FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones

One of the constants in life is change. It is something inexorable and necessary; without change, we are static, refusing to grow, resisting adaptation, aspects necessary to our survival. We don’t like it. We want things to remain just as they are.

Change is, however, inevitable. We’ll get along better with it if we don’t build up walls to keep it out, to keep it from affecting us. I’ll stop short of suggesting that we embrace it; that wouldn’t stand up to our moniker of “The Frozen Chosen” as some refer to Episcopalians.

We have folks in this parish who have been devoted workers for the Kingdom for many years. Paula Ross is one of those and she’s been the “keeper of the rota” for our services for too many years to remember. “Rota” comes from the Latin word for “wheel”. Our “rota” is the schedule of ‘who does what’ for our Sunday services. Paula told me she took it over when Sam Mason came as rector. That means she’s been making the schedules for over thirty years!

To my dismay, Paula has decided to retire from the “Ministry of the Rota”. I say “to my dismay” because, unless someone else steps forward, the task will fall to me! I think we all owe Paula a big “Thank you” for her faithful ministry to each of us over the years.

The Rota that Paula kept is actually five separate schedules: Greeters, Readers Intercessors, Eucharistic Ministers, and Eucharistic Visitors. There’s a different crew of folks for each one. Somehow, most of the time, the folks on the schedule were the ones who actually showed up on Sunday.

Since it is fall to me, I’ll first confess that I’m sure I won’t do nearly as good a job as Paula did, so please be patient with me. I’m going to attempt to “automate” it as much as possible, so we’ll have to see how well that works out.

What I plan to do is: gather all of the names for each schedule together and make assignments for the whole year. I’ll post the current month and the next two months on the website and make a complete copy available for those that need it. I ask that any schedule conflicts be worked out and substitutions be conveyed to me so I can update the monthly rota. We’ll try it for a few months and see how it goes.

So, while we’re talking about changes, here’s another little wrinkle. As you know, when Major Feast days fall on Saturdays, I’ve scheduled mass in the late afternoon. Becky Anderson (along with a couple of others) became very faithful at these services, because she usually worked on Sunday mornings. We’ve done a little research among potential attendees and think there is enough interest to schedule this on a regular basis. Beginning with the new liturgical year, I’ll schedule a mass on Saturday evenings at 6:00PM. The first will be November 28, the Eve of the First Sunday in Advent. We’ll see how it goes.

Now for something completely different. Last Sunday, we hosted our bishop for visitation. I think it was a wonderful event. His time with the congregation and confirmands was good. His sermon was spot-on and his energy was so good to see. I’ve been through lots of confirmations, but what we experienced last Sunday was unlike anything I’ve seen before. I was moved to tears by Russell’s engagement with the confirmands and his inclusion of close family in the laying on of hands. I offer my sincere thanks for all who helped to make his visit a great success and I offer my thanks and gratitude to our bishop for being so present and available to us.

-- Thomas
All Saints’ Day
The Feast of All Saints’ might have originated in Ireland and spread through the British Isles and to the continent. A commemoration of all who had professed faith in Christ and had given their lives for it and were felt to be in communion with Christians everywhere is found in the writings of Gregory Thaumaturgus from about 270. All Saints’ is a Principal Feast of the church, one of only seven that takes precedence over a Sunday. The 1979 Prayer Book recommends All Saints’ as one of four days that are particularly appropriate for the administration of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

All Souls’ Day
The day following All Saints’ is known as All Souls’ or All Faithful Departed. This day recalls the body of all faithful Christians who have risen to new life in Christ. It is a day for remembering family and friends and members of a parish who have died in the preceding year. All Souls’ lost favor in the Reformation due to the abuses connected with the practice of saying Masses for the dead. A renewed understanding of All Souls’ led to its acceptance amongst Anglicans.

Martin of Tours
One of the patron saints of France, Martin was born in about 330 in what is now Hungary. As a catechumen and soldier, legend holds that a poor man who asked alms in Christ’s name approached Martin. In response, Martin cut off part of his military cloak and gave it to the man. The following night, Jesus appeared to Martin and said, “A simple catechumen covered me with his cloak.” Martin was ordained in about 350 and established a hermitage at Ligugé. He was elected Bishop of Tours in 372 and accepted on the condition that he could maintain his ascetic life. A diligent missionary, Martin was a defender of the poor and helpless and opponent of the violent repression of heresy. Martin died in 397 and a shrine to him still stands at Tours.

Hilda of Whitby
Hilda’s life falls into two equal parts of 33 years. In the first, she lived a chaste and respected life at the court of the King, her uncle. She decided to enter a convent, but Bishop Aidan recalled her to East Anglia. Some time later, she founded the Abbey at Whitby, where both men and women lived according to her monastic rule. Known for her wisdom, prudence and good sense, Hilda remained advisor to kings and public officials. Hilda died at Whitby in 680, surrounded by her monastic brothers and sisters.

