



# 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 5

May 2020

## FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

We are in a new era of being the church. We cannot be together for worship. We cannot visit each other. Our usual outreach activities are curtailed, but different needs are coming to the surface. That's now; what the future will bring is anybody's guess.

I am pleased to say that I have heard no reports of any of our congregation getting sick. When all of this started, I was shocked to discover that I'm now considered 'elderly', so we are particularly at risk.

I am also pleased at your response to our 'live streaming' of worship. We're seeing a pretty good turnout for Sunday mornings and a few less on Wednesdays. I seem to have a steady following of folks for Morning Prayer. In fact, for both Sundays and Morning Prayer live streams, we are attracting some folks who don't come to church!

So, just for form, let me post the address of our Facebook page. Once there, if you click the like button, you will be able to receive notifications through Facebook when we "go live." You can, of course, get to the same place via our webpage.

Our Facebook address is:  
<https://www.facebook.com/349597065159312/live/>

I know that not everyone is internet connected and I am working on being able to include those folks through conference call. If this is an appealing approach for you, please **let me know** so that I can send the details of how it works to you through the mail. Long ago, this was a regular practice at the church I attended. It was a complicated and expensive process back then. Our telephone system includes conference calling. I've used it with the Murray House board a few times; I think it will be a good addition.

So, speaking of additions, we continue to work toward improving the quality of our live stream offering. First up is patching our sound system into the computer that is handling the encoding. It will be similar to what

one hears from our Assistive Listening System. The last component to support this arrived last Saturday; I'm hopeful that it can be on-line for next Sunday.

We've been using a web conferencing camera for an individual PC for Sunday services. It works, it has been the best we could come up with. I have a camera on order that will afford us more flexibility of use of the space and permit more appropriate focus of attention.

With the loosening of restrictions on the horizon, one might be inclined to ask whether this sort of expenditure makes sense. As I said before, we are seeing folks attending that are not part of our regular congregation. Some are members that don't darken the door, and some are folks scattered around the country. I have absolutely no explanation for the latter group. If we are bringing the message of the Kingdom of God to more folks, even if they are not local, it is still a good thing.

No decision has been made for Alabama or the diocese concerning large attendance worship services. When I know something concrete, I'll get the word out. If you are not email connected, be sure to let me know.

I need to send huge thanks to all of the people that have helped to put this all together and to make it happen week after week. Kristen Turner has stepped up to being our producer and director. Louis Daniel is the musical director for the production. I can't omit Lee Dorsey who has been a rock through all of Holy Week and following. I freely admit that we've been making it up as we go along. I guess the nicer way to say that is that we've been "improvising."

You all have been very faithful in sending your offerings to the church. We're OK at the moment, so please keep it up.

If you need or want to talk, call me on my mobile phone. Suggestions, comments, criticisms gratefully received.

-- Thomas

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MAY LITURGICAL CALENDAR

### Saint Philip and Saint James, Apostles

We will commemorate the lives and ministries of Philip and James at a said mass on Friday, 1 May at 12:00 PM. Our knowledge of these two apostles comes primarily from the gospels of John and Mark. James and his brother, John, were sons of Zebedee. We know Philip was from Bethsaida. Jesus encountered Philip in Galilee and called him to be a disciple. It was Philip who told Nathaniel “We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.”

### Alcuin, Deacon and Abbot of Tours

On Wednesday, 20 May at our 10:00AM said mass, we will remember Alcuin. Born around 730, Alcuin was a student of the Venerable Bede and a deacon of the church. In about 770, he was head of the cathedral school at York and instituted scriptoria and worked to preserve ancient manuscripts. Around 780, Charlemagne tapped him to be minister of education. Much credit goes to Alcuin for the revisions of the Latin liturgy.

### Ascension Day

Falling forty days after Jesus’ resurrection, Ascension Day is always on a Thursday. We will commemorate Our Lord’s ascension to his father at a said mass on 21 May at 12:00 PM. Jesus’ ascension is a key component of the story of his life. The original Greek of many texts and the Nicene Creed set as opposites Jesus’ descent from his father in heaven and his subsequent ascension back to his father. This is done by replacing the prefix of the verb that means “to ascend” with ‘kata’. Jesus’ ascension is the final step in confirming his identity as the Son of God.



