



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

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FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

I received a call the other day that took me by surprise. The caller's initial question was straightforward enough: "Do you have a bookstore?"

I told him that we used to, but because of staffing and traffic, we'd given it up a couple of years ago. I suppose the rest of our conversation (and this column) are entirely my fault. I asked him, "What is it that you're looking for?", fully expecting him to say that he wanted to buy a Prayer Book for a niece/nephew/cousin that was being confirmed on Sunday. Of the dozen or so calls like this that I've received in the past, this has been the target object.

Color me surprised when the caller said, "Oh, the other Christian bookstores around here don't have anything theological; its all fluffy stuff without much substance. I'm looking for books by John Shelby Spong, Marcus Borg, or John Dominic Crossan."

In our continuing conversation, he revealed that he had been a Church of Christ pastor, but couldn't abide the literal reading of scripture that pervaded the denomination, so he left. He's doing some teaching in Bayou La Batre on Sunday mornings and is looking for texts for himself and possibly for his Sunday School.

We talked a bit about other authors he might investigate. I mentioned some of my favorites: James Alison, Barbara Brown Taylor, Henri Nouwen, Diana Butler Bass, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Catherine LaCugna. He'd read some, heard of others, and some were new.

Then he asked, "Do you know of anyone doing group reading of a book?" (While he didn't say it, I suspected that he was looking for other than Sunday mornings). I responded that our Adult Formation program had been doing Bible study and had read books in the past.

We talked a little about what he found in Spong that interested him. At one point he said that he thought Spong went too far with some things, like "All the names in the Bible are made up." After all, does it really make a difference? (We Anglicans would say that it is 'adiaphora', that is, something that is not essential for faith, and open for debate.)

He asked if we had any weekday Bible Study. I said that we didn't; that I had thought about it, but didn't know how much interest there would be.

I did tell him that we read Morning Prayer on weekdays and have a mass on Wednesdays. He asked about Morning Prayer, what it was and could he attend. I know you'll find it hard to believe, but I told him he could join us. Then he asked if "communion was closed". I said that all baptized Christians were welcome to receive.

We chatted for another five or ten minutes. He thanked me for my time, commenting that I had been much more open to him than another Episcopal Church rector he had spoken with.

I don't know his name. I don't know whether he will ever darken our door.

So, why have I shared this with you? Because it's a good example of encountering someone new, being open with him/her, being hospitable, and extending an invitation. I didn't initiate the contact. I was open and receptive to his questions. I was willing to talk with him. Our topic was something of mutual interest, and sort of naturally led to my invitation.

It really isn't hard and we have so much we can share with others.

--Thomas

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEPTEMBER LITURGICAL CALENDAR

John Henry Hobart

Bishop of New York from 1816 to 1830, John Henry Hobart was the driving force behind the revitalization of The Episcopal Church following the American Revolution. Hobart was an evangelist and mission planter in the state of New York. He was consecrated Assistant Bishop of New York in 1811 and succeeded Benjamin Moore as diocesan bishop and rector of Trinity Church, Wall Street. We'll commemorate his ministry at our Said Mass on Wednesday, 12 September at 10:00AM.

Holy Cross

On Friday, 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.

Theodore of Tarsus

On Wednesday, 19 September at 10AM, we will remember Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury. Theodore was consecrated as Archbishop in 668 and served until his death at the age of 88 in 690. His archepiscopate was characterized by establishing schools, conducting regular visitations, defining diocesan boundaries and laying the foundations for the English parochial system. The Venerable Bede says that Theodore was the first archbishop whom all the English obeyed. He is buried near Augustine in the ruins of the Abbey Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul at Canterbury.

Saint Matthew, Apostle & Evangelist

Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist will be commemorated on Friday, 21 September 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.

Lancelot Andrewes

We will commemorate the life and ministry of Lancelot Andrewes on Wednesday, 26 September at 10:00AM. Andrewes was a Greek and Hebrew scholar and was one of the translators of the Authorized Version (King James) of the Bible. A devout man, he was a favorite preacher of King James I and was influential in the education of priest and poet George Herbert.

