



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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December 2018

FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

As I write this, we are in the waning days of the church year. Last Sunday was “The Last Sunday after Pentecost” and with the adoption of the Revised Common Lectionary, we inherited the subtitle “Christ the King”. The readings for the day certainly emphasize the sovereignty of Jesus; they are also very apocalyptic and place a strong emphasis on Jesus’ second coming.

First century Christians expected Jesus’ return in the very near term, imminently, possibly “tomorrow.” This is very evident in the writings of Saint Paul, though some of the later epistles seem to walk back the immediacy. The [Revelation to John](#) gives us technicolor images of what that might look like. On one hand, it is glorious; on the other, it is terrifying. Revelation 20 tells us that the beast was chained and locked up for 1000 years. This marks the beginning of what’s known as the 1000 Year Reign of Christ. At the end of the thousand years, Satan will be released and finally defeated.

As you might imagine, this is interpreted in a variety of ways by different religious groups and members within those groups. There are four predominant interpretations:

- Dispensational Premillennialism—A very literal reading of scripture. The church will be raptured before the seven years of tribulation. At the end of it, Christ will return to institute a 1000 year reign from Jerusalem.
- Historical Premillennialism—A literal or metaphorical reading of scripture. Prophecies will be fulfilled. When the millennium begins, the Temple worship and sacrifice will be restored as a remembrance of Christ.

- Postmillennialism—The millennium is an era rather than a strict time period where there is widespread belief in the Gospel, the Kingdom of God is a spiritual entity as the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham to make him a great nation.
- Amillennialism—The Kingdom of God was initiated at Christ’s resurrection and is a spiritual reality. The millennium is an already/not yet, where Christ reigns over all and is already victorious over Satan.

These are very brief and cursory descriptions, so don’t get too wrapped up in them.

Curiously, as we begin Advent on the first Sunday of December, we will be presented with images of the second coming of Jesus, playing right into the hands of the millennialists, regardless of their particular views on the subject.

I’d like to suggest that we endeavor to create an anamnetic memory of Jesus’ first coming and the work that he did and will do for us all. Let’s put flesh on those memories and bring them to life within us. Let’s not focus on the second coming, rather, let’s focus on inviting Jesus, the anointed one of God to:

- Take possession of our hearts,
- Allow him to shape and mold us so our wills conform to the will of God,
- Be obedient to his understanding the greatest commandment: To love God and to love each other.

--Thomas

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DECEMBER LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Clement of Alexandria

We will commemorate Clement of Alexandria at our Said Mass on Wednesday, 5 December at 10:00AM. Clement was a priest and philosopher living in Alexandria, Egypt from about 150 to 210. He founded the Christian Catechetical School and was a teacher of Origen. His life coincided with the age of Gnosticism, a movement that claimed special knowledge of salvation. Clement was influenced by it, but did not succumb to its lures. His most famous writing was "What Rich Man Will Be Saved?"

Saint Thomas the Apostle

Thomas, called "the twin," will be commemorated at a mass on Friday, 21 December at 12:10PM. Thomas is recorded in John's Gospel in several incidents. Seemingly somewhat literal minded and inclined to skepticism, Thomas was a staunch friend. According to Eusebius and others, Thomas evangelized the Parthians. Christians of Malabar, India claim that Thomas brought the Gospel to India.

The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

We will celebrate the birth of Our Lord at two liturgies. On Christmas Eve, with music beginning at 7:00PM, the 7:30PM Solemn Mass and Procession will welcome the Babe of Bethlehem. The Wise Men will begin their journey this night as well. On Christmas Day at 10:00AM, we will have a Said Mass.

Saint Stephen, Deacon and Martyr

Stephen, one of the first deacons of the first century Jerusalem church, was the first recorded martyr for the cause of Christ. His story is contained in the Acts of the Apostles. In it, a certain Pharisee named Saul is standing by. We will commemorate Stephen on Wednesday, 26 December with a Said Mass at 10:00AM.

Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist

We will commemorate Saint John, the patron of our parish, at a Said Mass on Thursday, 27 December at 12:10PM. While historical data is suspicious of the apostle and the writer of the fourth Gospel being the same person, this has been the Church's view since the second century.

