



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 James Russell Kendrick, Bishop

Vol. XXV, Issue 8

August 2015

FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

The following was posted anonymously in London a week or so ago:

Today was the absolute worst day ever
And don't try to convince me that
There's something good in every day
Because, when you take a closer look,
This world is a pretty evil place.
Even if
Some goodness does shine through once in a while
Satisfaction and happiness don't last.
And it's not true that
It's all in the mind and heart
Because
True happiness can be obtained
Only if one's surroundings are good
It's not true that good exists
I'm sure you can agree that
The reality
Creates
My attitude
It's beyond my control
And you'll never in a million years hear me say that
Today was a good day

A bit below the last line, the author included:

Now read from bottom to top.

Take a minute to do just that; I'll wait.

Much of how we perceive events, encounters, interactions, and people is based in where we are at the moment, whether we're feeling good or bad.

At the same time, those same events have effects on us that can (and do) move us around in how we're feeling. The poem's author suggests that it is his/her attitude that changes how the world is perceived and influences his/her feelings. I get that. But what influence does a belief system have on our outlook or attitude?

At our baptism, we are granted forgiveness of sins and a new life of grace. We ask for inquiring and discerning hearts, courage to persevere, a spirit to know and love God, and the gift of joy and wonder in all of God's creation. Shouldn't that put us in a place where everything is positive and full of possibility?

For me, I know that when events and issues stack up, there is an influence that turns my outlook a bit darker. And yes, I can turn into "Debbie Downer" with the right set of circumstances. What the heck, a 60-year-old air handler fails, a 35-year-old compressor in the chiller goes to its great reward, and part of our 20-year-old sound system lets out its magic smoke: it just keeps getting better! From the "top down" poet's perspective I should be in the dumps, looking for yet another shoe to drop.

But, I'm not. In fact, I just take them as other challenges to face and work my way through. I guess that's kind of how I approach life. I think that has a lot to do with who I am in my reliance on God to take care of me. Now, I don't mean that in the sense that God will intervene and keep a car from hitting me, or anything else. It is, instead, my trust in God for my eternal life that makes facing daunting and sometimes seemingly impossible challenges with confidence and grace.

I guess I'd even suggest that by relying on God's providence, God's un-warranted love for us, we should be eternal optimists, seeing the possibilities for growth and renewal in the world around us. To borrow a phrase from the Stewardship world, having an "Attitude of Gratitude" is really the only place we can be if we are remembering and living into our Baptismal Covenant.

-- Thomas

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AUGUST LITURGICAL CALENDAR

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

We will celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ on Thursday, 6 August at 12:10PM. This will be a said mass commemorating Jesus' physical and spiritual re-manifestation. The Roman calendar didn't include the Transfiguration until just before the Reformation, and in The Episcopal Church, we didn't include it until the 1892 Prayer Book. It has, however, been in the Eastern church's calendar for a very long time. In their theology, the Transfiguration prefigures Jesus' resurrection and ascension.

Florence Nightingale

Florence Nightingale is known for her contributions to the advancement of education in the field of nursing and its elevation to an esteemed medical profession. Perhaps not as well known is her history as an Anglican mystic. She was known as a frequent conversant with prominent church leaders, taking up topics of theological as well as social importance. We will celebrate her life and work on Wednesday, 12 August at our 10:00AM said mass.

Saint Mary the Virgin

The Feast of Saint Mary the Virgin is known in the Roman church as The Assumption and in the Eastern tradition as The Dormition of the *Theotokos*. Perhaps the Greek *Theotokos* gets us to a place where we can truly grasp Mary's importance. It means "God bearer", that is the one who was mother to Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The tradition for this day cannot be supported by scripture, but is older than any surviving texts: Mary, for her service to God as *Theotokos* did not suffer earthly death, but "fell asleep in God" and was taken to heaven. One of our Major Feasts, we will observe Saint Mary the Virgin on Saturday, 15 August, at 5:30PM.