Saint Michael & 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 ἄγγελος (Angelos) which means "messenger". This day we commemorate all the messengers and agents of God throughout the course of history.



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

Kathy & Morris Palefsky
 Jean & Cliff Brown
 Rick Lepine
 Judy & Junius Mattoon
 Shirley Hall
 Dom J. Cuccia
 Trace Crossing POA
 Vivian & Bill Watt
 Margaret & Bill Finegan

PARISH LIFE

4TH SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 23RD TAILGATE PARTY TIME!

It's time to wear your team colors and bring your favorite tailgate food; our 4th Sunday Potluck for September will have a "tailgate party" theme. We'll cheer for our teams and enjoy good food, good fellowship, and good friends. 4th Sunday is always a good time to invite family and friends to St. John's—the more the merrier!



ST JOHN'S SALE OF BOOKS AND RELIGIOUS ITEMS: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20

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. If you have religious items you would like to contribute to the sale we will be grateful for those too. Thank you to those who have already contributed.



BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS....



We're getting very good at putting the St. John's labels into the books that are going to the Head Start children: we put 1000 labels in 1000 books in less than an hour and a half!! Thank you to all the willing hands: those who opened the boxes, those who put the labels in the books, those who put the books back in the boxes and those who restacked the boxes. Many hands made short work! The children will be getting their books the second week in September.





Over the past few months, we have been hearing from members of the congregation about their attitudes toward giving to the church. Our contributor this month is Connie McLean.

No one likes to talk about the giving of money. That is, of course, unless you happen to be on the receiving end of the conversation.

Wait a minute—can it actually be true that the more you give or share really does outweigh anything you could ever receive? We are all wealthy in so many different ways and we are very generous in sharing. God always gives us the strength and courage to help find our own individual pathway to share that wealth.

Each year I have tried to increase my pledge. I know that God will always appreciate my effort.

-Connie McLean



Marking the month of September as paying particular attention to our relationship with God's creation is something we're doing in common with parishes all across The Episcopal Church. Our Stewardship of Creation is rooted in the creation stories of Genesis and can be found throughout the obligations of Torah.

In caring for creation, we "give back" to God for the blessings we have received. In the same way, our giving to the church is a "thanksgiving" for the gift of Jesus as Our Lord and Savior and his gift to us of eternal life.

We'll continue to talk about Stewardship as a Way of Living through the coming weeks, culminating in our pledge in-gathering in October.



Vestry

The regular meeting of the Wardens and Vestry of Saint John's Church was convened at 11:35 AM on 12 August 2018 by Fr. Thomas Heard.

The Agenda was adopted and the minutes of the May meeting were approved with corrections.

Connie McLean reviewed the financial statements for July, noting that we had a \$2,700 deficit for the month. She and Fr. Heard reviewed the Audit Report with the Vestry. The report was accepted by the Vestry.

The Head Start books have been labeled and will be distributed in September. Outreach will collect food stuffs for November food box distribution and prepare the Angel Tree for Azalea Gardens Nursing Home in December.

Parish Life reported that the picnic in July was a great success. The August potluck will be themed "Bring your favorites."

Louis Daniel updated the vestry on progress of the Garden rehab project. Darren Anderson reported that the water lines have been repaired and the sprinkler system needs to be re-evaluated. A roofer has made repairs to the Great Hall roof. Bids for replacement of the three flat roofs will be sought. We will be re-striping the parking lot in the coming weeks and a clean-up day will be scheduled.

Fr. Heard reported that McKemie Place continues to use the Great Hall. On 26 July, Lella Lowe and some of the McKemie ladies prepared their supper in our kitchen. MEJAC met in the Parlor on 12 July and 9 August. Saint John's was a polling place on 17 July. On 27-28 July, training sessions for Mobile Public Safety Chaplain were held in the Parlor.

