



# 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. XXVI, Issue 3

March 2016

## FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear ones,

Your Vestry met in retreat on Saturday, 27 February. Geri Moulton graciously invited us to meet around her dining room table. She fed us, too!

We started with an exercise to develop “Group Norms”, that is, agreement on how we behave, how we treat each other, what we expect from each other, and our obligation to you, the members of the parish.

Having said that, there weren't really any surprises. There isn't anyone on the vestry that hasn't served before, and, for the most part, we have been operating in the same way for a long time. Our exercise today was more about reminding ourselves of the norms we all have assumed to exist and to ratify what we've been doing as how we'll continue in the future.

We had some great conversation about several topics. It was good to work through our topics of Time, Listening, Confidentiality, Decision Making, Expectations, Participation, and Expectations. I'll make a few comment on these.

**Time:** We value our time together, but want to be sure that we use it wisely. We'll continue to meet after church on the second Sunday.

**Listening:** It is important for each of us to listen carefully and respectfully to our peers. There was a suggestion of “taking a breath” before replying. It's important that everyone feel appreciated and heard.

**Confidentiality** garnered some earnest discussion. We recognize the importance of being open, yet needing to be considerate. We agreed that our meetings are open; sensitive topics might force us to be in executive session.

**Decision Making:** We'll operate by majority rule, though we'd prefer consensus or unanimity. Once an issue is decided, we're done with it. No Monday Morning Quarterbacking.

**Participation:** We need to be there, we need to engage others in the work of the church. We need to set the example. There was discussion of volunteering vs. being asked, a Saint John's tradition of sorts.

We adopted a budget for 2016 and it will be available at the Annual Meeting. There is really good news here, folks! While the budget has a shortfall, there are two things to note:

1. The shortfall is the smallest in years, and
2. We have money in the bank to cover it.

What I'm saying is: we have a balanced budget for the first time in years.

We talked about the future and where we've failed in the past. Our strong position this year is the result of being generously remembered in a parishioner's will. We haven't done a good job on this. One of the consistent things your vestry hears is how important Saint John's is to you.

Part of our “future” conversation focused on what we can do to raise our visibility and tell our story. There are some really exciting ideas being kicked around. I'm looking forward to getting to make some of them happen. Stay tuned!

—Thomas

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MARCH LITURGICAL CALENDAR

### Chad of Lichfield

We will commemorate the life of Chad, Bishop of Lichfield, England at a Said Mass on Wednesday, 2 March at 10:00AM, and this service will also include healing.

Chad was one of four brothers who devoted their lives to the service of the church. Trained by Aidan of Lindisfarne, Chad governed the abbey at Lastingham after his brother Cedd's death. The Venerable Bede wrote that Chad was "a holy man, modest in his ways, learned in the scripture and zealous in carrying out their teaching." He was appointed Bishop of York, but the new Archbishop of Canterbury, because of Chad's Celtic roots, invalidated his ordination. Chad offered to resign, saying that he never felt himself worthy of the office. Archbishop Theodore was so moved by Chad's humility that he re-ordained him and appointed him Bishop of Mercia and Northumbria.

A concerned administrator, Chad built a monastery and established a monastic rule at Barrow. A great house for the bishop was in Lichfield, but Chad preferred to spend his time reading and meditating in a small house he had built nearby. Plague broke out in 672 and Chad perished along with many residents of the diocese. He is buried in the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Lichfield.

### Gregory of Nyssa

We will commemorate the life and work of Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, on Wednesday, 9 March at our 10:00AM Said Mass. Gregory was the brother of Basil of Caesarea and close friend of Gregory of Nazianzus. Together, they are known as the Cappadocian Fathers. Gregory of Nyssa was a theologian's theologian and made significant contributions to the doctrine of the Trinity and the Nicene Creed in the later Ecumenical Councils. His thought was greatly influenced by Origen. Today, Gregory's writings on Universal Salvation are still foundational to its continued consideration and debate..

### Saint Joseph

We will remember Joseph at a Said Mass at 5:30PM on Saturday, 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.

### Sunday of the Passion or Palm Sunday

Holy Week begins on 20 March 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 24 March 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

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(Continued from page 2)*

Collects are prayed. In the Showing of the Cross, the celebrant will bring a cross into the Nave. 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.

