



# 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. XXX, Issue 1

January 2020

## FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

The Season of Advent has come to an end. Now it is Christmastide! But what does that really mean?

Sure, the Santa Claus and Elves and reindeer and sleighs and trees and stockings and presents are part of Christmas tide. But, there is so much more to it.

Let's look first at the collects for The Nativity of Our Lord. There are three:

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting.

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born [this day] of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever.

Also, there is the Proper Preface for Incarnation:

... because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children.

Do you see any thread running through all of these?

Out of the Collects come redemption, light, adoption/ born again. The Proper Preface takes us to the realm of incarnation, of redemption, and adoption.

For me, perhaps the dearest, most meaningful gospel proclamation comes on Christmas III (John 1:1-14) and on the First Sunday after Christmas (John 1:1-18). These happen every year, for which I am grateful. They are very special for me because they are the first gospel passages that I proclaimed after my ordination to the diaconate. Much deeper than that, however, the Prologue to the Gospel According to John gives us the complete picture of Jesus' identity and purpose.

Please understand: we do get glimpses of this reality in the writings of Saint Paul and in the Synoptic Gospels. Saint John presents, perhaps, the most complete and cogent exposition. And it does it in 14 verses, even giving over a few to John the Baptizer's place and role.

Jesus is a gift from God. Saint John calls him "Logos" in the Greek. In David Bentley Hart's translation *The New Testament* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), he leaves the Greek word for us... "At the beginning was the Logos..." Hart resists the common translation to "word", insisting that it doesn't carry any of the metaphysical import of 1st century Greek speaking people. That the Logos pre-existed creation is key to our understanding of Jesus' identity and role in God's plan. Jesus, co-creator with God and the Holy Spirit, bringing into being everything that is. Through the miracle of the Incarnation, Jesus comes to live with us, be one of us, yet different. He shows us what it means to be children of God. He manifests the love God holds for all of creation. How incredible it is that God would subject God's self to human existence, knowing how badly we treat each other. But God does it anyway because God's desire to be in relationship with us outweighs anything we can do to separate ourselves from God's love.

—Thomas

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JANUARY LITURGICAL CALENDAR

### Holy Name

This day we celebrate the naming of Our Lord on the eighth day after his birth, in accordance with Jewish custom. Naming is important to all of us; it establishes our identity. We will celebrate this feast on Wednesday, 1 January 2020 at 10:00 AM. As this will be the first Wednesday, we will include Healing at the Mass.

### Epiphany

“Epiphany” comes from a Greek word meaning to manifest or appear. This feast concludes the twelve days of Christmas and marks the discovery of God Incarnate by the gentiles in the persons of the wise men. Join us to celebrate the visit of the Magi to the stable in Bethlehem. We will celebrate the Epiphany of Our Lord on Monday, 6 January at 12:10 PM.

### Harriet Bedell

Harriet was a missionary and Deaconess, living from 1875 until 1969. She served the Cheyenne in Oklahoma, a teacher and nurse in Alaska, and missionary to the Seminole and Mikasuki in Florida. A Deaconess was a lay order for women, set apart for caring for women and children. We will commemorate her life and work on Wednesday, 8 January at 10:00 AM.

### Baptism of Our Lord

The First Sunday after the Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ is also known as The Baptism of Our Lord. On this day, we recount Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan by his cousin John the Baptizer. It is a particularly appropriate day for baptisms.

### Confession of Saint Peter

On this occasion, we commemorate Peter’s confession of Jesus as the Christ. Of course, we also remember how human Peter is: often bumbling, stumbling, impetuous, intense, and with rough edges. This feast also marks the beginning of the annual Week for Christian Unity, and we’ll celebrate it on Saturday, 18 January at 5:30 PM.

### Vincent of Saragossa

Vincent is often considered the first martyr of Spain. He was ordered Deacon by Valerius, Bishop of Saragossa. One legend says that Vincent used to preach for his bishop, because the bishop had a speech impediment. He and his bishop were captured during the Diocletian persecutions. Vincent was martyred for defending his bishop. We will commemorate his life and work on Wednesday, 22 January at 10:00 AM.

### Conversion of Saint Paul

We mark Paul’s acceptance of Jesus as his Lord and Savior on this day. Even though it is referred to as his conversion, the Pauline position seems to be more of enlightenment to a new reality, rather than rejection of his heritage in favor of Christ. We’ll celebrate this on Saturday, 25 January at 5:30 PM, concluding the Week for Christian Unity.

