



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. XXVII, Issue 9

September 2017

FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

It has been a busy few weeks for Saint John's. We've had six in hospital for one thing or another. Broken bones seem easy compared to cancer diagnoses. Everyone seems to be coping pretty well, if not being downright positive about their personal situation. It could be so easy to be down in the dumps about it and be pessimistic, but that's not where you all are! You've been real troupers. The parish has been keeping all of you in its prayers, both corporate and private. But let's work on staying healthy, OK? It's much more fun!

On top of that, it's been a troubling few weeks for all of us in this country. It kind of hit me this past Sunday as I listened to the Epistle reading: We are all so far from acting as God would have us act. We really don't understand what an incredible gift God's grace is for us.

Let me digress a minute. Last Sunday, Bishop Kendrick was with us. I think it was a great day: the bishop enjoyed it; the people enjoyed it; even the Vestry's meeting with the bishop was fun. (I'll come back to that in a bit.) We had a good congregation, a great reception, and I think everyone really enjoyed the forum before mass. I suspect almost everyone learned something from it, too.

So my moment on Sunday morning happened at the beginning of the reading from Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans:

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
(Romans 12:1-2)

I confess that because I'm usually preaching, I'm usually thinking about my sermon, not listening to the lesson. The bishop preached and so I just listened. Saint Paul's words to the church at Rome were the right thing at the right time and shone a light on the events of the past few weeks.

How often do we surrender our ego and self-importance to the life to which God calls us? When was the last time we allowed the Holy Spirit to transform us into what God desires? We don't have to be right. We don't have to be stronger. We don't have to be wealthier. We don't have to be more powerful.

We have to be and act like Children of God. As the bishop reminded us in the forum and again in his sermon, that's what our baptismal covenant calls us to be. Those five questions really do define who we are as Episcopalians and what we are called to do in the world.

In the past few weeks, we have been failing badly in being faithful to those promises. Not just one of them, but all of them. To put it in Saint Paul's terms, we've allowed ourselves to be conformed to the world. We need to be the transforming power of God, active in the world in bringing all people to justice, mercy, and peace. I pray you think about how you can be one of God's agents of change.

At the vestry meeting, we surprised the bishop with our conversations about hosting the ladies of McKemie Place. Russell was terribly excited about the possibilities and is very interested. There may be new life to that project, so stay tuned.

--Thomas

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEPTEMBER LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Situated as close to the Feast of the Assumption as it is, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary receives less solemnity than it did in earlier times. The earliest evidence of a celebration of the Mother of Our Lord comes from the 6th century. Following the declaration of the Council at Ephesus in 431 that Mary was the *Theotokos*, or God-bearer, devotion to Mary became much more common. The origins of the story of her birth come from the apocryphal *Protoevangelium of James*, written about 150. We will celebrate the birth of Mary at a said mass on Friday, 8 September at 12:10PM.



Cyprian of Carthage

Cyprian was a rhetorician in North Africa. He grew up in a rich and aristocratic family, but converted to Christianity in about 246. He was elected Bishop of Carthage two years later and then faced persecution under Emperor Decius. In hiding, he wrote many letters to the church, advising it on dealing with members who had lapsed during the persecution. Many of his letters survive today. He was placed under house arrest by Emperor Valerian and executed in 258.

Holy Cross Day

On Thursday, 14 September at 12:10PM, we will celebrate the Feast of the Holy Cross. Eusebius tells us Emperor Constantine's mother, Helena, discovered the True Cross buried at Golgotha. She was entrusted by the emperor to build suitable housing that would inspire and attract veneration of the relic. Helena's work stands today as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This day, we honor the implement of execution that brings us life and salvation.

John Coleridge Patteson

John Patteson was Bishop of Melanesia. In 1871, he and his companions were martyred by Melanesian islanders whom Patteson was trying to protect from slave-traders. In fact, Patteson's stabbing was mistaken retaliation for brutal attacks by the slavers. His successor, Bishop Selwyn reconciled with the islanders to the memory of Patteson, who came to help, not to hurt.

Saint Matthew

Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, will be commemorated on Thursday, 21 September 2011 at a Said Mass at 12:10PM. Legend holds that Matthew the Tax Collector became a disciple of Jesus and later wrote an account of the life and works of Jesus. We know this today as the Gospel of Matthew.

Saint Michael and All Angels

One of the Major Feasts of the Church, the Feast of Saint Michael and All Angels is observed on 29 September. Also known as Michaelmas, this day commemorates not only the Archangel Michael but the entire host of angels. Angels have found a place in contemporary society with many identifying a personal guardian angel. But angel comes from the Greek "*Aggelos*" which means "messenger".

This day we commemorate all the messengers and agents of God throughout the course of history. We will commemorate this feast at a Said Mass on Friday, 29 September at 12:10PM.



