



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. XXIX, Issue 10

October 2019

FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

Recently, I've been hearing more and more of some quasi-religious statements. No, I'm not hearing these from you all. One might say, "Out there in the world."

First up is, "I'll be praying for you." While it might be an actual promise to hold someone up in prayer, it usually seems to be a little more like, "Well, bless her heart." Generally, it comes off as a way to end that part of a conversation.

We have a pretty extensive prayer list. It covers our own parish, including those members who are unable to attend. We have a long list of family and friends. The person that has asked to put someone on this list has shared with me the "why" of the request. The list is long enough that I have to keep a list, or I confuse folks. We also have a list of folks in the armed forces.

We raise up the homeless, those recovering from natural disasters, those with addictions, those in prison and their families. A recent addition to the list is the cities in which shootings have occurred where four or more folks have been wounded or killed in the incident. Lastly, we raise up all who have died, sometimes naming one or more people.

When our lector is leading the Prayers of the People, there is a pause between the end of the petition and the versicle that follows. Sometimes there's lots of room for folks in the congregation to add their own specific petitions and sometimes not. (I probably need to work with the lectors on that.) It is a moment where you can bring before God those people or situations that are heavy on your heart. Sharing them with the rest of us lets us join with you, even though we might not know why.

Another statement that I hear is, "God never gives you more than you can handle." Sometimes I just want to scream! The implications of this statement are incredible. For example, God gave you that cancer because you can handle it. Hooey! It goes on, though,

because if you don't survive the disease, then you must not have been good enough. Hogwash! There is also the implication that God "tests us" with things. I hope you're immediately thinking about the Genesis story of the Sacrifice of Isaac (Gen 22:1-19). If that's the case, then it's kind of foolish to pray for someone who is "being tested by God"; that would imply that we're asking God to intervene in God's "test."

The last one is "It must be God's will.", and its companion, "Everything happens for a reason." If that is really the case, then we have no free will and everything that happens in the universe is controlled by God. Picture a single puppet master running everything in the world! See, that also means that hurricanes, floods, fires, volcanic eruptions, and the like are orchestrated by God. I think you can see where I come down on this one, too.

So, when we raise up someone in prayer, what exactly are we doing? Are we asking God to "fix" what ever it is? If so, doesn't that require a miracle? Rather than asking for that kind of interventions, I'd like to suggest that we are asking for strength, for confidence, for reassurance, for patience, and for peace on behalf of the person or people we're raising up.

I was watching "Bull" the other night. In this episode there was the return of a phrase used in a previous episode: "Sometimes, things just happen." It says that there is randomness in the world. Sure, sometimes we have culpability in the events in our lives. Sometimes, things just happen. That doesn't mean we can't care about folks or be concerned. That's when we raise someone up before God, to let God know that we're concerned about them, too. That we wish there was something we could do to make whatever troubles them be OK.

Don't get me wrong, I'll take that miracle any day of the week, but my prayers won't all be asking for one.

-- Thomas.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OCTOBER LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Robert Grosseteste

One of the outstanding bishops of the 13th century, Robert Grosseteste came from humble beginnings. He was accomplished in the law, medicine, language, science, and theology. He served as teacher, translator, and commentator. It is partially due to Robert's excellence in so many fields that Oxford began the study of sciences. He was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln in 1235 and was renowned for visiting his parishes, spending time with both laity and clergy. We will remember Bishop Robert's life at our Said Mass on 9 October at 10:00 AM.

Bishops Ridley, Latimer & Cranmer

Three bishops, Hugh Latimer, Nicholas Ridley and Thomas Cranmer were burned at the stake in Oxford. Cranmer was Archbishop of Canterbury and the primary force behind *Common Prayer*. Nicholas Ridley was a staunch supporter of Cranmer and Hugh Latimer was the outstanding preacher of the Reformation period in England. All three ran afoul of Queen Mary after the death of Edward the Sixth. On October 16, 1555, Ridley and Latimer were executed and on March 21, 1556, Thomas Cranmer joined his colleagues. We will commemorate the bishops at our Said Mass on 16 October at 10:00 AM.

Saint Luke the Evangelist

We will celebrate the life and ministry of Saint Luke the Evangelist at a Said mass on Friday, 18 October, at 12:10 PM. Luke, the self-identified author of the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, brings his own perspective on the person and ministry of Jesus and Jesus' continuing effect on the world. Luke's account of the spread of the early church and the ministry of Saint Paul help us to craft a picture of the

world in the first century. His portrayal of the radical hospitality and inclusion that Jesus manifested still stands today as a standard by which we can judge our ministries.

