FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

Lent is, once more, upon us. It is a time for preparation, introspection, reformation, and perhaps even confession, in order to open us to the Pascal Mystery.

Each of us approaches Lent differently. That’s more than OK — we should approach it individually. Put another way, what is the right approach for one person doesn’t necessarily work for another.

There is an age-old practice of ‘giving up for Lent’ that bears some closer inspection. I know of folks who, annually, give up chocolate for Lent. From Ash Wednesday until Easter, no chocolate will pass their lips. Come Easter Day, the ears of the chocolate bunny are the first to go.

I have to question whether that particular practice is making the practitioner a better person. Sure, I guess depriving oneself of chocolate for the 40 days of Lent might be a trial, but at the end, could the ‘give up’ of chocolate be permanent? (Well, perhaps for some, but definitely not for me!)

As I have suggested in the past, perhaps a better practice would be to “add on” to our lives. For example, we’ve done Lent Madness for a couple of years; why not pick it up individually? Reading the biographies of the saints being contested will almost surely teach something and/or expose someone new.

I think the list of things that could be added on to our lives is nearly endless. It could include things like:

- Reading the Daily Office every day
- Joining in with the Good Book Club
- Taking on a daily prayer or meditation practice
- Picking up the habit of daily walking for some period of time or distance.

What one chooses to add on is, I think, largely a matter of what the intended outcome is to be. So, for my short list here, what might some of those be?

- Reading the Daily Office every day:
  — Get into a daily practice of prayer and scripture reading.
- Joining in with the Good Book Club:
  — Being a part of a large group reading the Gospel of Luke for Lent and Eastertide
- Taking on a daily prayer or meditation practice:
  — Creating time and space to open up to God’s movement.
- Picking up the habit of daily walking for some period of time or distance:
  — Creating a time to mindful activity and meditation, and increasing health.

On Sundays, we get a break from Lent: Every Sunday is a “little Easter” and Lent is no exception. (Which raises the question of why we call them “Sundays in Lent” when they don’t count in the 40 days of Lent. Topic for another day.) Our readings, however, are thematically oriented toward Lent and our preparation for Jesus’ passion, death, resurrection, and ascension. Perhaps Sundays are opportunities for us to recharge a bit; if our Lenten practice is strenuous, we might need that.

I think Sundays are our opportunity to come together as a community, to strengthen each other, to share our journeys with each other, to be together as we seek to be closer to God and open to God’s calling, to be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in our common life.

--Thomas
**Highlights of the March Liturgical Calendar**

**Saint Joseph**

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. Joseph is commemorated on 19 March at 12:10PM.

**Good Friday**

We will offer the Good Friday liturgy twice on 30 March, 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 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.

**Holy Saturday**

We will offer the Holy Saturday liturgy for the first time at Saint John’s at Noon on Saturday, 31 March. The liturgy is entirely said, with silence for contemplation and meditation.

**The Great Vigil of Easter**

Holy Week reaches its peak with the Great Vigil of Easter at 7:30PM on Saturday, 31 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 our salvation history. In the early church, this was the liturgy where catechumens were baptized, becoming full members of the community. Following renewal of our Baptismal Covenant and baptism, the proclamation of Easter is made: bells are rung, candles are lit, the lights come up and we celebrate the first Mass of Easter.

**Sunday of the Passion or Palm Sunday**

Holy Week begins on 25 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 29 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.
Lenten Food Drive: Food Boxes for Families in Need

Our Lent Food Drive will have a specific goal: we are going to fill twenty-four boxes with non-perishable food and have them delivered to twenty-four 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 Maundy Thursday, March 29th. We want to have the boxes filled by Sunday, March 25th. 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 help them out for the week their children will be home for the Spring Break holiday. 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 (bring to the church by Sunday, March 25th):

- pudding cups
- fruit or applesauce cups
- grits
- canned soup
- peanut butter
- jelly
- canned tuna
- dry cereal
- canned peaches
- dried beans
- rice
- boxed macaroni and cheese
- granola bars
- snack cakes

Project Homeless Connect

Under the leadership of the Rev. Deacon Terry Goff at Trinity Mobile, Trinity, St. John’s and Redeemer were all collection sites for Project Homeless Connect this year and provided many, many articles of clothing. Donations were also brought from the Christ Cathedral and St. Luke’s, as well as neighbors in the community who knew Trinity was collecting for the guests.

In all, there were 30 very full racks of coats, pants, shirts, and business clothing for men, women and children, plus socks, underwear, hats, gloves, scarves, hygiene items, shoes, belts, pajamas and blankets to send home with the guests.

At the event at The Grounds on January 26, each guest was invited to “take what you need” as they were greeted with warm smiles by volunteers ranging in age from 10 years to 80-something. Each assisted the guests in finding their sizes, folding their selections and packing their bags. These volunteers let the light of Christ shine forth into the world into each face they met at Project Homeless Connect.

Thanks to all St. John’s members who donated warm clothing for this worthwhile project.

Adapted from an article by David Clothier for The Coastline
**PARISH LIFE**

**LENTEN STUDY AND SIMPLE SUPPER**

As part of our observance of the Lenten season Saint John’s will once again be having a study series and simple meal on Wednesdays during Lent. The **meal will start at 6 PM** and be followed by discussion led by Fr. Heard about the creeds. Don’t worry, choir members, we’ll be finished in time for rehearsal at 7.

The meals will have a meatless entre and include salad, bread and dessert. There will be a sign up sheet on the bulletin board for bringing meal items. We will need volunteers to bring/prepare parts of the supper.