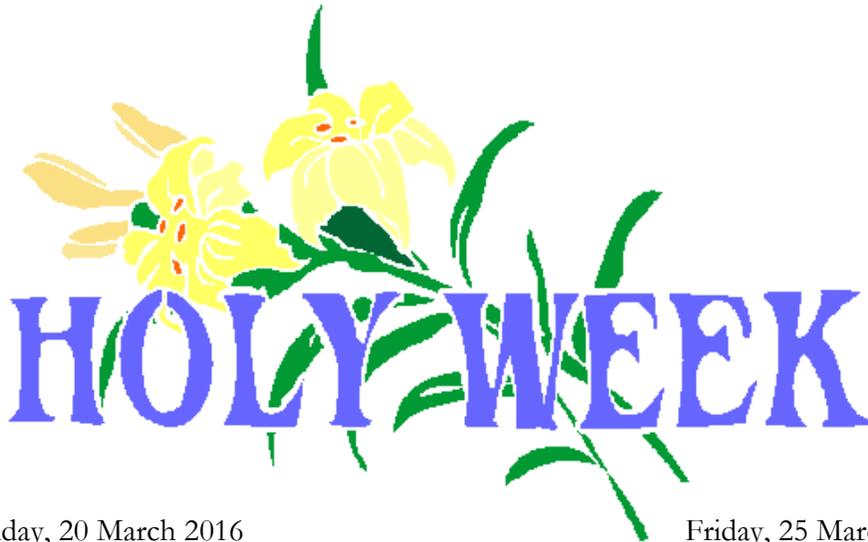
### **The Great Vigil of Easter**

Holy Week reaches its peak with the Great Vigil of Easter at 7:30PM on Saturday, 26 March. 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.

### **The Annunciation**

The Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lord Jesus Christ to the Blessed Virgin Mary is normally observed on 25 March. Because of the reverence we hold for Holy Week and Easter Week, no other feast days are observed during this time and may be transferred to the next open date. This year that will be on 4 April. Look for The Annunciation in the April newsletter and calendar.



Sunday, 20 March 2016

#### **Palm Sunday**

#### **The Sunday of the Passion**

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

Thursday, 24 March 2016

#### **Maundy Thursday**

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

Friday, 25 March 2016

#### **Good Friday**

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

Saturday, 26 March 2016

#### **Holy Saturday**

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

Sunday, 27 March 2016

#### **The Sunday of the Resurrection**

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



**BEN SCHMERBAUCH**  
**4 AUGUST 1942 - 2 FEBRUARY 2016**

Our brother, Ben Schmerbauch, entered into new life on Tuesday, 2 February. Ben had suffered a stroke and was in rehabilitation therapy at Crowne on Dauphin Street. His health plummeted and he was moved to Intensive Care at Springhill Medical Center. He fought bravely. His son, Matt, and friend, Sandra were with him. I arrived just in time to offer Last Rites for him before he left us to be with his Lord. I'll always have fond memories of Ben and his stories of "Bear" Bryant and Broadway Joe. I'll always remember him, too, as being pragmatic and down to earth. Rest easy, my friend. We will miss you.

**MARY LOU VARNES**  
**14 APRIL 1927 - 22 FEBRUARY 2016**

Mary Lou Varnes entered into new life on Monday, 22 February. She was surrounded by family that she loved and loved her. Mary Lou and Lois Hamby (sisters) initially moved to Crowne Nursing Home into a shared room. It didn't last long, because each of them was always right and mostly didn't agree. One of the things I enjoyed most about visiting Mary Lou was knowing that she would not hold back. If I hadn't done something or had done something that displeased her, I would hear about it. I could always count on her to let me know. Mary Lou always gave her full attention to her visitors; another of her great characteristics.



The regular meeting of the Wardens and Vestry of Saint John's Church was called to order on 14 February 2016. All member of the vestry were present.

The financials were reviewed and the Budget Committee reported that it would be meeting on Wednesday, 24 February, following the Lenten Series Program.

Dobson Roofing has not yet performed the repairs to the Great Hall Roof.

The Pledge Report was reviewed. Several members commented that they found it difficult to ask parishioners about Pledge Cards. They also reported that members seemed a little disconcerted by their call as well.

The Vestry called for the Annual Meeting of the Parish to occur on 28 February 2016 as part of the 4th Sunday Potluck.

The Vestry set Saturday, 27 February as the date for the Vestry Retreat. Geri Moulton offered her home as the venue for the retreat.

The Comprehensive Landscape Plan has been posted in the Great Hall. Tony Seymour is putting together pricing. The plan will be accomplished in steps, probably starting with the West side and the Monument Sign.

Butch Yeager reported that the transaction to sell the van has been completed.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer.





## FOOD PANTRY NEEDS MARCH 2016

The Outreach Committee is restocking our food pantry. Fr. Thomas often gets homeless folks who are simply looking for a meal that they can eat on the go, and at the moment we have nothing available to give them. Our needs are very specific, and we ask that you only bring in canned goods that have “pop tops” and that **do not require a can opener**. Some suggestions are listed below:

- Canned tuna with a pop top
- Vienna Sausages with pop tops
- Canned spaghetti or any other pasta with pop top lids
- Beef stew with pop top lids
- Fruit cups with easy open lids
- Applesauce with easy open lids
- Cheese and cracker packages
- Peanut butter and cracker packages
- Bottles of fruit juice

Please bring these items to the table in the Great Hall at your earliest convenience. Thank you for helping out our homeless neighbors!



The February meeting was held on the third Sunday with 15 in attendance. Reports were given by the Sunshine and Caring and Sharing committee. Minutes and Treasurer reports from January were read and approved.