Saint James of Jerusalem

We will remember **Saint James of Jerusalem**, the brother of Our Lord, at a Said mass on Wednesday, 23 October 2013 at 10:00 AM. Sometimes called "James the Just", James supported the inclusion of Gentiles in the church. According to a second-century chronicler, James provoked the ire of some factions in Jerusalem because of his success at bringing new converts into the church. Taking James to the pinnacle of the Temple, they commanded him to recant his faith and Jesus. When he refused, James was thrown from the roof and then cudged to death.

Saints Simon & Jude, Apostles

Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles will be remembered at a Said mass on Monday, 28 October at 12:10 PM. Sadly, our knowledge of these two original apostles is quite lacking. Simon is referred to as "a Zealot" and Saint John mentions Jude in his account of the Last Supper. Tradition associates both with the region of Persia, now Iran. Some accounts call them martyrs; some say that both died peaceful deaths in Edessa or Beirut. One Epistle of Jude brings us a unique doxology:

"Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing,
 25 to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and for ever. Amen.



BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Please join us at Saint John's on Sunday, 6 October at 4:00PM in the courtyard for a blessing of all of our furry, feathered and finned friends. All types of animals are welcome, but please respect others and leash or restrain your pets.



Vestry

The regular meeting of the Wardens and Vestry of Saint John's Church was called to order at 11:30 AM on 8 September 2019 by Fr. Heard.

Darren Anderson was working, Bootsie Cieutat was ill, Ron Waites was out of town, and Kathe Gieseler was absent.

The minutes of the 11 August meeting were approved as corrected.

Connie McLean reviewed the financial reports, noting that we will run short in the next month. She added that a withdrawal of \$25,000 has been requested from our funds with the Episcopal Church Foundation. We should see this in our bank account around mid October.

Outreach is soliciting luggage to be given to children being placed in foster homes from institutional settings.

Spread the Word committee is working on yard signs and a banner for Blessing of the Animals on October 6.

No report from Parish Life as Bootsie was absent.

The replacement of the soffit and fascia on the first floor of the parish house is underway. Waterproofing of the west exposure of the second floor is in progress. Repairs to 1702 Church St. have been approved and we are waiting to be contacted by the contractor.

Fr. Heard reported that Gloria Dei Chorale used the Great Hall and the Church for a workshop and concert on 23-24 August. McKemie Place submitted its plans to the city on 8 August. Stewardship will kick off in October with bulletin inserts followed by a letter.

The Audit Report, prepared by Kim Enikeieff, was approved by the Vestry.

Thee Store fixtures are being prepared for sale.



October orders due Sunday, October 13. Gifts cards available by Sunday, October 20.

The scrip program is a simple way to financially support St. John's without costing you a cent. Simply buy gift cards for retailers you shop with all the time, and the church receives a percentage. Easy peasy. Give it a try this month!

September Birthdays



Celebrating September birthdays at St. John's with Mary Bonner and Jason Chestang. Also pictured—Mary Jones. (Photo by Irene Yeager)



Did you know that St. John's provides the drinks, desserts and paper products for the evening meal once a month for McKemie Place, Mobile's only shelter for homeless, unaccompanied women? If you would like to help on the 4th Thursday of every month, please contact James Christiansen or Lella Lowe.

SHINING OUR LIGHT

“The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.” — PSALM 121:7-8

BY KATHY HOOD CULMER

I was near the point of tears last year when I broke some of my mother’s salt and pepper shakers. I had kept them safely in a cabinet in the corner of the dining room for years, taking them out a few times during the year to dust them off and return them to their display case. This time, however, I must have pressed too hard on a shelf or something, setting off a chain reaction and causing a number of those shakers to go crashing to the floor, some of them unrecoverable.

In terms of dollar value, the salt and pepper shakers my mother had collected for who knows how many years may not have been worth very much. Some, however, had come from pretty interesting places. My mother’s friends who traveled and knew she was a collector would bring her souvenir shakers from those places, and that gave them their value to her. I had contributed some in that way, as well.

And while my mother has been gone from this earth for more than two decades, it has been important to me to take good care of “her” salt and pepper shakers, which have become mine, because of what they had meant to her. I treasure them and care for them as though she would someday return to see what a great job I’ve done and be pleased, or to tell me how proud she was of the loving care I have given to the special gift she left me.

