



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. XXVIII, Issue 8

August 2018

FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

For most of the month of July, our Old Testament readings have been taken from the Prophets. In their Bible (the *TANAKH*), our Jewish sisters and brothers divide the *Nevi'im* (The Prophets) into two sections: major and minor. We've heard from both categories: Ezekiel and Jeremiah from the former and Amos from the latter.

What is consistent across all of the Old Testament prophets is their determination to be purveyors of one thing: the truth. Unequivocally, we can say that the prophets were "truth tellers". We can also say that it generally got them in trouble with the authorities of their day.

When reflecting on their times, we need to keep in mind that the civil authority and the religious authority were often vested in the same folks. For Israel and Judah, their kings were the top that hierarchy. Their obligation under the covenant with God was to care for all things. They were to be God's stewards of creation — and that included everything that God had made. So, people, creatures, and the environment were the kings' responsibility; they were to act on God's behalf. Put another way, they were to do what God would do. Our friends the prophets were the independent conscience, the ones to point out to the kings where the kings had gone astray or fallen short.

What happened when the prophets followed their conscience and call was pretty predictable: the kings became angry and lashed out, either in person or by proxy. Elijah managed to get on the bad side of both King Ahab and his queen, Jezebel. Jezebel had brought her religion to Israel; her husband had built altars for the priests of Ba'al. Jezebel also defrauded Naboth the Jezreelite of his vineyard by slandering him. Elijah remained the truth teller he was called to be, but he also had to run for his life!

As Christians, we generally don't tend to think of having prophets in our culture, but that wouldn't be quite right. In the Gospel According To Luke, we have two prophesies at the outset. The first is *Magnificat* at Luke 1:46-55. It isn't called a prophesy, but it fits the criteria. The second is Zechariah's prophesy at Luke 2:68-79. In it, Zechariah calls his son "the prophet of the Most High" - this is, of course, John the Baptizer.

John the Baptizer was undoubtedly a truth teller. He called the hierarchy on their failure to abide by the covenant. He accused Herod the Tetrarch and Herodias of divorcing their former spouses in order to marry someone else and that led them to be guilty of adultery, as well.

What has happened to us as a nation? Are we so devoid of righteousness that what happens around us on a daily basis makes no impression? Where are the prophets of our time? Where are the truth tellers?

Not a week goes by that there isn't some sexual peccadillo that captures national attention. Civil discourse has devolved into shouting and no one seems to listen anymore. Then there's constant telling of lies, restated so often that they take on the ring of truth.

In the week we heard from Ezekiel, we had Psalm 123. It concludes:

⁴ Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy, *
for we have had more than enough of contempt,

⁵ Too much of the scorn of the indolent rich, *
and of the derision of the proud.

I believe it is time for us to make a stand. Time to hold up God's righteousness as the standard. Time to be about recovering our identity. Time to be the prophets and truth tellers of our time. Think about how we might do that, what it might look like. Stay tuned.

--Thomas

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AUGUST LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Joseph of Arimethea

We will commemorate Joseph of Arimethea on Wednesday, 1 August at a 10:00AM Said Mass. Joseph figures in the burial of Jesus in the Gospels. John speaks of him as a secret disciple and friend of Nicodemus. A tradition developed in the 13th century that Joseph had come to England with the Holy Grail. We remember him not for the legends but for being bold enough to face the authorities while the rest of Jesus' disciples were in hiding.

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

We will celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ on Monday, 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.

Dominic

We will commemorate the life and ministry of Dominic at our 10:00AM Said Mass on Wednesday, 8 August. Dominic, born around 1170 in Spain, became the founder of the Order of Preachers. They were known as the Blackfriars because of the black scapular worn over their white habits. The Dominicans place a

high value on intellectual pursuits: learning, teaching, and preaching. They also embrace a vow of absolute poverty. Many colleges and universities owe their founding to the Dominicans. Among the great thinkers and writers of the order is Thomas Aquinas.

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 Tuesday, 15 August, at 12:10PM.

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 a copy of the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew that was purportedly given to the church by Bartholomew. We will celebrate Saint Bartholomew on Friday, 24 August, with a said mass at 12:10PM.