Connie Anderson told us of her report to convention concerning Murray House. She told them that, next to Chapel, bingo is one of the highlights of their week. We are putting a basket in the Great Hall for prize donations. Lotions, powders, Kleenex, and large-print game books are a few of their favorites.

Our next meeting will be on March 29. Please join us.

## GUILD OF SAINT MARTHA NEWS MARCH 2016



The Guild of St. Martha is providing meatless meals on Wednesdays during Lent as part of our Lenten program. Please come and join us for Stations of the Cross at 5:30PM on Wednesdays, followed by dinner and a short time of conversation and learning together. There are still a couple of blank spaces on the signup sheet in the hall, so you still have time to share your favorite vegetarian dish with us.

We will also be doing an Easter reception following our service on Easter Sunday. Rather than the usual fourth Sunday potluck on that day, join us for a festive spread right after the Easter Egg hunt. We will whet your appetites but leave room in your tummy for that big family Easter Dinner!



## EASTER LILIES

*Easter Lily sign up cards are in the Narthex and the Great Hall. Cards are due by Palm Sunday, March 20.*



Maria del Socorro's eyes sparkle with enthusiasm as she talks about the newest additions to her household in San Francisco Libre, Nicaragua: a pig and several chickens.

She received the animals through our partnership with the Council of Protestant Churches (CEPAD) of Nicaragua, where we work with farming families in the region to develop techniques to improve their lives.

Maria's pig is growing fast and becoming more marketable by the month. Soon, she will sell it and

make a tidy profit. Meanwhile, her chickens are regularly producing eggs and giving the family a sustainable source of protein for breakfast.

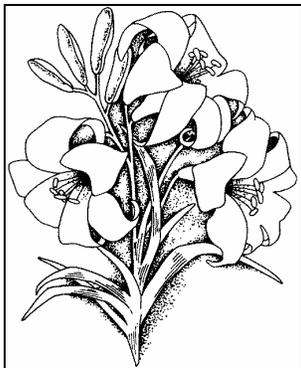
Maria is proud of what she's accomplished and so should those who purchased these and other animals the *Gifts for Life* catalog. They were able to help create a better life for someone else.

*Gift for Life* catalogs are available at the church or you can look the online catalog at <http://www.episcopalrelief.org/what-you-can-do/gifts-for-life>



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

Joan-Marie Elam  
 Connie & Bud McLean  
 James Christiansen  
 Connie & Bob Anderson  
 Vivian & Bill Watt  
 Irene & Butch Yeager  
 Angie & John Leon



## *Elsewhere in the Diocese*



### **FRIDAY FISH FRIES IN LENT**

Episcopal Church of the Redeemer is 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 5:00– 7:00 p.m., March 4 through March 18. Redeemer is located at 7125 Hitt Road (corner of Cody and Hitt).



Bessie Southall	03/05
Howard Yeager	03/10
Marian Boykin	03/12
Darren Anderson	03/15
William Anderson	03/15
Bud McLean	03/18
Courtney Bryan	03/19
Jean Brown	03/20
Chick Wohlert	03/24
Sandra Wilson	03/27
Rhonda Clark	03/28
Faith Velaski	03/28



## DON'T FORGET

Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 13. Set your clocks forward one hour before you go to bed Saturday night.



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

Bessie Southall, Kathe Gieseler, Emily Johnston, Jayson Chestang, Ashley Garris, Marian Boykin, Budd McLean, Joyce Lee, Donna Waites.

### For our Homebound:

Mae Dunn, Nell Kirk, Lorraine Murray, Alice Schablinski, 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:

Troy Fisher, Kaye Turner, Katelynn Tillman, Betty Jo Lagman, Britney Butler, Ann Hall, John Hawlicheck, Lou McBeath, Angie Leon, Doug Turner, Neal Tourné, Sandy & Ray Michel, Brenda Bateman, Connor Crist, Blake Bennet, Starley Anderson, Paul Nelson, Barbara Bassett, Krystal Hiatt, Robert Cochran, Sr., Irene Barrow, Elias Bates, Donnie Chestang, Bill Jones, Mark Stiber, Dennis Brown[priest].

## Contact Us

### Staff:

The Reverend Thomas Heard, *rector*  
[rector@stjohnsmobile.org](mailto:rector@stjohnsmobile.org)

Louis Daniel  
 Organist & Choir Director  
[music@stjohnsmobile.org](mailto:music@stjohnsmobile.org)

Lella Lowe  
 Financial Secretary  
[finance@stjohnsmobile.org](mailto:finance@stjohnsmobile.org)

Jack Ruppe  
 Sexton

### Vestry:

Connie Anderson

Ron Brown

Janet Buckley, *treasurer*

James Christiansen, *junior warden*

Cindy Gass, *senior warden*

Eugene Johnston

Geri Moulton

Nikki Shaw, *clerk*

Butch Yeager



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 1<sup>st</sup>  
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](http://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.