What if we held such regard for the gifts that God has given us for our provision and pleasure? What if we kept such careful watch over all that has been entrusted to us for our safekeeping, including our bodies, minds, relationships, and the earth’s resources, taking every measure possible to avoid breakage or overconsumption or misuse and abuse? What if we did so, not out of fear or obligation, but because of our great love for the Giver, because we want the Giver to be well pleased with us and maybe even proud of us?

What if we would spend every day we’re given expressing our thanksgiving for all that we have received in the way we care for all that has been provided?

Kathy Hood Culmer holds a doctorate of ministry in biblical storytelling. She is a professional storyteller, educator, advocate and retreat leader. The proud mother of three daughters, she and her husband reside in Houston and are active in the Diocese of Texas. Her meditations have appeared on multiple occasions in Forward Movement’s Day by Day Devotional.

Annual Commitment Campaign

Pledge cards will be mailed to all members later this month.

Ingathering will be Sunday , 10 November.



ONE THOUSAND DAYS OF LOVE

Episcopal Relief & Development announces the launch of ONE THOUSAND DAYS OF LOVE, a \$3 million grassroots Church-wide fundraising campaign dedicated to expanding the organization's global programs improving the lives of children up to age six. The campaign started on September 4, 2019, and will run for 1,000 days, ending May 31, 2022.

"Love allows us to bridge great distances so that children an ocean away are as precious to us as the little ones living right down the block," said the Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church and Honorary Co-Chair of ONE THOUSAND DAYS OF LOVE. "Episcopal Relief & Development's programs with children share our love with thousands of children in Africa, Asia and Latin America. With your help, we can demonstrate God's love to thousands more."

Research shows that the first 1,000 days for children are critical in setting a foundation that affects their ability to grow, learn and thrive over their entire lives. Around the world, 155 million children under five are stunted due to inadequate nutrition and health care. Episcopal Relief & Development works with communities to ensure that children have access to food, clean water, and quality health care.

"We believe that every child deserves to reach their full potential," said Abigail Nelson, Senior Vice President,

Programs for Episcopal Relief & Development. "Our integrated programs are designed to work together, to address many of the challenges faced by marginalized communities, and to give children the opportunity to thrive throughout their lives."

Episcopal Relief & Development invites individuals, congregations and dioceses to join ONE THOUSAND DAYS OF LOVE by engaging in acts of love of their own. These acts can include:

- ◆ Learning about the campaign and the organization's work with children.
- ◆ Sharing the campaign with their congregations and communities on social media, through online peer-to-peer fundraising and other creative campaign activities.
- ◆ Giving as an individual or congregation to help expand the organization's work with children.

"We encourage you to visit the website to learn more about how you and your congregation can get involved. This is only the beginning! We will be sharing additional resources and activities as the campaign moves forward," said Chad Brinkman, Director, Campaign with Episcopal Relief & Development.



EPISCOPAL CHURCH OFFERS RELIEF TO SOUTH CAROLINA FOOD SERVICE WORKERS

The Episcopal Church in South Carolina, the diocese in the eastern half of the state, is extending a helping hand to food service workers who suffered financial loss due to an inability to work before, during, and after the time Hurricane Dorian passed the coast of South Carolina.

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Funded by an Episcopal Relief and Development grant of \$25,000, the church has partnered with Giving Kitchen of Atlanta to create the Hurricane Dorian Relief Fund and offer financial assistance to food service workers experiencing hardship due to Hurricane Dorian in coastal South Carolina.

“While many people in South Carolina did not suffer significant property damage from Hurricane Dorian, the storm was financially devastating to hourly employees who because of the state’s mandatory evacuation were unable to work for nearly a week,” said the Rt. Rev. Gladstone B. “Skip” Adams III, Bishop of The Episcopal Church in South Carolina. “We are thankful for the assistance of Episcopal Relief & Development in allowing our diocese to serve this tremendous need in our local communities.”

One-time funds are provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Food service workers may apply for assistance from the Hurricane Dorian Relief Fund from now through Sept. 30. Membership or participation in the Episcopal Church is not a precursor for support.

Giving Kitchen’s application requires food service workers impacted by Hurricane Dorian to provide proof of current employment in the commercial food service industry as well as financial need.

Approved applicants will receive grocery store gift cards in amounts ranging from \$50 to \$500 based on current need.