### Pentecost

The conclusion of the Great Fifty Days of Easter will be celebrated on Sunday, 31 May at our 10:00AM mass. We get two different views of the gift of the Holy Spirit, one from Acts and one from John’s Gospel. In Acts, it is the fiftieth day and the Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples as tongues of flame and sound of rushing wind. In the Gospel of John, Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on the disciples on the evening of the day of the resurrection. In both, it is the commissioning of Jesus’ disciples to take up the work of spreading the Gospel. It is with the help of the Holy Spirit that we continue Jesus’ work today, in our parish, in Mobile and in the world beyond.

And all of them  
were filled  
with the  
Holy Spirit

Acts 2:4



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

Joan-Marie Elam  
Doris Billingsley  
James Christiansen  
Geraldine England  
Connie & Budd McLean  
Joyce Lee  
Mary Gieseler  
Joyce Lee  
Neva Bache  
Connie & Bob Anderson  
Janet Buckley  
Walter Mayson  
Joyce Lee

## *In Memoriam*

### LAVERNE MORRISON FOSTER

LaVerne Morrison Foster was born in Johnson, TN on 15 October 1926. She was raised Baptist and was baptized in 1936. LaVerne and daughter Leah were confirmed at Saint John's on 24 April 1988. The Reverend Sam Mason presented them for confirmation. The Right Reverend Charles F. Duvall confirmed them. For the past few years, LaVerne has been a resident of Murray House Assisted Living Residence. A couple of months ago, she took a fall that required hospitalization. She was moved to Saad Hospice in March of this year and died on 25 March. I conducted her graveside service at Pine Crest Cemetery, attended by her grandson, his partner, Irene & Butch Yeager, and David Thompson. Yes, we practiced social distancing.

### JOAN-MARIE PARKS ELAM

Joan-Marie Parks Elam was a native Mobilian, born 5 June 1929. She graduated from Convent of Mercy High School and attended Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, in Terre Haute, IN. She worked for many years in Florida before returning to Mobile. Son, Mark Alan Smith, was the force behind her efforts for the founding of the Mobile Association of Retarded Citizens and she worked as its Executive Secretary in the 1950s. Joan-Marie was a graduate of Education for Ministry (EfM) and was the Saint John's program mentor for thirteen years. She entered into new life on 13 April and was interred in our garden. There will be a celebration of her life at a later date. Joan-Marie was my Monday office volunteer for several years. Something I miss is her speaking her mind about things; I could always count on her to be honest with me.

--Fr. Thomas



## *Vestry*

The Wardens and Vestry of Saint John's Church met via Zoom on 19 April 2020 at 11:30 AM. The agenda for the meeting and the minutes of the 8 March 2020 were approved.

The financials of the parish were reviewed. Fr. Heard reported that we have applied through Regions Bank for benefits from the Payroll Protection Program. As was recently reported in the news, the SBA has spent all of the allocated monies.

Janet Buckley reported that Outreach is working on two projects: 1) sending Easter cards, books, and treats to all of the Murray House residents; 2) beginning discussion of assistance to Saint Mary's Home.

Bootsie reported that the ECW has sent \$200 to Feeding the Gulf Coast and has sent cupcakes to the residents of Murray House.

Fr. Heard reported that Terminix and their contractor have visited and inspected the damage to the lancet windows. They found additional damage to wall panels in the sanctuary. The contractor will pull together an estimate in the next few days.

The vestry discussed the live-streaming of the Sunday morning and Wednesday morning services, along with morning prayer. The response within the congregation has been positive. Fr. Heard noted that there were a number of people watching the services who do not normally attend church. As a result, he anticipates that he will continue live-streaming morning prayer even after the current moratorium on group worship is over. He has ordered additional audio-visual equipment that will allow people who do not have Facebook to access the broadcast services via conference calling.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 PM.