OUTREACH

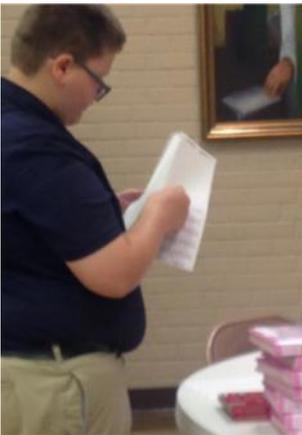
BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS!!

The Saint John's provided 1,000 books to the Head Start children in Mobile and Washington counties. Saint John's members spent fellowship time putting stickers into the books. The stickers read: *"A gift from Saint John's Episcopal Church with hopes you will become a lifetime learner."*

Head Start is a federally funded comprehensive school readiness program that serves low income three and four year old children. The purpose of the program is to get the children ready for kindergarten. There are 1,463 Head Start children in Mobile and Washington counties. These books will be provided to the children to take home and keep.

The books come from First Book, the National Book Bank which receives the books from publishers and then distributes them to organizations that will provide them to low income children and their families. Although the

Book Bank gets the books at no cost from the publishers, organizations have to pay shipping and handling to receive the books. Saint John's Outreach Committee paid for the books to get to Mobile to be distributed to the Head Start children.



PARISH LIFE



Saint John's is reviving the old tradition of having monthly birthday blessings. On the first Sunday of each month Fr. Heard will ask congregants with birthdays in the month to come forward for a special blessing. Birthday cake will be served in the Great Hall.

SEPTEMBER 4TH SUNDAY POTLUCK



September's 4th Sunday Potluck will be held on Sunday, September 24, 2017. The theme will "Tailgate Party," so wear your team colors, bring tailgate party food and we'll all enjoy fun, fellowship, and lots of good food!

WELCOME DABNEY AZALEA



Meet Dabney Azalea Lundberg, born to Leslie and Jeremy Lundberg at 4:54 am on 8/13/17, weighing 5 lbs. 7 ozs., 18.5 inches. Proud grandmother is Jan Dabney.



Vestry

VESTRY SUMMARY

The regular meeting of the Wardens and Vestry of Saint John’s Church was called to order at 11:35 AM by Fr. Heard. All members of the vestry were present. The agenda and minutes of the last meeting were approved.

- ⇒ Connie McLean reviewed the financial reports. Cindy Gass moved that Thee Store’s checking account be closed and the monies moved to the Saint John’s operating account.
- ⇒ Fr. Heard presented the audit report. It was approved by the vestry.
- ⇒ Kathe Giesler reported for Outreach that the books are ready for distribution. The Giving Tree for Penelope House is up. The committee is considering providing a fund for Council school to assist students for field trips.
- ⇒ Fr. Heard reported that there is a range available that could replace the old one in the kitchen. If it can be acquired for a reasonable cost, he will pay for it from discretionary funds.
- ⇒ Our tenant in 1702 Church St is hospitalized. We have been informed of some issues with the house and will investigate and make necessary repairs.
- ⇒ Fr. Heard reminded the vestry that the bishop will visit on 27 August.
- ⇒ Connie McLean presented a sample “We Miss You” card. These will be mailed to parishioners who miss three weeks in a row.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 11:45 AM.



ECW NEWS

The August meeting saw a large group in attendance...the most in several years! Thanks to all who attended. Members present received an update on our parishioners who have been struggling recently health-wise. The Sunshine Committee will send cards. If you have any extra “Get Well Soon” cards you don’t plan on using, please bring them to church and give them to Irene or Bootsie.

Discussion about our reception for the Bishop at his annual visitation was a large part of the planning this month.

The ECW officers for the next year: Irene Yeager, President; LaNeisha Anderson, Vice President; Wendy Cape, Secretary; and Connie McLean, Treasurer.

Murray House needs small prizes for their activity time: small items such as costume jewelry, small artificial flowers, little statues of angels, seasonal items would be appropriate. There is a box on the table at the entrance to the Great Hall. They currently have enough sample shampoos and toiletries.

The ECW meets on the third Sunday at 11:30 – please join us in September.



 * Mary and Kathe Giesler want to thank their Saint John’s family for their love, care, kindness, and support *
 * during Mary’s recent accident and hospitalization. You are the best! *
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**SAINT JOHN'S
WELCOMES
BISHOP
RUSSELL KENDRICK
AUGUST 27, 2017**



Photos by Nikki Shaw



EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT RESPONDS TO HURRICANE HARVEY

August 28, 2017

Dear friends,

.... so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Romans 12: 5-8

This was part of the reading from the Second Lesson we had this morning. As it was read my thoughts immediately went to the Hurricane turned Tropical Storm Harvey and how would we respond.

As the storm continues, we are not sure what our response will be, but we know that it must be done with liberality, zeal, cheerfulness and love. Episcopal Relief & Development has been in touch with the Diocese of Texas. There will be much more information released for a while to come.