Plans for Thee Store liquidation continue to be defined.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 PM with prayer by Fr. Heard.



SEASON OF CREATION

SEPTEMBER 1- OCTOBER 4

September 1 through October 4, Christians around the world celebrate the Season of Creation, a special season of prayer and action to protect God's creation. The Season begins with a World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation on September 1 (St. John's will recognize this with special Prayers of the People), and concludes on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, honoring the man who is regarded as the patron saint of ecology.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, recently signed "Faith leaders' invitation to join the Season of Creation." The invitation ends with these words:

"As the environmental crisis deepens, we Christians are urgently called to witness to our faith by taking bold action to preserve the gift we share. As the psalmist sings, 'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein' (Psalm 24:1-2). During the Season of Creation, we ask ourselves: Do our actions honor the Lord as Creator? Are there ways to deepen our faith by protecting 'the least of these,' who are most vulnerable to the consequences of environmental degradation?"

"We invite you to join us on a journey of faith that challenges and rewards us with fresh perspective and deeper bonds of love. United in our sincere wish to protect creation and all those who share it, we join hands across denominations as sisters and brothers in Christ. During this season, we walk together towards greater stewardship of our place in creation."

In September 2016, along with reconciliation and evangelism, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry identified care for creation as one of the three pillars of the Episcopal branch of The Jesus Movement. This strong statement is made on the Episcopal Church's website, backed up by years of policy statements made through resolutions passed at General Conventions:

Christians cannot be indifferent to global warming, pollution, natural resource depletion, species extinctions, and habitat destruction, all of which threaten life on our planet. Because so many of these threats are driven by greed, we must also actively seek to create more compassionate and sustainable economies that support the well-being of all God's creation.

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/environment>

At St. John's we will recognize the Season of Creation with weekly bulletin inserts that highlight some of the Episcopal Church's resolutions on the topics of eco-justice and climate change. We will also feature many of the creation-focused events being held in Mobile in the month of September, to suggest ways that we might personally learn about and act on environmental issues that affect our own Mobile Bay area.

THE MARTYRS OF MEMPHIS

ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

As communicants approach the high altar of St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Memphis, they are reminded graphically of the Sisters of St. Mary who, when the going got tough, were tougher. Unlike most Memphians who could—and did—leave town, they, along with a number of priests and lay people, stayed at the Cathedral school to nurse victims of the devastating 1878 Yellow Fever epidemic. The sisters' names are incised on the altar steps: Constance, Hughetta, Frances, Thecla, and Ruth.

The epidemic of 1878 was one of the most severe; every morning men driving mule wagons passed

through the city's neighborhoods calling "Bring out your dead!" so the corpses could be carried to Elmwood Cemetery for mass-grave burials. One can still see those burial sites today. Memphis was so depopulated that the city eventually lost its charter.

"Constance and Her Companions" or, informally, the "Martyrs of Memphis," were added to the Episcopal Church's Lesser Feasts and Fasts in 1981. Their feast day, September 9, commemorates their sacrifices.

-Mary Gieseler



RESPONDING TO FLOODS IN KERALA, INDIA

Episcopal Relief & Development is responding to the critical needs of people impacted by the worst floods to hit Kerala, India in a century. The devastating floods began with torrential downpours on August 8 in the southern state.

Working with the ACT Alliance through CASA, Episcopal Relief & Development's support is part of a multi-agency response providing emergency supplies such as food, temporary shelter, hygiene kits, water storage containers, water purifiers and agricultural seeds for 4,000 vulnerable families.

As of August 20, approximately 350 people have died in the rising waters and landslides, and more than 700,000 are displaced in overcrowded relief camps around the region. According to state authorities, Kerala usually receives high rainfall. This year, between August 8 and August 15, the flood-hit state has seen over 250 percent more rain than normal.

"Our hearts go out to all of the people affected by the floods. We will continue to support these communities and keep them in our prayers," said Nagulan Nesiah, Senior Program Officer, Disaster Response and Risk Reduction for Episcopal Relief & Development.