The Holy Innocents

We will commemorate The Holy Innocents on Friday, 28 December at a Said Mass at 12:10PM. This feast commemorates the children Herod the Great slaughtered out of fear of the Babe of Bethlehem. Though not supported by secular history, the Church, since at least the fourth century, has honored these innocents as martyrs.



THE GREENING OF THE CHURCH SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2018

Our annual "Greening of the Church" comes close to Christmas day this year. We'll be decorating the church for Christmas on the 4th Sunday of Advent as always, but this year that will be on Sunday, December 23rd. We'll spend some time after the morning service on the 23rd to "deck the halls" of the church so that our first Christmas service of the Christmas season the next day will be beautifully decorated. We'll need willing hands, creative talents, and some magnolia leaves...cookies and cider after we are finished.

OUTREACH

SHARING CHRISTMAS GIVING

The Saint John's "Angel Tree" will be up again this year. The gifts will be going to residents of *Azalea Gardens Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center* (formerly Kindred Nursing Home).

The tags have names of the nursing home residents and requests for specific items. The list of items was given to us by the Activity Director of the nursing home. Some were requested by the residents themselves and, for those residents that have trouble communicating, the staff suggested needed items.

The gifts will be given to low income, senior, long term residents of Azalea Gardens who do not have a network of family or friends who can provide them with presents that make the holidays special.

Each tag has the name of an individual with a specific request. We are asking that you take a tag (or two or three) from the tree, purchase the specific items requested, and return **by Sunday, December 16th**, wrapped or in a gift bag with the angel tag on it. We will be delivering the gifts on December 18th.

This year we are asking you to "sign up": Please put your name next to the tag(s) name you took; that way if you lose or misplace your angel tag we can look it up for you and we can make sure all of the residents we committed to, get their presents.

Don't like to shop: the Outreach Committee is providing a "shopping service." There will be a basket and some envelopes next to the tree, choose an "angel" put it in the envelope with the amount you wish to spend (check or cash) and a member of the Outreach Committee will do your shopping for you.

— Outreach Committee



PARISH LIFE

SAINT JOHN'S PARISH CHRISTMAS PARTY

It's time to put on those Christmas sweaters and ties and celebrate the Christmas season at Saint John's. Bring your family and friends to church and stay for our annual Christmas Party.

When: Sunday, December 30th, 2018
Where: Parish Hall after Sunday Service

The ECW is providing the main course but we need all the "fixin's" and (of course) desserts. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.



COOKIE EXCHANGE

Remember lots of yummy cookies laid out across two long tables? Remember the "if you brought, you can take" instructions? It was the St. John's Cookie Exchange and we're getting ready to do it again!

On **Sunday, December 16th**, after the service, we will have our annual **Christmas Cookie Exchange**: bring two or three dozen cookies (or candy or slices of cake) and we'll all walk around the table filling up our plates. This is a chance to get a great plate of a variety of goodies and only have to cook but once.

Remember:
The more
participants,
the more
variety!





In Loving Memory

CHARLES WOHLERT (1924-2018)

“Chick”, as we all knew him entered into new life on Saturday, 10 November. For several years, Chick had been a resident of the W.F. Green State Veterans Home in Bay Minette, AL. Chick was baptized and confirmed at Saint Paul’s in 1936 and 1937. His name first appears in the Communicant Register in 1949. His last year or two brought great difficulty in communication; he couldn’t hear much and was very hard to understand. I remember Chick best in his “Ham Shack” at the house on Shell Road Place. He loved talking to folks all over the world and always brought a big grin to his usually smiling face. Chick was interred at Mobile Memorial Gardens next to Dot. When the weather gets a bit warmer, we’ll gather some folks at graveside to give Chick an Episcopal send-off.

MAX L. STIBER (1930-2018)

Max came to Saint John’s in the summer of 1970 by Letter of Transfer from Grace Episcopal Church in Old Saybrook, CT. He and his wife, Annette, moved to Mobile for Max’s job at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, MS. Max was an engineer with a highly disciplined mind and encyclopaedic knowledge of his field. One of the things I will always remember about Max was his participation in the sermon conversations that we often have at Wednesday’s mass. Max asked intelligent questions and contributed greatly to the discussion. I’m really going to miss that. Max will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery. When the family can all be present, we will say mass for Max at Saint John’s.