# MAY 2020 AT SAINT JOHN'S

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Omitted: 05/24 – Jackson Kemper, First Missionary Bishop in the United States, 1870 03/31 – Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary						
<b>3 Easter 4</b> 10A Mass	4 Monica 830A MP	5 830A MP	6 830A MP 10A Mass	7 830A MP	1 St. Philip & St. James 830A MP 12P Mass	2 Athanasius
<b>10 Easter 5</b> 10A Mass 1130A Vestry via Zoom	11 830A MP	12 830A MP	13 830A MP 10A Mass	14 830A MP	15 830A MP	16 830A MP
<b>17 Easter 6</b> 10A Mass	18 830A MP	19 Dunstan 830A MP	20 Alcuin 830A MP 10A Mass	21 Ascension Day 830A MP 12P Mass	22 830A MP	23 830A MP
<b>24 Easter 7</b> 10A Mass	25 Venerable Bede 830A MP	26 Augustine 830A MP	27 830A MP 10A Mass	28 830A MP	29 830A MP	30 830A MP
<b>31 Pentecost</b> 10A Mass						

# OUTREACH

## REACHING OUT IN A TIME OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING

The requirements for sheltering at home, restricting the number of people one comes in contact with, and the six foot physical distance have impacted all of us, but for residents of residential group settings these new social norms are even more impactful.

At Murray House the residents have to stay six feet apart: it means eating meals at a table by yourself, it means no groups of more than 10—no Bingo, no sing-alongs, no Chapel; limited contacts means no one except staff comes in or out of the facility—no family, no friends, no visitors, no volunteers, no new faces. The residents understand these provisions are to keep them healthy and safe but it does get wearying.

Saint John's Outreach sent puzzle books, coloring books and colored pencils to Murray House for the residents to provide them with some new activities compliant with social distancing rules. As a special treat, Outreach also provided Easter candy treats and Easter cards individually addressed to each resident to wish them joy at this joyous season. Connie Anderson, Murray House Administrator, told us the residents were very happy with their Easter gifts.

Outreach's next project: St. Mary's Home – picture teenagers in a residential situation having to follow social distancing rules! And school is on-line. The Committee is working with Lee Dorsey to decide what we can provide, or do, to help.

If you have suggestions for the Outreach Committee please contact any member of the committee.



--Janet Buckley

## PARISH LIFE

### BOOK CLUB

Well, not exactly a “let’s get together and read the same book” club because we can’t do that right now, but more like a “what are you reading?” book club. Lists of books we’re reading right now or read recently. It’s always nice to read a book that someone you know has also read—or get recommendations for new reading selections. Don’t worry, this is judgement free—we



know that none of us read great literature all the time!! Email your lists (no more than five) to Janet Buckley ([janet.buckley@wku.edu](mailto:janet.buckley@wku.edu)) and next newsletter, if we get enough lists, we’ll publish!

Happy reading.

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE  
of the  
CENTRAL GULF COAST



### MAY: CREATION STEWARDSHIP

As a whole Episcopal church, we have promised to place the care of God's Creation at the heart of our common life. Together, we have taken up church-wide action in order to safeguard the integrity of Creation and to sustain and renew the life of the Earth. As a diocese, we can commit to joining in this promise by making changes in our daily lives that support the care of God’s great gift for generations to come.

There is an insert in this newsletter containing a 40 Day plan for Caring for the Environment, developed by St. John’s members who were studying the book *Climate Church, Climate World*. There is also a list of action items provided by the diocese. Please take some time to read these suggestions and see if there is anything that you can do to help care for creation.



## EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT RESPONDS TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Episcopal Relief & Development is providing financial and technical support to partner organizations in Asia, Africa and the Middle East in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The organization continues to be in close contact with partners in 44 countries, including the United States, to provide assistance for communities affected by the novel coronavirus.

“The coronavirus pandemic has adversely impacted communities all over the world,” said Nagulan Nesiah, Senior Program Officer, Disaster Response & Risk Reduction for Episcopal Relief & Development. “We are working together with our partners to determine how to respond to the urgent needs for the most vulnerable populations, whether it be food supply, medical equipment, best practices for physical distancing, hygiene or other critical supplies.”

In the Philippines, Episcopal Relief & Development is partnering with the E-CARE Foundation in the production of personal protective equipment (PPE) for medical staff. As in many countries, hospitals are experiencing a shortage of critical PPE. At least one medical center, the Lung Center of the Philippines temporarily stopped accepting new patients as a result. E-CARE partners such as KASALIKA, a local community group of women organized by E-CARE, and other smaller groups will produce approximately 6,000 face masks and 1,000 gowns which will be donated primarily to hospitals in Quezon City, where there is a concentration of coronavirus treatment centers.