James Otis Sargent Huntington
Huntington was born in Boston in 1854. After graduating from Harvard, he studied theology at Saint Andrew’s Divinity School in Syracuse, NY. During his time there, he ministered to a working class community at Calvary Mission. Huntington was called to religious life. He considered joining the Society of Saint John the Evangelist, but with two other priests established the Order of the Holy Cross on New York’s Lower East Side. Huntington and his companions ministered to the immigrants and young people as social witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Order grew and relocated to West Park, NY, where Huntington served as superior several times. He was an active preacher, teacher and spiritual counselor until his death in 1935.

Thanksgiving Day
Falling on 26 November this year, Thanksgiving shares the commonality of agricultural festivals with many religions. None of these feasts were included in our Prayer Book until the Continental Congress established the Day of National Thanksgiving. Its roots are found in the observances of the Massachusetts and Virginia colonies.

Saint Andrew
The Feast of Saint Andrew is the first feast in the liturgical year, most often falling after the First Sunday of Advent. Andrew is most commonly remembered as the brother of Simon Peter, but overlooks his special gifts to Jesus’ companions. Andrew was first a disciple of John the Baptist, one of two who left to follow Christ after John pointed out Jesus with the words, “Behold the Lamb of God.” Andrew, the first missionary, sought out his brother and brought him to Jesus. He was the disciple who brought the boy with the fishes and loaves to Jesus for the feeding of the multitude. Eusebius’ writings tell us that Andrew went to Scythia. Legend holds that he was martyred by pagans and crucified on an X-shaped cross. This is seen in the flag of Scotland, honoring its patron saint.
The October meeting of the Vestry and Wardens of Saint John’s was called to order on Sunday, 11 October 2015 at 11:38AM.

The minutes of the 13 September meeting were approved as written.

Connie McLean reported income of $10,800 and expenses of $18,000, leaving a deficit of $7,200.

Janet Buckley, reporting for Outreach, said the Head Start children’s books have been distributed. A workday at the Bay Area Food Bank is scheduled for 7 November, and Thanksgiving boxes will be filled again this year. It was decided that Azalea Gardens Nursing Home will be the recipient of the Angel Tree project at Christmas.

A fund line item was approved for the Guild of Saint Martha.

Reporting for Parish Life, Janet said that the 4th Sunday in October will be the bishop’s visitation and a reception is being planned. The November 4th Sunday Potluck will be “Anything but turkey” again this year.

Fr. Heard reported that he and James Christiansen have completed the installation of the dimmer system for the church. He recapped the schedule for the bishop’s visitation. A claim has been filed with Church Insurance for the damage caused by the lightning strike in April and a claim has been filed with Alabama Power for reimbursement for our expenses for the service entrance.

The Vestry approved the repairs to the Great Hall roof proposed by Dobson Roofing. Butch Yeager reported that he may have a buyer for the van.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:26PM.

The October 18, 2015 meeting of St. John’s ECW was opened with Mary Jones giving the information on ordering the St. John's ornaments. It was decided that we would place an order for 100 of these ornaments, as this was the minimum order. There was then much conversation regarding the throws and the design for the throws. It was decided that we order 50 of the throws, with the St. John's emblem that is on the banner. The color of the throws will be gray, and the design will also have St. John's, Mobile, Alabama on them. These 50 throws would be given to our shut-ins at Christmas time and those that are left over will sold until they are gone.

Irene Yeager reported on the flowers that we put at the graveside of Leah Betts, and how much LaVerne Foster appreciated them. She also advised that the flowers from the altar were taken to Cookie Rich who is presently in rehab for a knee replacement, and that we had sent a check to Ronald McDonald House in thanksgiving for Emily Johnston. She reported that she was going to take a turkey breast dinner to Connie & Bob Anderson as Bob is recovering from total shoulder replacement.

Cheryl said that plans have been finalized for the reception for the Bishop and the Confirmands. She advised that $128.00 had been collected from the Breast Cancer Awareness day at St. John's. The ECW approved the matching of this amount to go along with the check to the Cancer Center.

Bootsie advised that Thelma Lomers & Audrey Garner had agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee to recruit officers for the ECW for next year.

Dates to be remembered:
December 13th – Cookie Swap
December 20th - Greening the church
December 27th—Parish Christmas party

Connie McLean gave the current Treasurer's Report, outlining all income and expenses for the previous month.

-Paula Ross, Secretary
**Guild of St. Martha Update**

At our October meeting we reviewed the Second Sunday breakfast, and made plans for continuing this activity. The pancake breakfast on October 11 was delicious, with $66.00 raised from hungry parishioners. Our next breakfast is scheduled for November 8 at 8:30 am. Please join us for good food and good fellowship.

We also planned the reception for confirmation and the Bishop’s visit on October 25. This was a wonderful success! A big thanks go out to all volunteers who helped set up, who brought delicious foods, and who shared our terrific St. John’s hospitality with our new confirmands and our new bishop.

**Sunday October 11 was also our third annual Breast Cancer Awareness Sunday with cupcakes, punch, and pink everywhere! We raised $128.00 for the American Cancer Society which was matched by both the Outreach Committee and the ECW for a generous donation to the ACS of $384.00. Thank you everyone for your generosity!**

We extend an invitation to all men and women who would like to become part of the Guild of St. Martha as we provide service and hospitality to our Parish. Our next meeting is on Sunday, November 1 after Mass in the EfM Room. Grab a cookie and a coffee, and come join us!