Payment for the meals will be $5.00 each or (if you purchase them all at once) five for $20.00. See Connie McLean for payment and meal tickets, the money raised will be matched by the Outreach Committee and donated to the Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy.

Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization that serves the needs of the community through prescription assistance. Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy focuses primarily on maintenance medications for chronic illnesses – such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure. Each year, over 1600 patients rely on Ozanam to get their medications so they don’t have to choose between feeding their families and managing their illnesses. None of the patients pay for their medication, so the pharmacy relies on support from the community.

In order to make sure we have enough food for the meals we will have an “I’m coming...” sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

**Lenten Suppers Schedule**

- Wednesday, February 21, 2018
- Wednesday, February 28, 2018
- Wednesday, March 7, 2018
- Wednesday, March 14, 2018
- Wednesday, March 21, 2018

**February Birthdays**

St. John’s celebrates the February birthdays of Alison Chestang, Lisa Chestang, Fr. Thomas Heard, Geri Moulton, Mary Sheffield.

**4TH SUNDAY POTLUCK MARCH 25TH**

The March 4th Sunday Potluck will be held on Sunday, March 25, 2018. That’s also Palm Sunday and the first Sunday in spring. We’ll have a “Spring” theme, so we’ll be seeing lots of fresh veggies and salads, and pretty desserts.
The regular meeting of the Wardens & Vestry of Saint John’s Church was called to order at 11:35 AM on 11 February 2018. Darren Anderson was excused; Ron Waites was absent.

The proposed agenda was approved.

The minutes of the January meeting were approved as distributed.

Connie McLean reviewed the financial reports for January, noting that expenses were $18,193.09, while income for the month was $13,338.28, leaving a $4,855 shortfall for the month. She also reported that Bootsie Cieutat is now the coordinator for Scrip sales and that the Scrip program has generated $1,800 since its inception.

Janet Buckley reported for Outreach that a Lenten food box program is being organized. It will be 24 boxes to be distributed on Maundy Thursday for use during spring break. Mobile Community Action will identify the recipients and handle distribution.

Darren Anderson is beginning to build a list of projects and tasks that need to be performed. He is also interested in gathering together like-minded folks to function as a steering committee to prioritize the project list.

Fr. Heard reported that the ladies from McKemie place had their first day at Saint John’s on 5 February. They arrive around 8:00AM and depart around 4:30PM. The middle shelf in the big refrigerator has been turned over to them for storage of their lunches. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between McKemie Place and Saint John’s was included in the meeting packet.

Janet Buckley is taking some of the Thee Store leftovers to diocesan convention.

Connie McLean reported that she has spoken to Mary Catherine Warren. She is doing well.

Fr. Heard reminded the vestry that the Safe Church training required by the diocese is due. Information concerning login and curricula was included in the meeting packet.

Fr. Heard requested and the vestry concurred to call the annual meeting of the parish for Sunday, 25 February during the 4th Sunday Potluck.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30PM.

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**GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION DESIGNATED FOR CHURCH IN JERUSALEM**

The history of the Good Friday Offering reaches back to 1922 when, in the aftermath of World War I, The Episcopal Church sought to create new relationships with and among the Christians of the Middle East. From these initial efforts which focused on a combination of relief work and the improvement of ecumenical and Anglican relations, the Good Friday Offering was created.

Through the years many Episcopalians have found the Good Friday Offering to be an effective way to express their support for the ministries of the four dioceses of the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Pastoral care, education and health care continue to be primary ministries through which the reconciling spirit of the Christian faith serves all in need. Participation in this ministry is welcome. The generous donations of Episcopalians help the Christian presence in the Land of the Holy One to be a vital and effective force for peace and understanding among all of God’s children.

At St. John’s, the collections at both the 12PM and 6PM Good Friday services will be forwarded for the good work of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem.
Easter Lilies

Easter Lily sign up cards will be in the Narthex and the Great Hall by Sunday, March 4. Cards are due by Palm Sunday, March 25.

Elsewhere in the Diocese

Friday Fish Fries in Lent

Episcopal Church of the Redeemer is hosting a fish fry every Friday in March for 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., February 23 through March 30. Redeemer is located at 7125 Hitt Road (corner of Cody and Hitt).

2018 Beckwith Programs

- Preparing to Die at Peace Not in Pieces: March 6-8
- Spirit and Body Retreat: April 13-15
- Clergy Marriage Enrichment Retreat: May 21-23
- Father/Son Retreat: Aug 24-26
- Chair Yoga and Body-Prayer: Nov 1-2
- Parish Unsung Heroes Appreciation Retreat: Nov 5-7
- Clergy Silent Retreat: Dec 13-14

*Prices and times vary with each retreat.

For more information on these programs and other events at Beckwith contact Program Director Addie Boyd-Quina (251) 928-7844 Addie@BeckwithAL.com
For healing grace and continued strength, we pray for our members:

For our Homebound:
Bea Brown, Joan-Marie Elam, LaVerne Foster, Mary Catherine Warren, Chick Wohlert.

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

For our Friends and Family:

### Contact Us

**Staff:**
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**Vestry:**
Darren Anderson
Janet Buckley
James Christiansen, junior warden
Cindy Gass, senior warden
Kathe Gieseler
Jan Joseph
Connie McLean, treasurer
Nikki Shaw, clerk
Ron Waites

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**DON’T FORGET**

Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 11. Set your clocks forward one hour before you go to bed Saturday night.

Howard Yeager 03/10
Marian Boykin 03/12
Darren Anderson 03/15
William Anderson 03/15
Budd 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
Saint John’s Episcopal Church
1707 Government Street
Mobile, Alabama 36604

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.