Saint Bartholomew

One of the Twelve, Bartholomew is known only by his inclusion in the list of disciples in the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and Luke. Some sources credit Bartholomew with the writing of a Gospel that was known to Saint Jerome and the Venerable Bede. Eusebius reports the existence of copy of the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew that was purportedly given to the church by Bartholomew. We will celebrate Saint Bartholomew on Monday, 24 August, with a said mass at 12:10PM.



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

In Memory of Marjorie Mattoon

Lowell Berry, Michael Berry
& Marjorie Alvord

Patricia Guillemette

Eugene & Emily Johnston

Geraldine England

Margie, Roy & Ben Duhon

Julie Sanders

Lee Dorsey

Julie McDougal

Jean & Cliff Brown

Connie & Bud McLean

In Memory of Matt & Marjorie Mattoon

Martha Hansen-Dreijer

Pam & Bill Privett

Vivian & Bill Watt

Curtis & Cindy Gass



Vestry

The regular meeting of the Vestry and Wardens of Saint John's Church was called to order on 12 July 2015 at 11:30AM.

Connie McLean reviewed our financial performance, noting that we continue to run a deficit each month.

Janet Buckley reported that we will sticker books for the children in Head Start in Mobile County, beginning the first Sunday in August.

Janet also reported that July 26 will be our annual in-house parish picnic. The Men of the Church will cook.

Fr. Heard reported that the repairs to the Narthex are progressing, with only plaster and painting remaining.

James Christiansen reported that the contract to install a lay-in ceiling in the parlor has been let. He is seeking volunteers to assist in the demolition of the existing ceiling.

Fr. Heard reported that the correct motor control unit has been ordered for the church air handler and is expected very soon.

The Vestry reviewed the recommendations of the Building Use Committee and voted to accept their proposed schedule of building use fees with a monthly report of building usage at Vestry meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15PM.



Did you know that each hanging fixture in the nave has 6 light bulbs in it? Each one uses 800 Watts and generates a lot of heat. The four fixtures in the choir used a total of 2300 Watts – no wonder the choir said it was always hot!

We did a little digging and came up with some interesting facts:

There are eighty-one 60W light bulbs, nine 500W bulbs, and four 200W bulbs. These consume 10,160 Watts while we're in church! If we change the 60W bulbs to LED equivalents, change the 500W bulbs to 300W floods, and the 200W bulbs to LED floods, we'll save \$550 a year on our electric bill!

The LED bulbs will cost \$7.97 each, but they'll last 10 years and pay for themselves in 2 -1/2 years. All told, if we spend about \$1,000 for new lamps, we'll save money, conserve electricity, and reduce the heat we generate.

Would you like to help out? Buy some bulbs for the church and help us be better stewards of God's creation!

Oh, by the way, no little brass plaques on the bulbs. That'll just have to be between you and God!



PARISH LIFE

UPDATE FROM JOAN-MARIE

Many of you have kindly asked me about my move to Murray House – and how it’s working for me. Well, I’m into my fifth month there and I’m happy to say Miss Ellie Mae (feline roommate) and I are adjusting quite well. Neither of us hides under the bed anymore.

The change of lifestyle is huge, but the lack of homeowner responsibility is great. No, my house has not sold, but the Lord and Butch Yeager are working on it.

Two Saint John’s parishioners have joined me: LaVerne Foster and Bessie Southall. All three of us live close to each other on the second floor – sort of like a Saint John’s Annex. Irene and Butch Yeager very generously furnish transportation for us to and from Sunday services.

You knew I couldn’t sit still for long, right? So, Saint John’s member and Murray House volunteer Mary Geiseler and I have reorganized the Main Library. With two great shelving units built by Saint John’s Bob Anderson, we now have a slew of books low enough for short and wheelchair readers. There’s a Best Selling Authors section and others for Mysteries, Bios and Memoirs, Politics and Inspirational. We have a small Large Print section, but we need more of these. Any sitting around your house that you could donate?

All in all, it’s not a bad life. Staff is great, meals are good, chair exercises every day, transportation when you need it, laundry done, and Eucharist once a week.

Executive Director, Saint John’s member Connie Anderson, reports that Murray House is full – that makes 43 of us.

Come see us.