-Cheryl Winters-Heard

**Did You Ever Wonder…**

Every now and then, you need to know that this Saint John’s newsletter does not get to you through Divine Intervention.

It takes quite a few folks to get it from start to you: Vestry secretary, ECW secretary, Committee Chairmen, Father Thomas, our invaluable Lella Lowe, and guest scribes like me.

The Naughty Newsletter Nymphs who gather in the Great Hall monthly to collate, fold, tape, label and eat doughnut holes are ever faithful Neva Bache, plus Mary Gieseler, Bootsie Cieutat, Fran Barbour, P. L. Pritchard, and sometimes Thelma Lomers and Nikki Shaw...along with yours truly.

-Joan-Marie Elam

**Memorial Donations**

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

Corinne Faust
Connie & Bud McLean
Bootsie & Tina Cieutat & Mary Jones
ECW
Leah Betts
Connie & Bud McLean
Neva Bache
Bessie Southall & Marion Wallace
Mike & Fran Barbour
Bob & Connie Anderson
Ben Schmerbauch
Robbie Fisher
Bootsie & Tina Cieutat & Mary Jones

*Bootsie Cieutat, Fran Barbour, Mary Gieseler, Neva Bache, Joan-Marie Elam hard at work on the newsletter.*
ANGEL TREE

The St. John’s “Angel Tree” will be up on the fourth Sunday in November.

The gifts will be going to residents of Azalea Gardens Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center Home. The tags have names and requests for specific items. The list of items was given to us by the Activity Director of the nursing home.

Our Christmas gifts are going to low income, senior, long term residents of Azalea Gardens who do not have a network of family or friends to provide them with presents that make the holidays special.

Each tag has the name of an individual with a specific request. We are asking that you take a tag (or two or three) from the tree, purchase the specific items requested, and return by Sunday, December 13th, wrapped or in a gift bag with the angel tag on it. We will be delivering the gifts on December 15th.

This year, the Outreach Committee is providing a “shopping service.” There will be a basket and some envelopes next to the tree, choose an “angel” put it in the envelope with the amount you wish to spend (check or cash) and a member of the Outreach Committee will do your shopping for you.

FOOD DRIVE: THANKSGIVING FOOD BOXES FOR FAMILIES IN NEED

This fall’s food drive will have a specific goal: we are going to fill sixteen boxes with non-perishable food and have them delivered to sixteen 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, November 26th. We want to have the boxes filled by Sunday, November 15th. You can start bringing your contributions to the church any time during the next two weeks.

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

Thank You
Outreach Committee

Saint John’s Fall Food Drive Shopping List

canned yams
canned sweet peas
canned fruit cocktail
pudding cups
fruit or applesauce cups
grits
canned peaches
dried beans
rice
boxed macaroni and cheese
Gifts for Life, gift catalog, are available year-round, but Christmas is the perfect time to give a gift with lasting impact. New to the catalog this year are three care packages for moms and newborns, three gifts of clean water, three goats, reforestation of 100 trees and a micro-credit loan and training for a female entrepreneur. Popular items include goats and chickens, which provide families with a source of milk or eggs, enriching the household diet and helping to generate income. High-impact gifts like communal wells and vegetable gardens can improve health and wellbeing for an entire community. And “green gifts” like energy efficient cook stoves and trees for reforestation promote sustainable solutions that protect and nurture the environment.

Purchasing Gifts for Life is easy and secure – via mail, over the phone or through the online catalog at www.episcopalrelief.org/giftsforlife. Printed copies of the catalog can be ordered through Episcopal Marketplace. Children will love the colorful photographs and engaging stories of how each item makes a difference, making Gifts for Life a wonderful family or Sunday School project. Gift givers can choose a printed card or a customizable e-card to send to the person in whose honor the purchase was made. Another way to support Episcopal Relief & Development through holiday giving is with the organization’s new Fair Trade Partnership with Equal Exchange. Equal Exchange offers fair trade organic coffee, tea, chocolate and other products that benefit Episcopal Relief & Development (15 cents for every pound of product purchased) while benefiting smallholder farmers who grow their crops sustainably. During the check-out process select “Episcopal Relief” from the “Coffee Project or Denomination drop-down menu.

Gifts for Life catalogs will be available at St John’s beginning the first Sunday in Advent, Sunday, November 29.
For healing grace and continued strength, we pray for our members:
Jean Meador Brown, Jayson Chestang, Bob Anderson,
Ashley Garris, Fran Barbour, Marian Boykin, Cookie Rich,
Budd McLean, Joyce Lee, Donna Waites, Ben Schmerbauch.

For our Homebound:
Mae Dunn, Nell Kirk, Lorraine Murray, Alice Schablinski,
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:
Krystal Hiatt, Midge Harden, Robert Cochran, Sr., Irene Barrow,
Elias Bates, Douglas Evans, Donnie Chestang, Bill Jones,
Mark Stiber.
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.

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