may branch out to other things in the future, but right now we will start small with an ongoing volunteer effort to wash the parish's dirty laundry.

All men and women are welcome to join us—we do not discriminate based upon gender. We would like to have a really short organizational meeting on Sunday, June 7 right after church in the parlour to set up an initial list of volunteers and describe what we hope to do. We will be setting up a laundry basket in the kitchen to collect used and dirty linens, and our volunteers will ensure that these are laundered (or dry-cleaned as appropriate), and returned in a timely manner.

Please consider joining this tiny but significant ministry and become the first member of the Guild of St. Martha! Contact Cheryl Winters-Heard to volunteer.



Elsewhere in the Diocese

Over the past few months, members of the Diocese have expressed their thanks to the Duncans in many ways for their love and service as they prepare to depart for retirement. The Transition Committee has arranged two additional opportunities for members of the Diocese to say a fond farewell and a hearty thank you to the Duncans. All are welcome to take part in these events. The first of these two events will be held on Wednesday, May 27, 2015, at Holy Nativity Church, 222 North Bonita Avenue, Panama City

The second event will take place on Sunday, June 7, 2015, at Church of the Redeemer, 7125 Hitt Road, Mobile. There will be a covered dish picnic on the lawn from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Lois Bolter Lobolter1@gmail.com or call the church at 251-639-1948.



Saint John's wishes to extend a sincere thank you to those who made donations in memory of the following:

Matt Mattoon

Lee Dorsey

Julie McDougal

Mazie Cleveland

Connie & Bud McLean

James Christiansen

Frances Godbold

Jean & Cliff Brown

Margie, Roy & Ben Duhon

Milo, Pet of Barry & Lynn Gritter

Gerri Moulton



MAZIE AURELIA (MCDONALD) CLEVELAND

Our sister, Mazie Aurelia (McDonald) Cleveland entered new life on Wednesday, 22 April, after a brief illness. Mazie was a life-long member of Saint John's. She was baptized and presented for confirmation by Dr. Tucker (his 2766th baptism), confirmed by Bp. McDowell, and married by Dr. Pennington – all at the old church. Mazie was a character. She and Nell Kruithoff used to “go to the boats” in Mississippi whenever they could; she loved Dew Drop hotdogs. Mazie was always in motion, unless she was fishing; then she had the patience of Job. Around Saint John's, Mazie was in the thick of things when she was younger.



EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT OFFERS MONTHLY GIVING OPTIONS

Your monthly donation gives Episcopal Relief & Development a consistent and much-needed source of support. With this in hand, we can make commitments to new projects and quickly respond to disasters. By picking one of the funds, you are assured that your money goes where you want it.

These funds need your assistance:

The **Hunger Fund** provides you with an opportunity to ensure that food is available, affordable and accessible for those in need around the world. We work alongside communities to improve food production by offering training, healthy animals, tools and resources.

The **Health Fund** saves lives by promoting quality health care and fighting preventable diseases that kill millions of people each year. Your support provides programs that help prevent common illnesses through care, immunizations and education of communities.

The **Child Survival Fund** gives children a chance for a brighter tomorrow. About 29,000 children under the age of five die each day – that's 21 children every minute. Your contribution helps protect children by training local community health workers in neonatal and child care and improving basic health services.

The **Emergency Fund** helps communities get critical assistance when it is most needed. In the wake of an emergency, your contributions to the Emergency Fund supply critical necessities such as food, water, medicine and shelter.

To begin your monthly donations please call 1.855.312.HEAL (4325).



Corinne Faust	06/01	Emily Johnston	06/10
Sam Escobio	06/02	Ron Waites	06/12
Connie Anderson	06/03	Wanda Hannon-Sundie	06/13
Neva Bache	06/05	Gavin Dunham	06/16
Joan-Marie Elam	06/05	Connie McLean	06/16
Jerry Fulford	06/07		



David & Kim Partsch	06/06
David & Mary Jones	06/12
Art & Becky Youngblood	06/20
Bob & Mary Sheffield	06/28
Neil & Marie McPhail	06/30



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

Emily Johnston, Leah Betts, Caitlyn Brown, Margie Mattoon, Jan Joseph, Joyce Lee, Donna Waites, Ben Schmerbauch.

For our Homebound:

Mae Dunn, Corinne Faust, Nell Kirk, Lorraine Murray, Alice Schablinski, Bessie Southall, Mary Lou Varnes, Catherine Warren, Chick Wohlert.

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

Ellis Garner, Eric Mattoon.

For our Friends and Family:

Bob Sheffield, Blake Bennett, Cliff Federle, Michael Blankenship, Jacqui Hill, Krystal Hiatt, Justin Runyan, Donny Chestang, Zeb Morgan, Midge Harden, Connie Bryan, Irene Barrow, Rocky Rockwell, Mike Davis, Jean Cochran, Marsha Gilmore, David Pearce, Connor Crist, Frances Bridges, Erica Long, Bill Jones, 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, William & Barbara Dorsey, Mark Stiber, Anna Marie Brown, Mary Joan *[religious]*.

Contact Us

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Jack Ruppe
 Sexton

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Connie Anderson, *clerk*

Ron Brown

Janet Buckley

James Christiansen, *senior warden*

Eugene Johnston

David Jones

Connie McLean, *treasurer*

Geri Moulton

Butch Yeager, *junior warden*



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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

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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.