-Joan-Marie Elam

MARY JOAN [RELIGIOUS]

You may have noticed that for some time we have been praying for “Mary Joan, Religious” and wondered who she is and why we are praying for her. She is a member of the All Saints’ Sisters of the Poor in Catonsville (Baltimore), Maryland, and she is fighting cancer with all her strength. About six months ago it seemed that the cancer was winning, but now she is improving and feels much better, and she thanks us for our prayers.

I first met Sister when I attended a retreat at the convent many years ago. She was younger than many of the sisters, and in addition to being a great retreat leader, she had a sense of humor, which was helpful for my first retreat. Over the years we’ve kept up a correspondence, and when I’ve been in the neighborhood I’ve dropped in to see her. I’m a member of the sisters’ Fellowship, and I’m grateful that she’s in our prayers.

If you are curious about the All Saints’ Sisters of the Poor in Catonsville, check them out in your computer at <http://allsaintssisters.org/>. You may be surprised.

-Mary Geiseler

PHOTOS NEEDED FOR THE NEWSLETTER!

Don’t you enjoy having pictures in the St. John’s newsletters? If you carry a camera to church events, please send photos to:

llowe@stjohnsmobile.org.



GENERAL CONVENTION WRAP-UP: HISTORIC ACTIONS, STRUCTURAL CHANGES

By Episcopal News Service staff | July 7, 2015

North Carolina Bishop Michael Curry elected presiding bishop

The Episcopal Church's General Convention made history June 27 when it chose Diocese of North Carolina Bishop Michael Curry to be its 27th presiding bishop. The House of Bishops elected Curry, 62, from a slate of four nominees on the first ballot. He received 121 votes of a total 174 cast. Diocese of Southwest Florida Bishop Dabney Smith received 21, Diocese of Southern Ohio Bishop Thomas Breidenthal, 19, and Diocese of Connecticut Bishop Ian Douglas, 13. The number of votes needed for election was 89. Curry's election was confirmed an hour later by the House of Deputies, as outlined in the church's canons, by a vote of 800 to 12.

Marriage equality

In the wake of the June 26 U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalizing same-sex marriage for all Americans, General Convention followed suit on July 1 with canonical and liturgical changes to provide marriage equality for Episcopalians. The House of Deputies concurred with the House of Bishops' approval the day before of a canonical change eliminating language defining marriage as between a man and a woman (Resolution A036) and authorizing two new marriage rites with language allowing them to be used by same-sex or opposite-sex couples (Resolution A054).

Budget emphasizes racial reconciliation, evangelism

The General Convention adopted the 2016-2018 triennial budget July 2 after agreeing to add \$2.8 million for evangelism work. While the addition passed with relatively little debate in the House of Deputies, it faced some opposition in the House of Bishops.

The 2016-2018 triennial budget is based on \$125,083,185 in revenue, compared to the forecasted \$118,243,102 for the triennium that ends Dec. 31 of this year. The expenses are projected to be \$125,057,351. The budget comes in with a negligible surplus of \$25,834. Its revenue projection is based in part on asking the church's dioceses and regional

mission areas to give 18 percent of their income to fund the 2016 budget, 16.5 percent for the 2017 budget and 15 percent in 2018.

The version of the budget presented July 1 by the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance also included a major new \$2 million initiative on racial justice and reconciliation, even as it reduces the amount of money it asks dioceses to contribute to 15 percent by 2018.

Mandatory assessment

General Convention made mandatory the current voluntary diocesan budgetary asking system for the 2019-2021 budget cycle and imposed penalties for noncompliance. The mandatory assessment will not apply to the upcoming 2016-2018 triennial budget, but becomes effective Jan. 1, 2019. Without getting a waiver, a diocese that does not pay the full assessment will be unable to get grants or loans from the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society unless the Executive Council specifically approves disbursing the money. The resolution allows the council to begin granting waivers to dioceses that do not pay, based on financial hardship, beginning Jan. 1, 2016.

Divest from fossil fuels, reinvest in renewables

General Convention passed two resolutions aimed at environmentally responsible investing and creating a climate change advisory committee.