Saint John’s wishes to extend a sincere thank you to those who made donations:

In memory of Roy Duhon

Margie Meador Duhon & Ben Duhon

Charles Hayes Coldwell Banker

Scherry Adams

In memory of Max Stiber

Joyce Lee

James Christiansen

In memory of Chick Wohlert

Joyce Lee

Bootsie & Tina Cieutat

Sandra Meador Wilson

James Christiansen

In honor of her children: Steven, Julie & Jeffery

Audrey Garner



November Birthdays



Saint John’s celebrates the November birthdays of Caitlin Bryan, Cindy Gass, Landon Heavner, Louis Daniel, and Nikki Shaw.

Photo by Irene Yeager.



Vestry

The regular meeting of the Wardens and Vestry of Saint John's Church was called to order on 11 November 2018 at 11:40AM. Darren Anderson was excused due to his work schedule. The minutes from the October meeting were approved.

Connie McLean reviewed the finances: There was a \$6,511 deficit for October. The transfer from the Endowment was received.

Janet Buckley reported that the fall food drive has concluded and the boxes will be distributed this week.

Reporting for Parish Life, Janet reminded the vestry that the potluck theme for November is "Let's do brunch". December will have the Christmas Party on the 5th Sunday.

Reporting for Darren Anderson, Fr. Heard said that the patch has been applied to the Great Hall roof and the ceiling tiles in the Great Hall have been replaced. He reminded the vestry that no decision has been made concerning further roof work or trimming the live oak trees.

Fr. Heard reported that, in addition to the weekday use of the Parish House by McKemie Place, MEJAC met on 11/08 and Saint John's was the Precinct 56 Polling Place on 11/06. Commitment campaign letters and pledge cards will go out next week.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 12:50PM.

A special meeting of the Wardens and Vestry was called to order on 18 November 2018 at 11:15AM for the purpose of setting the date for the meeting to elect vestry and convention delegates.

It was voted to call for a meeting of the parish to elect vestry and convention delegates for 16 December 2018 at the end of mass.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20AM.

CALL FOR MEETING

The Vestry of Saint John's has called a Meeting of the Parish for Sunday, 16 December 2018 for the purpose of electing new members of the Vestry and electing Diocesan Convention Delegates and Alternates. The meeting will begin after the Blessing at the Mass.

This year, we will be electing 3 persons to 3-year terms on the Vestry. We will elect 3 delegates to Diocesan Convention and as many as 3 alternates, as well.

2018 CONTRIBUTIONS

For donations to be included in your 2018 contributions statement, they must be physically received in the church office or postmarked by December 31, 2018.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Look for Christmas poinsettia signup cards in the Narthex and the Great Hall beginning Sunday, December 2. Deadline to place your order is Sunday, December 16.



EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT KICKS OFF \$700,000 HOLIDAY MATCH

Thanks to a generous group of donors, Episcopal Relief & Development is launching its annual Holiday Match again this year, offering our supporters and new donors the chance to double their impact with a donation. From now until the end of the year, every dollar donated will be matched, up to a total of \$700,000.

“In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells his listeners, ‘You are the light of the world,’” said Rob Radtke, President & CEO of Episcopal Relief & Development. “The Holiday Match provides an exceptional opportunity to be that light and to amplify the life-changing impact Episcopal Relief & Development and our partners are creating together.”

The Holiday Match will benefit the Global Needs Fund, enabling the organization to work around the world with local partners as they help communities overcome poverty, hunger, disease and rebuild after disasters. Contributions will help fund projects such as microloans and training to economically empower

women around the world, community health programs to improve the health and well-being of women and children, and disaster preparedness and response efforts both domestically and overseas.

Donations made to any Episcopal Relief & Development fund before December 31 are eligible for matching, including contributions online, over the phone, by mail or through [Gifts for Life](#), the organization’s alternative giving catalog. Gifts of stock or from an IRA are also eligible for the Holiday Match.

“Through your support of our work, you are helping to transform the world, revealing the potential that exists but lies in communities around the globe that are struggling with poverty and hunger,” said Radtke.