Vestry

The July meeting of the Vestry and Wardens of Saint

John's Church was called to order on 8 July 2018 at 11:30AM by Fr. Heard.

Darren Anderson was excused as he was at work.

The minutes of the 10 June meeting were approved.

Connie McLean reviewed the financial reports.

Outreach is planning to label books for Head Start at the end of July.

Parish Life reminded that the Parish Picnic will be 22 July.

The Garden Rehab is on hold pending the installation of the new sprinkler system.

Fr. Heard reported that MEJAC used the Parlor for a meeting on 28 June. McKemie Place continues to use the Great Hall as its day shelter space.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55AM with prayer by Fr. Heard.

PARISH LIFE

PARISH PICNIC GREAT SUCCESS

Good friends, good food, good company, and no bugs: the formula for a successful parish picnic.

St. John's parish picnic was judged to be one of the best ever: grill master Darren Anderson produced a great selection of delicious grilled meats; salads, beans, veggies and all the picnic "fixins" filled the tables; and then there were the desserts...more goodies than could be sampled!

Thanks to everyone for participating, bringing food, helping to clean up: see you next year!!

Photos by Nikki Shaw and Janet Buckley





THIS AND THAT

Scrip orders will be taken on Sunday the 12th. The cards will be back on Sunday the 19th. See Bootsie Cieutat for the list. Lots of fun things for summer and back to school. Try a new card this month!

The ECW extends their heartfelt thanks for your Bakeless Sale support; it's still ongoing if you would like to make a donation. A special thank you to Joyce Lee for her wonderful poem.



The Wine and Cheese party given by the ECW for Murray House was a big hit. The wine, snacks and favors were enjoyed by all. Thank you to all who helped make it so much fun for the residents.

Darren and LaNeisha Anderson outdid themselves this year for our picnic. The grilled treats were exceptional. Everyone enjoyed the sides and dessert tables as well. It was a really fun day.

-Bootsie Cieutat

Photos from ECW Wine and Cheese party for Murray House by Irene Yeager.

stewardship

sharing the gifts we have been given

Over the next few months, we will hear from members of the congregation about their attitudes toward giving to the church. Our contributor this month is our beloved Joyce Lee:

I've been asked to write on the topic "why do I tithe"? It shocked my 90-year-old brain for a minute, but it made me think about it.

Why do I tithe? First of all, I thought that everyone tithed (at least the ones who come to church weekly, and especially all of us white-haired individuals). Secondly, isn't that what our God expects from us? I think so. I've had a good life, even through the Depression. We were poor, but I didn't realize it, since everybody else we knew were like us.

It was always hard to write that first check every month to the church, especially trying to raise four sons, but we did it and I'm proud now. When Seymour and I married, he insisted we increase our pledge every year, even if it was only \$5 a week. That's what we tried to do each year.

I've lived a blessed life and I'm grateful. So I guess that's why I give to the church. I know the church is in a bind for operational money, but with everyone's help, we'll make it. Do you agree?

-Joyce Lee



Saint John's wishes to extend a sincere thank you to those who made a donation in memory of Roy Duhon:

Faye Dulaney
Patti & Chris Esfeller
Olivia Vacalis
James Bodiford, Jr.
Billy & Mary Ann Davis
Rhonda D. Woodson
Richard & Terry Davis

WE NEED YOUR BOOKS...

Time to clean out those book shelves of your gently used paperbacks, hardbacks, and magazines: St. John's is having a books sale! We will be selling the last of the contents of *Thee Store* along with the books donated by the parish members. You can start bringing your books now. The actual sale will be held at the beginning of October.





DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, Benjamin Franklin once noted. This adage is especially true when it comes to disasters. Planning ahead and taking steps to lessen the impact of potential disasters can go a long way in minimizing the suffering and damage that often follow—particularly in places where people already face poverty and may lose the few resources or safety nets they have.

To this end, Episcopal Relief & Development has partnered with the Episcopal/Anglican Church to better prepare for and respond to disasters, whether natural or human-made. At the core of this goal is the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management initiative with the Anglican Diocese of Colombo and the Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA) in Sri Lanka.

