



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. XXXI, Issue 5

May 2021

FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Ones,

We may be beginning to see light at the end of the pandemic tunnel. At least, I hope that's what it is.

"Pandemic" and "Epidemic" are sometimes used interchangeably. It really isn't appropriate because each has a different scope. Pandemic comes from a combination of the Greek words "pan" and "demos" meaning "all" and "people", respectively. Obviously "epidemic" shares part of it. "Epi", also Greek, means "among", definitely a narrower scope.

The 1918-1919 Influenza Pandemic is estimated to have infected 500 million people worldwide. Estimates of deaths range from 50 to 100 million. It was global and deserves to be called a pandemic. According to our register, Saint John's lost 24 to pneumonia or consumption. Consumption is more properly known as tuberculosis. Interestingly enough, there are a few deaths noted as being caused by tuberculosis, and not one death from April of 1918 through April of 1919 that is listed as flu or influenza. Leads me to believe that those 24 probably were due to the influenza pandemic.

Mobile is not a stranger to widespread illness. Yellow Fever made appearances every ten years or so. In 1819, 430 deaths were attributed to Yellow Fever. That was out of a population of about 1000. During the 1839 epidemic, doctors, business folks, and concerned citizens formed the "Can't Get Away Club", which catered to the needs of individuals and families afflicted with Yellow Fever, of which about 450 died. In 1852, Yellow Fever claimed 1191 lives in Mobile.

During the 1860s and 1870s, there were almost annual Yellow Fever outbreaks. Saint John's register shows fourteen deaths from 18 September through 20

November 1870. One of those who died was Saint John's Senior Warden.

The Rev. Reuben Denton Nevius was rector of Saint John's from 25 February 1869 to 6 February 1872. To say that his tenure at Saint John's was difficult grossly misses the mark. When Fr. Nevius arrived with his wife, Margaret, she was pregnant. As is turned out, she was carrying twins. The babies were born on 1 June 1869. One daughter was still born; I cannot imagine how heartbreaking that must have been. The other daughter died on 3 June. She was named, baptized, and buried from the church. Fr. Nevius was relieved of performing the burial office by permitting a colleague to officiate. Again, how incredibly heartbreaking!

Ever hear someone say, "Well, God never gives you more than you can handle."? Here's proof positive how foolish that is.

Fr. Nevius was rector during the September-November 1870 Yellow Fever outbreak. Our parish register doesn't always list a cause of death. Recall that I said there were 14 deaths in that period? One of those that died was Margaret Mercer Nevius, Fr. Nevius' wife. There were a number of entries in a two week period where another priest officiated at the burials. There's a notation by that priest that he was filling in for Fr. Nevius due to Yellow Fever. Fr. Nevius recovered and remained for another two years. I think I would have been broken by what he endured.

The mosquito as vector for Yellow Fever was not identified until 1848. The last significant outbreak in Mobile was in 1897. Our own Dr. Tucker was the last member of the "Can't Get Away Club".

—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 Saturday, 1 May at 5:30 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.”

Ascension of Our Lord

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 13 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 prefixing the verb that means “to ascend” with ‘kata’. Jesus’ ascension is the final step in confirming his identity as the Son of God.

Dunstan of Canterbury

Dunstan was Archbishop of Canterbury from 960 until his death in 988. Born of a family with noble connections, he became a monk and ascended to be Abbot of Glastonbury Abbey in 943. Dunstan was a strong proponent of the Benedictine monastic revival in the 950s and was named Bishop of Worcester and London in 957. The revival brought two peculiar institutions to the English church: monastic cathedrals and monk bishops.

Pentecost

The conclusion of the Great Fifty Days of Easter will be celebrated on Sunday, 23 May at our 10:00 AM 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.

Augustine of Canterbury

Augustine led a group of monks from Rome to Kent in 596 at the direction of Pope Gregory the Great. They were to plant a mission among the Anglo-Saxons. The local king, Ethelbert, put up with them, allowing them to use a church built during Roman occupation. This church, the Church of Saint Martin, is the oldest place of Christian Worship in England that is still in use. Around 601, Ethelbert converted to Christianity; his wife, Queen Bertha, had come from France already a Christian. The mission was so successful that Augustine was ordained Archbishop of the English Nations. As Anglicans, we owe a great debt to the mission of Augustine. We will commemorate Augustine’s life at our Said Mass on Wednesday, 26 May at 10:00 AM.

Visitation

We will celebrate the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary at 12:00 PM on Monday, 31 May. This commemorates the visit of the mother of Our Lord to her cousin Elizabeth as recounted in Luke’s Gospel. It is from the Annunciation and the Visitation



In Memoriam

Our brother in Christ, Bill Duke, entered into new life on 10 March 2021. Bill had moved from Mobile with his good friend, Elizabeth, to the places her career took her. Bill was a great help in taking care of Elizabeth's elderly and failing mother. Elizabeth's career took her to Richmond, VA after her mother died. A year or so ago, Bill suffered a significant stroke affecting his motor skills. We had talked about two weeks before he died. During that conversation, he told me that he had been diagnosed with cancer, and "it didn't look good." I was surprised when one of you pointed out his obituary in the *Press-Register*. Bill was interred at Mobile Memorial Gardens on 19 March.



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

George Seymour Lee, Jr.
 Joyce Lee
 Paula & Bob Ross
 Cieutat & Jones Families
 Irene & Butch Yeager
 St. John's ECW
 Connie & Budd McLean



Vestry

The regular meeting of the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of Saint John's Church was called to order at 11:09 AM on 11 April 2021. This meeting was held in-person, the first since March of 2020.