To support Episcopal Relief & Development's response to the devastating floods, please pray for those impacted or make a donation to the International Disaster Fund at Episcopal Relief & Development P.O. Box 7058 Merrifield, VA 22116-7058.

August Birthdays



Saint John's celebrates the August birthdays of James Christiansen, Kathe Gieseler, David Jones, Bootsie Cieutat, and Eugene Johnston, and Father Thomas' 11th anniversary at St. John's. (Photo by Irene Yeager)

Elsewhere in the Diocese

DIOCESAN ACOLYTE FESTIVAL

The Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast will be celebrating a day all about honoring the ministry of acolytes, and will include workshops on different aspects of being an acolyte, Acolyte Olympics, catered lunch, and a Festival Eucharist with procession of participants. The event is being hosted by Christ Church Cathedral in Mobile, on September 15, from 8:30 am to 3 pm.

BAYLIGHTS AT BECKWITH

September 28-30, 2018

A weekend of fun and fellowship in support of Beckwith.

- ⇒ **Friday night** - Undercroft Cafe at 6:30pm with Sean of the South at 7:30pm.
- ⇒ **Saturday** - Bishop's BBQ 12:00pm, Diocesan Visioning with Bishop Russell 1:00pm, Diocesan Ultreya 2:30pm.
- ⇒ **Saturday evening** - Music with Rock Bottom 5:00pm, Live ticket draw down 5:00pm - 8:00pm, Low Country Boil 6:00pm, music and dancing by the Bay until 9:00pm.



Thomas Creel	09/02	Jeremy Anderson	09/20
Ron Brown	09/06	Mary Bonner	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
Jim Hayward	09/15	Ashley Garris	09/26
Lavelle Ollhoft	09/19		

Jan & Mark Joseph	09/02
Regina & John Molyneux	09/02
Jan & Mark Joseph	09/02
Erin Nelson & Chris Delaporte	09/12
Irene & Butch Yeager	09/29



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

Bootsie Cieutat, Ron Waites, Chick Wohlert, Mac Pearce, 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:

Abigail Harrison, Martha Pounds, Robert Levy, John Barnett, Denise Brewer, Bonnie Adler, Chris Christiansen, Connor, David Green, Laurie Williams, Ted & Sadie McGill, Tiffany Matthews, Augusta Wombaugh, Betty Williams, Kelley Lynd, Kay Barnes, Latecia Cushion Knight, Evia Daniel, Charles Geck, Mary Jo Vinson, Bonnie Jernigan, Kaye Turner, Britney Butler, Angie Leon, Neal Tourné, Sandy & Ray Michel, Connor Crist, Paul Nelson, Krystal Hiatt, Mark Stiber, Michael Curry [*bishop*], Bob Graves [*priest*].

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Cindy Gass, *senior warden*

Kathe Gieseler

Jan Joseph

Connie McLean, *treasurer*

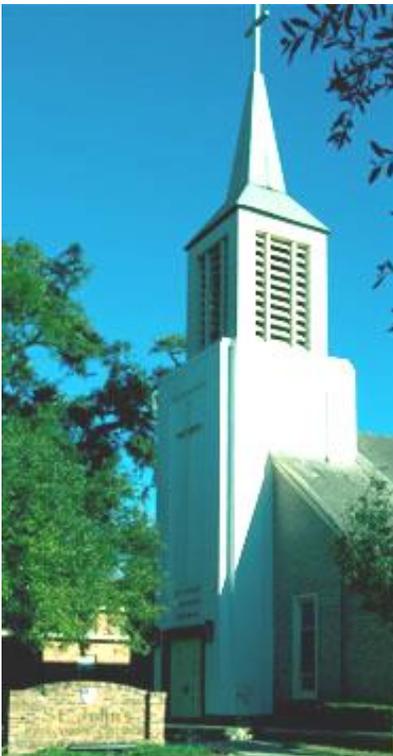
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 Mobile, Alabama 36604

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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

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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.