Other partners such as Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches, the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Church of Bangladesh are also providing PPE, hygiene kits and essential medical

supplies through partners. These critical supplies will help medical staff safely treat coronavirus patients and will help slow the spread of the disease through improved sanitation practices.

With the support of Episcopal Relief & Development, the Anglican Diocese of Guinea is coordinating with local governing officials to launch an educational campaign about the importance of hygiene in slowing down the transmission of the virus. The diocese plans to serve over 300 families through hygiene and sanitation kits.

Episcopal Relief & Development’s International Program staff is also providing guidance and expertise in Sri Lanka. The Dioceses of Colombo and Kurunegala are distributing food, while following best practices for physical distancing, to plantation and day workers who have lost income due to the virus and shutdowns. Program staff are in close contact with other partners as they determine how best to respond to needs in their communities.

Domestically, the US Disaster Program is holding weekly partner coordination calls and public webinars to offer support to Episcopal dioceses, churches, individuals and other groups. Resources for a faith-based response to epidemics and pandemics are available.

Donations to Episcopal Relief & Development’s COVID-19 Pandemic Response Fund will continue to support partners around the world and in the United States in responding to the coronavirus. You can send checks to Episcopal Relief & Development P.O. Box 7058 Merrifield, VA 22116-7058. Note in memo section for Pandemic Response.

## April Birthdays



Remembering April birthdays celebrated at St. John's in 2019 with Joyce Lee and Fran Barbour. (Photo by Irene Yeager)



Tony Seymour	5/03
Cookie Rich	5/09
Mike Barbour	5/11
Paula Ross	5/15
Zachary Anderson	5/16
Claire Cameron	5/18
Jeanne Velaski	5/18
Pat Fulford	5/29



Kat & Chris Velaski 05/31



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

Elizabeth Cruz, Lisa Chestang, Jean Brown, Ashley Garris, 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:

Mary Catherine Warren.

### For our Family and Friends:

Sara Lansang, Frank Thompson, Helon Jones, Helen Guthrie, Ouida McNider, Eddie Hun, David Clothier, Donnie Chestang, Katelynn Tillman, Solomon Thompson, Karen Twilley, Lucas Hembree, J.E. Ryland, Nancy Payne, Lewis Johnston, William Dorsey, Donna Pigg, Sue Sheffield, David Shippee, Robert Levy, Connor, David Green, Tiffany Matthews, Betty Williams, Latecia Cushion Knight, Evia Daniel, 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*  
[rector@stjohnsmobile.org](mailto:rector@stjohnsmobile.org)

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Jack Ruppe  
 Sexton

### Vestry:

Janet Buckley

James Christiansen, *junior warden*

Bootsie Cieutat, *treasurer*

Jan Joseph

Geri Moulton

Nikki Shaw, *clerk*

Mary Sheffield

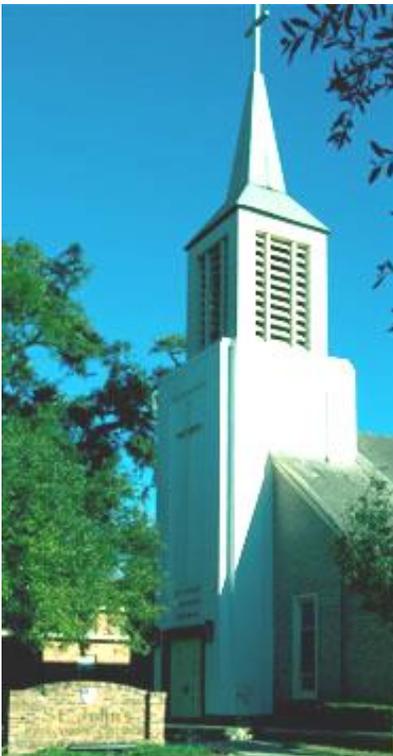
Kristen Turner

Ron Waites, *senior warden*

Saint John's Episcopal Church  
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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 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.