## OFFICER ELECTIONS

Congratulations to our new Vestry members and Convention Delegates who were elected at our meeting on 16 December.

Elected to three-year terms on the Vestry are James Christiansen, Geri Moulton, and Nikki Shaw.

Serving as Convention Delegates are Cindy Gass, Connie McLean, and Mary Sheffield. They will be backed-up by Alternate Delegate Eugene Johnston.

## SHINING OUR LIGHT

### 2020 PLEDGE SUMMARY

As this newsletter goes to print, we have received financial commitments from 31 pledge units for 2020 totaling \$96,526. In 2019, we received 42 pledges totaling \$139,334.

If you plan to pledge to the 2020 operating budget, please turn in a pledge card as soon as possible. Extra cards are available in the church office.



Dear John's Family,

Thank you so much for your support of the recent Thousand Days of Love fundraiser. Your generosity toward improving the lives of children up to age five was abundant. 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.

Thank you for bringing positive change to the lives of children!

—Eugene Johnston

**ONE THOUSAND  
DAYS OF LOVE** 



During the season of Epiphany we will be studying the book *Climate Church, Climate World: How People of Faith Must Work for Change*, by Rev. Jim Antal. Books are available for \$18.50 each from Fr. Thomas, or you may download a copy to your Kindle for \$14.10 (don't forget to use Amazon Smile to benefit St. John's!).

The study will begin Sunday, January 5 during the 9AM Christian Formation time slot. Please join us!

## December Birthdays



Celebrating December birthdays at St. John's with Sue Dyess, Susan Waites, Jan Joseph and Marie Brown. (Photo by Irene Yeager)

## FLOWER CHART SIGN-UP

It's time to sign up for flowers for 2020! Please use the cards on the bulletin board to begin signing up to supply altar flowers for Sundays in 2020. As Sundays are covered we will update the flower chart and post it for all to see. Altar flowers cost \$55 per Sunday.





# JANUARY 2020 AT SAINT JOHN'S

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Omitted: 01/12 Aelred, Abbot of Revault, 1167 01/19 Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, 1095 01/26 Timothy and Titus, Companions of Saint Paul			1 <b>The Holy Name</b> 830A MP 10A Mass+Urnction	2 830A MP	3 830A MP	4
5 <b>Christmas 2</b> 9A Formation 10A Mass 1130A Outreach, Spread the word	6 <b>The Epiphany</b> 830A MP 12P Noonday 1210P Mass	7 830A MP	8 <b>Harriet Bedell</b> 830A MP 10A Mass 7P Choir	9 Julia Chester Emery 830A MP	10 William Laud 830A MP	11
12 <b>Epiphany 1</b> 9A Formation 10A Mass 1130A Vestry	13 Hilary 830A MP	14 830A MP	15 830A MP 10A Mass 7P Choir	16 830A MP	17 Antony 830A MP	18 <b>Confession of St. Peter</b> 530P Mass
19 <b>Epiphany 2</b> 9A Formation 10A Mass 1130A ECW	20 Fabian 830A MP	21 Agnes of Rome 830A MP	22 <b>Vincent of Saragossa</b> 10A Mass 7P Choir	23 Phillips Brooks 830A MP	24 Ordination of Florence Li Tim-Oi 830A MP	25 <b>Conversion of St. Paul</b> 530P Mass
26 <b>Epiphany 3</b> 9A Formation 10A Mass 1130A 4th Sunday Podluck	27 John Chrysostom 830A MP	28 Thomas Aquinas 830A MP	29 830A MP 10A Mass 7P Choir	30 830A MP	31 830A MP	

# LECTIONARY AND ROTA FOR JANUARY 2020

Date Lectionary Day Color	Greeter	Lectors	Lay Eucharistic Ministers	Altar Guild	Vestry Teller
5 January 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Christmas A Christmas 2 White	Melissa Brown	Cheryl Winters- Heard Jan Joseph Budd McLean	Connie McLean David Thompson	Cindy Gass Pat Fulford	Janet Buckley Jan Joseph
12 January Baptism of Our Lord A Epiphany 1 White	Paula & Bob Ross	Geri Moulton Paula Ross Nikki Shaw	Connie Anderson Ron Waites	Cindy Gass Pat Fulford	Jan Joseph Ron Waites
19 January 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany A Epiphany 2 Green	Thelma Lomers	Mary Sheffield Ron Waites Connie Anderson	Paula Ross Butch Yeager	Marie Brown Lee Dorsey	Ron Waites Bootsie Cieutat
26 January 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany A Epiphany 3 Green	Irene & Butch Yeager	Janet Buckley David Thompson Cheryl Winters- Heard	Geri Moulton Mary Sheffield	Marie Brown Lee Dorsey	Bootsie Cieutat Mary Sheffield



## Remember, Reorient, Renew

That's the theme for our 50th Jubilee Celebration year for the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, and it offers opportunities not only for recollections of the past but also for recommitting ourselves to our Christian discipleship, re-invigorating our faith and moving forward with restored energy and vigor.