Between now and the end of the year, all contributions up to \$700,000 will be matched. Donate online at episcopalrelief.org/match or call 1.855.312.4325. Gifts can also be mailed to Episcopal Relief & Development, PO Box 7058, Merrifield, VA 22116-7058.

2019 PLEDGE SUMMARY

As this newsletter goes to print, we have received financial commitments from 20 pledge units for 2019 totaling \$62,424. In 2018, we received 38 pledges totaling \$137,468.

If you plan to pledge to the 2019 operating budget, please turn in a pledge card as soon as possible. Extra cards are available in the church office.

THIS AND THAT

Congratulations to Nikki Shaw. Her entry in the Southern Exposure Photographic Show won Best in Show. She entered a black and white photo of a rose. We are so proud of her!

Help needed! Our newsletter is folded and made ready for mailing on the last Thursday of each month. With enough helping hands, it takes less than a couple of hours to complete. We can use additional helpers, and you would enjoy the fun and fellowship. If you are interested, please contact Neva Bache.

Don’t forget bingo prizes for Murray House. Holiday items and costume jewelry would add lots of fun to the games. Add new life to your old jewelry by donating it to Murray House.

December scrip orders are due December 2 so that all gifts cards will be available by December 9. Please see Bootsie Cieutat to place your order.

FLOWER CHART SIGN-UP

It’s time to sign up for flowers for 2019! Please use the cards on the bulletin board to begin signing up to supply altar flowers for Sundays in 2019. As Sundays are covered we will update the flower chart and post it for all to see. Altar flowers cost \$55 per Sunday.





Jon Barbour	12/02	P. L. Pritchard	12/10
Pat Pritchard	12/04	Marie Brown	12/12
Craig Hall	12/05	Bailey James	12/14
Jack Ruppe	12/08	Chris Delaporte	12/23
Marie McPhail	12/10	Jan Joseph	12/23



Bob & Connie Anderson	12/07
Brian (Cully) & Meagan Clanton	12/09
Thomas Heard and Cheryl Winters-Heard	12/11
Mike & Fran Barbour	12/24



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

Tina Cieutat, Joan-Marie Elam, Carolyn Pearce, Audrey Garner, Joyce Lee, Mac Pearce, Neil McPhail, Marian Boykin, Ron Brown, Jayson Chestang, Budd McLean.

For our Homebound:

Bea Brown, 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:

Bambi Lynn Reynolds Marrow, Tyler Kimmons, Del Howatt, Kara Reynolds Hall, Ellen Green, Christina Morgret, Sue Sheffield, David Shippee, Abigail Harrison, Martha Pounds, Robert Levy, John Barnett, Bonnie Adler, Chris Christiansen, Connor, David Green, Laurie Williams, 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.

Contact Us

Staff:

The Reverend Thomas Heard, *rector*
rector@stjohnsmobile.org

Louis Daniel
Organist & Choir Director
music@stjohnsmobile.org

Lella Lowe
Financial Secretary
finance@stjohnsmobile.org

Jack Ruppe
Sexton

Vestry:

Darren Anderson, *junior warden*

Janet Buckley, *clerk*

James Christiansen

Cindy Gass, *senior warden*

Kathe Gieseler

Jan Joseph

Connie McLean, *treasurer*

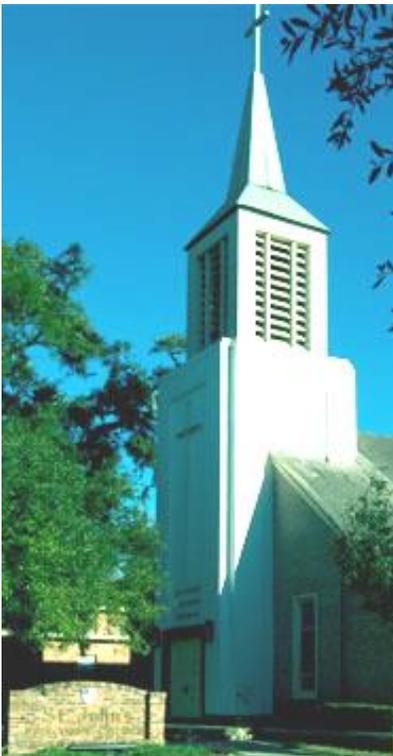
Nikki Shaw

Ron Waites

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.