At this point I would ask your prayers for those in that part of Texas and soon to be parts of Louisiana. Episcopal Relief & Development has set up a Hurricane Harvey Fund or send a donation to:

Episcopal Relief & Development
Hurricane Harvey Fund
P.O. Box 7058
Merrifield, VA 22116-7058

I will provide more information as it becomes available.

Peace,
Eugene Johnston
Diocesan Coordinator,
Episcopal Relief & Development



THE BENEFITS OF SAINT JOHN'S SCRIP PROGRAM

Scrip is just another word for gift card, so it is an alternative way to pay for your everyday expenses. You purchase these gift cards that have a rebate. Whenever you shop at the grocery store or get dinner out, and you use gift cards instead of your credit or debit card, **you help Saint John's**. Each gift card has a rebate on it, which goes right to the Saint John's budget.

Consider the following benefits:

The Saint John's Scrip is fundraising while you shop. Rather than paying for your groceries and household items using cash or credit cards, pay with gift cards you ordered and earn rebates for the church.

You can raise funds with scrip all year round. Many fundraisers run for a short amount of time, but because scrip is so habit-forming, you can run your program all year round.

Use scrip on almost every purchase. Scrip has over **750 retailers** available in categories like gas, groceries, clothing, restaurants, home improvement, and so much more! To see all the retailers go to: <https://shop.shopwithscrip.com/Shop/Product/Browse#?saved>

Everyone can participate. Everyone buys necessities like gas and groceries. Even if families only use scrip for the basics, they're still earning money for your organization.

Gift giving. The scrip cards come in a variety of denominations and can be given instead of going to all the trouble of hunting for a gift. This makes shopping easy and allows greater flexibility for the person getting the gift.

Orders are taken on the second Sunday each month (September 10). If you have question call Eugene Johnston at 251-591-4328.



Thomas Creel	09/02	Lavelle Ollhoft	09/19
Ron Brown	09/06	Jeremy Anderson	09/20
Jayson Chestang	09/08	Neil McPhail	09/20
John Creel	09/08	Thelma Lomers	09/22
Barbara Vann	09/12	Rhett Barbour	09/23
Becky Youngblood	09/13	Ashley Garris	09/26
Jim Hayward	09/15		



Regina & John Molyneux	09/02
Dana & Scott Escobio	09/07
Erin Nelson & Chris Delaporte	09/12
Irene & Butch Yeager	09/29



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

Marie Brown, Joyce Lee, Mary Gieseler, David Rich, Catherine Warren, Emily Johnston, Neil McPhail, Marian Boykin, Ron Brown, Jayson Chestang, Budd McLean.

For our Homebound:

Bea Brown, Mae Dunn, Joan-Marie Elam, LaVerne Foster, Chick Wohlert, Becky & Art Youngblood.

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

Ross Hussman, Josh Vernor, Ellis Garner, Eric Mattoon.

For our Friends and Family:

Marie Zarko, Kay Barnes, Latecia Cushion Knight, Hayley Espey, Evia Daniel, Charles Geck, Jerry Wigfield, Karen Davis, Anna Marie Brown, Mary Jo Vinson, Bonnie Jernigan, Kaye Turner, Katelynn Tillman, Britney Butler, Angie Leon, Johnny Leon, Neal Tourné, Sandy & Ray Michel, Connor Crist, Paul Nelson, Krystal Hiatt, Elias Bates, Bill Jones, Mark Stiber.

For Those Who Have Died:

Lucretia Bonner.

Contact Us

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Darren Anderson

Ron Brown

James Christiansen, *junior warden*

Cindy Gass, *senior warden*

Kathe Gieseler

Connie McLean, *treasurer*

Geri Moulton

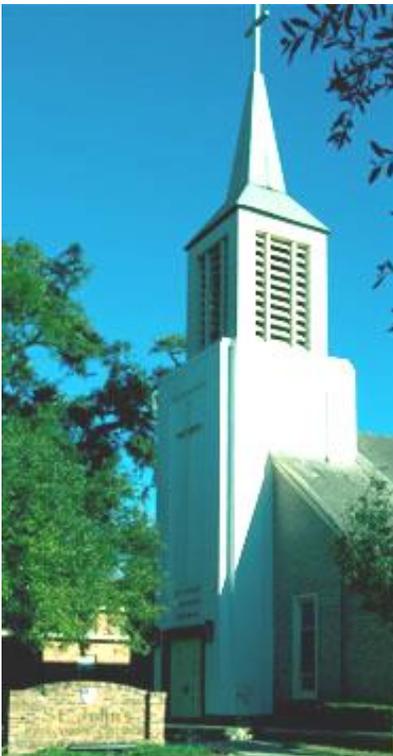
Nikki Shaw, *clerk*

Butch Yeager

Saint John's Episcopal Church
 1707 Government Street
 Mobile, Alabama 36604

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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

Monday-Thursday
 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Telephone: 251-479-5474

Fax: 251-473-1230

www.stjohnsmobile.org

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.