A working group of regional and international partners evaluated existing disaster preparedness and response practices, identified possible improvements, and produced a toolkit of core competencies and standards, best practices and case studies.

Our program is designed to provide an approach that is consistent, yet adaptable to varying local contexts and disaster situations. Once the regional pilot has concluded, we plan to expand the initiative to other global partners.

Your partnership will help the worldwide Church improve its ability to respond to emergencies and reduce their impact. Make your donations to:


Episcopal Relief and Development
P.O. Box 7058
Merrifield, VA 22116-7058

July Birthdays




Saint John's celebrates the July birthdays of Cheryl Winters-Heard, Caroline Chestang, Tina Cieutat, and Mike Bonner. (Photo by Irene Yeager)

July 17, 2018



The Episcopal Church of the Central Gulf Coast



The 79th General Convention

General Convention Forum with Our Deputation

You're invited!

Saturday, August 4, 2018
from 10 a.m to noon

Christ Church Parish
18 West Wright Street
Pensacola, FL 32501

Bishop Russell and the rest of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast deputation to the 79th General Convention invite you to a forum offering a summary of their time at the General Convention, the actions taken on a number of key resolutions, and other details that are important for us to know about the Episcopal Church. There will be time for Q & A.

All are welcome. Registration not required. Childcare provided.



Mac Pearce	08/01	Eugene Johnston	08/21
Julia Heard	08/03	Erin Nelson	08/25
Andrew Lee	08/03	Bootsie Cieutat	08/26
Kat Velaski	08/03	David Rich	08/27
Kathe Gieseler	08/07	Marion Wallace	08/27
James Christiansen	08/11	David Jones	08/29

Michael & Mary Bonner	08/07
Robert & Charlynn Will	08/10
Curtis & Cindy Gass	08/19



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

Chick Wohlert, Mac Pearce, David Rich, Joyce Lee, Neil McPhail, Marian Boykin, Ron Brown, Jayson Chestang, Budd McLean.

For our Homebound:

Bea Brown, Joan-Marie Elam, LaVerne Foster, Mary Catherine Warren.

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

Jacob Hester-Heard, Marcus Rich, Ross Hussmann, Josh Vernor, Ellis Garner, Eric Mattoon.

For our Friends and Family:

Robert Levy, Andy Morgret, John Barnett, Denise Brewer, DeAnne DuBose, Bonnie Adler, Chris Christiansen, Connor, Georgia Morrison, Rolf & Cheryl McInnis, David Green, Laurie Williams, Melanie Boulter, Ted & Sadie McGill, Larry Kent, Frank Thompson, Tiffany Matthews, Augusta Wombaugh, Betty Williams, Lee Bert Benbow, Eddie Chubb, Kelley Lynd, Kay Barnes, Latecia Cushion Knight, Evia Daniel, Charles Geck, Jerry Wigfield, Karen Davis, 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, Mark Stüber.

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Janet Buckley, *clerk*

James Christiansen, *junior warden*

Cindy Gass, *senior warden*

Kathe Gieseler

Jan Joseph

Connie McLean, *treasurer*

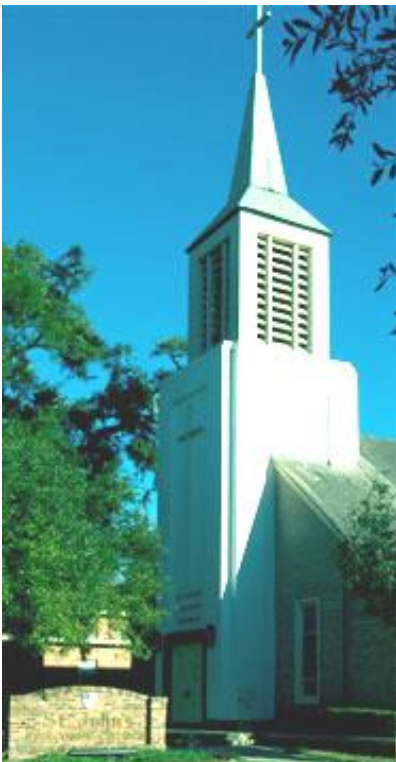
Nikki Shaw

Ron Waites

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 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.