Elsewhere in the Diocese

SUNDAY OCTOBER 13 TO BE MURRAY HOUSE SUNDAY IN THE DIOCESE

Bishop Russell Kendrick has proclaimed Sunday October 13 to be Murray House Sunday across the Diocese. Murray House is an agency of the Diocese and has been for the past 25 years. As an Assisted Living Facility, Murray House seeks to serve many of the most vulnerable of society with dignity and respect.

Murray House’s traces its history back to 1829 as the Benevolent Home for Aged Women with the idea of providing comfortable living quarters for dependently elderly woman. This was a ministry of Government Street Presbyterian Church and later it became known as “Widows Row”.

Fast forward to 1994 and the facility was gifted to the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast. After three years of construction, the facility was brought up to modern standards and met the historical requirements of the neighborhood in which it sits.

The staff of forty works tirelessly to ensure that all residents (women and men) are safe, comfortable and active. Residents can participate in a variety of activities such as arts and crafts, birthdays parties, trips around the community and social hour. In addition, priests from the Mobile area come each week for Holy Communion in the beautiful chapel.

The purpose of Murray House Sunday is to inform the Diocese of this ministry and ask for assistance in replacing the facility’s aging roof in the “Raise the Roof Project”. While trying to be a reasonable cost option for individuals, Murray House must seek funds for capital improvements.

For more information please call Pam Koch at 251.454.7110 or Laura Rutherford at 251.476.7350.





Ashleigh Sheffield	10/04	LaVerne Foster	10/15
Charlynn Will	10/04	Pam Velaski	10/24
Meagan Clanton	10/08	Chris Velaski	10/24
Bob Anderson	10/11	Madison Hughes	10/25
Kay Meador	10/11	Jeweliana Barbour	10/27
Marjorie Duhon	10/13	Audrey Garner	10/30
Shirley Hall	10/14		



Ron & Marie Brown	10/07
Budd & Connie McLean	10/22



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

Jerry Fulford, Mary Bonner, Bootsie Cieutat, James Christiansen, Cookie Rich, Bill Duke, Marie Brown, Audrey Garner, Joyce Lee, Marian Boykin, Ron Brown, Jayson Chestang, Budd McLean.

For our Homebound:

Joan-Marie Elam, LaVerne Foster, Mary Gieseler, Mary Catherine Warren.

For our Family and Friends:

Katelynn Tillman, Solomon Thompson, Karen Twilley, Peggy Sheffield, Lucas Hembree, J.E. Ryland, Nancy Payne, Lewis Johnston, William Dorsey, Donna Pigg, Fred Lloyd, Robert & Dorothy Johnson, Paul Kreamer, Jerry Wigfield, Glenda Evans, Ouida McNider, Kara Reynolds Hall, Sue Sheffield, David Shippee, Abigail Harrison, Robert Levy, Connor, David Green, Tiffany Matthews, Betty Williams, Kay Barnes, Latecia Cushion Knight, Evia Daniel, Charles Geck, Mary Jo Vinson, Bonnie Jernigan, Kaye Turner, Britney Butler, Neal Tourné, Sandy & Ray Michel, Connor Crist, Paul Nelson, Krystal Hiatt.

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

Alicia Logan, Jacob Hester-Heard, Marcus Rich, Ross Hussmann, Ellis Garner, Eric Mattoon.

Contact Us

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Janet Buckley, *clerk*

Bootsie Cieutat

Kathe Gieseler, *senior warden*

Jan Joseph

Connie McLean, *treasurer*

Mary Sheffield

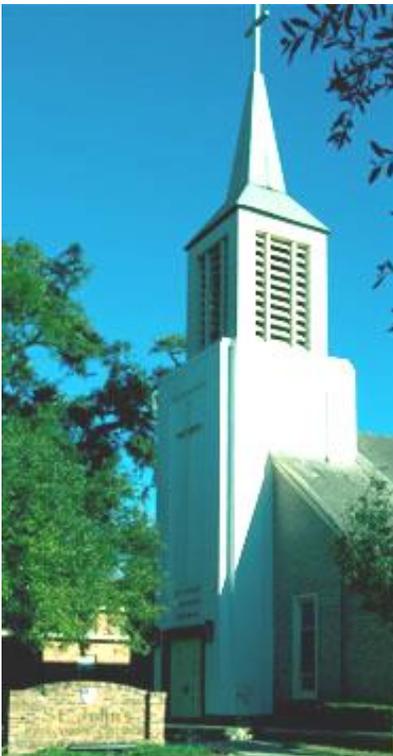
Kristen Turner

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.