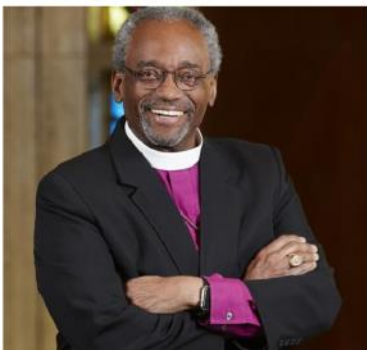
## Let's Celebrate Together

- Visit [www.diocgc.org/jubilee-celebration](http://www.diocgc.org/jubilee-celebration)
- Like us on social media - DioCGC
- Subscribe to our email newsletters - text DIOCGC to 22828 to join.

## Save-the-date

December 3-5, 2020 | Pensacola, Florida

Jubilee Celebration events with special guests:



The Most Rev. Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church



Bryan Stevenson, Founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative

# 2020

## JANUARY

Welcome to Our Jubilee!

## FEBRUARY

History

## MARCH

Storms

## APRIL

Our Agencies

## MAY

Creation Stewardship

## JUNE

Liturgy & Worship

## JULY

Our Selves, Our Souls, Our Bodies

## AUGUST

Justice & Reconciliation

## SEPTEMBER

Discipleship & Discernment

## OCTOBER

Evangelism

## NOVEMBER

Generosity & Sharing

## DECEMBER

Celebrate!



Bob Ross	01/08
Mary Jones	01/09
Eddy Velaski	01/10
Curtis Gass	01/16
Nicholas Tarantole	01/17
Irene Yeager	01/19
Alexandria Harvey-Smith	01/20
Janet Buckley	01/24
Mary Frances Chestang	01/25
Bill Duke	01/31

Craig & Shirley Hall 01/31



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

Jerry Fulford, Mary Bonner, Bootsie Cieutat, James Christiansen, Bill Duke, 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:**

Peggy Sheffield, Jeanette Nash & Family, Eddie Hun, David Clothier, Donnie Chestang, Georgia Morrison, Katelynn Tillman, Solomon Thompson, Karen Twilley, Lucas Hembree, J.E. Ryland, Nancy Payne, Lewis Johnston, William Dorsey, Donna Pigg, Fred Lloyd, Robert & Dorothy Johnson, Sue Sheffield, David Shippee, Robert Levy, Connor, David Green, Tiffany Matthews, Betty Williams, Latecia Cushion Knight, Evia Daniel, Charles Geck, Mary Jo Vinson, Bonnie Jernigan, 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:**

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

## Contact Us

**Staff:**

The Reverend Thomas Heard, *rector*  
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Jack Ruppe  
 Sexton

**Vestry:**

Darren Anderson, *junior warden*

Janet Buckley, *clerk*

Bootsie Cieutat

Kathe Gieseler, *senior warden*

Jan Joseph

Connie McLean, *treasurer*

Mary Sheffield

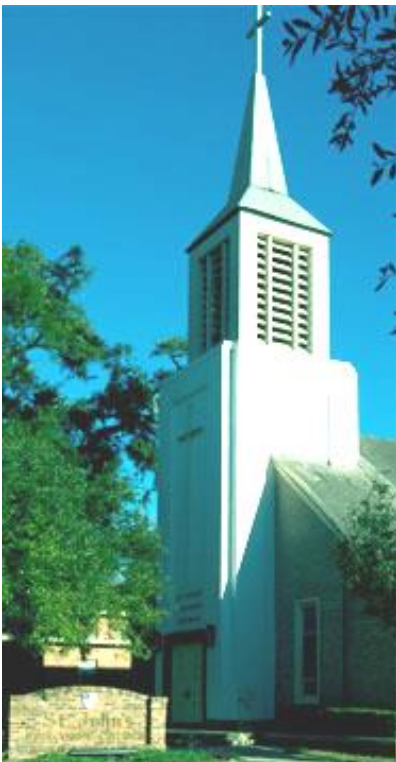
Kristen Turner

Ron Waites

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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 1<sup>st</sup>  
 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](http://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.