Plans to be created for prayer book, hymnal revision

General Convention 2015 took a step toward revising the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and The Hymnal 1982, directing the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to prepare plans for revising each and to present them to the next convention in Austin, Texas, in 2018. Among other liturgical issues, the convention directs bishops to find ways for congregations without clergy to receive Communion, but the House of Bishops defeated proposals to allow unbaptized people to receive Holy Communion or to study the issue.

Closer relations with Cuba

The U.S.-based Episcopal Church and the Episcopal Church of Cuba took a step toward closer relations during the 78th General Convention, meeting here June 25-July 3. Convention also passed a resolution calling for the U.S. government to lift its economic embargo against Cuba.



Episcopal Relief & Development and Equal Exchange have launched a new Fair Trade partnership, offering customers an opportunity to enjoy premium products while supporting small-scale farming communities and healing a hurting world.

[The Episcopal Relief & Development Fair Trade Project](#) offers a range of products including coffee, tea, chocolate and snack items. Equal Exchange donates 15 cents per pound of product purchased* to Episcopal Relief & Development, supporting programs that alleviate hunger, promote health and fight disease.

“I am so pleased to begin our Fair Trade Project with Equal Exchange,” said Sean McConnell, Episcopal Relief & Development’s Director of Engagement, “since they not only support farmer-run cooperatives but are actually a co-op themselves. With our own focus on [asset-based community development](#) and empowering small-scale farmers to earn a living while protecting the environment, this partnership is in perfect alignment with our mission.”

“Even though the formal partnership is just beginning, some Episcopalians have been purchasing Equal Exchange products for their congregations for years. I think it’s because they’ve trusted our long-term commitment to small farmers and our leadership in the world of Fair Trade,” said Susan Sklar, Equal Exchange’s Interfaith & Community Sales Manager, ... Our mission is to respect the dignity of farmers and to enable them to remain on their land, invest in education for their children and strengthen their communities.”

ERD PARTNERING WITH EQUAL EXCHANGE TO OFFER FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS

New and existing Equal Exchange customers who wish for their purchases to benefit Episcopal Relief & Development should [sign up online](#) or contact Equal Exchange at interfaith@equalexchange.coop or 774.776.7366. Both individuals and groups, such as congregations and community organizations, can [purchase products online](#) through the Equal Exchange website.

“Fair Trade enables small-scale farmers to support their families and stay on their land with fair and steady income through their cooperatives,” said Abigail Nelson, Episcopal Relief & Development’s Senior Vice President of Programs. “And organic farming keeps toxic pesticides and chemical fertilizers out of the soil and water, which preserves the environment. Additionally, shade-grown crops improve the soil and prevent erosion, while providing habitat for birds and other wildlife. Equal Exchange does a wonderful job of ensuring that their products create the greatest real benefits for farmers, consumers and the world.”

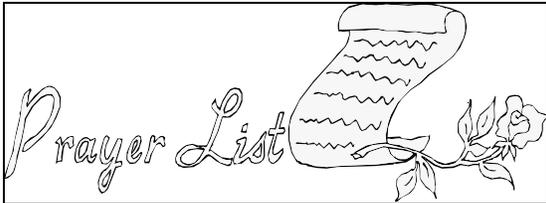




Mac Pearce	08/01	James Christiansen	08/11
Julia Heard	08/03	Eugene Johnston	08/21
Andrew Lee	08/03	Bootsie Cieutat	08/26
Kat Velaski	08/03	David Rich	08/27
Ben Schmerbauch	08/04	Marion Wallace	08/27
Kathe Gieseler	08/07	David Jones	08/29



Curtis & Cindy Gass 08/19



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

Marian Boykin, Cookie Rich, Budd McLean, Emily Johnston, Leah Betts, Caitlyn Brown, 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:

Linda Smith, Barbara Bassett, Blake Bennett, Linda Taylor, Cliff Federle, Michael Blankenship, Jacqui Hill, 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]* .

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Ron Brown

Janet Buckley

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Eugene Johnston

David Jones

Connie McLean, *treasurer*

Geri Moulton

Butch Yeager, *junior warden*



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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 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

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