The proposed agenda was approved without change. Mary Sheffield and Geri Moulton were absent from the meeting. The minutes of the 14 March meeting were approved as submitted.

Treasurer Connie McLean presented the preliminary March financial reports. The parish has received \$29,770 for the second round of the Payroll Protection Program (PPP). In order to protect the insurance proceeds and PPP monies, it was voted to move these to the Endowment.

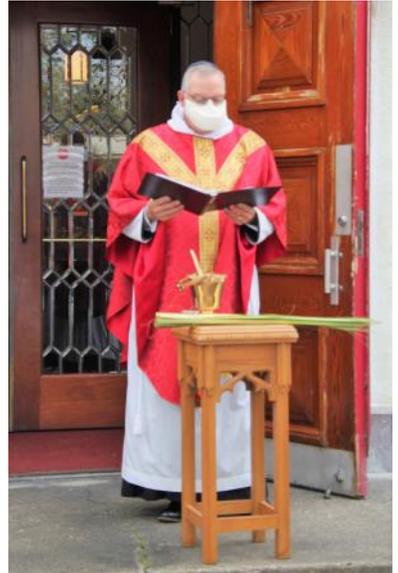
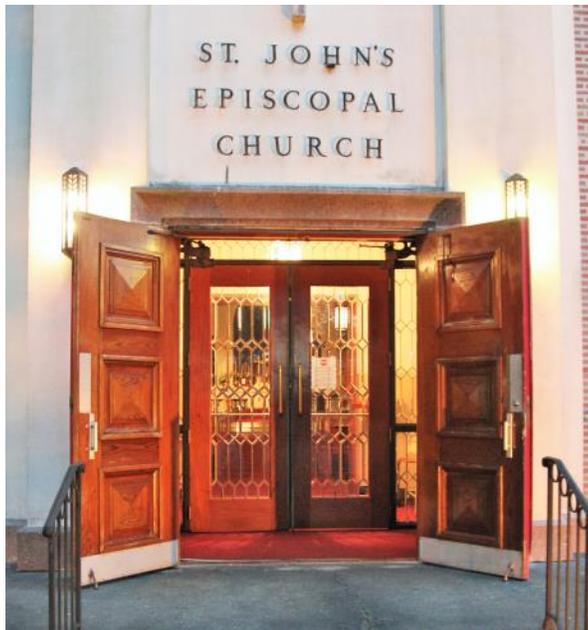
Fr. Heard reported that Saint John's will be the beneficiary of a \$24,000 grant from an anonymous donor.

Having been notified of a motion to reconsider, the Vestry voted to reconsider the 2021 budget. An extensive discussion, chaired by Senior Warden Cindy Gass, reached no conclusions but did surface several cost-saving ideas that require investigation. The discussion was tabled until the next meeting of the Vestry.

Fr. Heard reported that the State of Alabama inspector from the Department of Agriculture and Industry conducted her inspection of the church property. She noted several places, even in the re-treatment in January 2021, where Terminix failed to drill and treat. She also spotted a live Formosan termite in a damage area that Terminix had treated after they saw live activity. The inspector's report should be available in five to six weeks.

Fr. Heard reported that a second estimate for chiller replacement has been received; it is \$65,000.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 PM.



Holy Week 2021







EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT RESPONDING TO TORNADOES IN GEORGIA

Episcopal Relief & Development is supporting the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta as it provides assistance to marginalized communities that were disproportionately affected by the deadly tornado last month in Newnan, GA.

On March 25, 2021, an E4 tornado, only the tenth recorded in Georgia since 1950, tore through Newnan, GA, devastating a 16-block area with winds of over 170 mph. 140 homes have significant damage and 93 were completely destroyed, displacing over 300 people.

With Episcopal Relief & Development's support, the Diocese of Atlanta, working through St. Paul's Episcopal Church, is coordinating efforts with local churches, such as Newnan Presbyterian Church and Newnan Chapel United Methodist Church, and other organizations to distribute aid to vulnerable individuals and families in the Chalk Level neighborhood.

Volunteers are distributing gift cards for groceries and gasoline, cleaning supplies and clothing. They are following strict COVID-19 protocols to reduce the potential spread of the coronavirus. The diocese is also offering direct financial assistance for utility bills.

"Many individuals and families were already experiencing the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic," said Katie Mears, Senior Director, US Disaster Program, Episcopal Relief & Development. "It is heartening to see the local coordination of churches and other organizations to meet needs in the wake of this tornado."

To support the Episcopal Relief & Development's US Disaster Program send donations to Episcopal Relief & Development P.O. Box 7058 Merrifield, VA 22116-7058 or go to <https://www.episcopalrelief.org/>.

Elsewhere in the Diocese

REDEEMER OPENS ITS DOORS TO THE CORE PROJECT



The CORE Project Inc.

The year of COVID has been hard on all of us. We have lost loved ones, been isolated from most, and endured many hardships. However, in this year of darkness, the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer found a way to shine some much-needed light. This light came in the form of the CORE Project, a school for autistic children. The school's director, Jules Starr, needed a place to provide Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy, educational opportunities, and respite care for her students and their families. Starr came to us in search of a building, right as the world was closing all its doors. We had a building to offer. As easy as it would have been to say "no," it was just as easy to say "yes."

The year of COVID has been hard on all of us. We have lost loved ones, been isolated from most, and endured many hardships. However, in this year of darkness, the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer found a way to shine some much-

The school celebrated its one-year anniversary on April 24. CORE now has 51 students and a staff of 60; there are also 140 children on an ever-growing waitlist. The school provides services for students as young as three up to early adulthood. They work on behavioral skills, job training, and educational goals. Each teacher will tell you that their students are a gift and a miracle, and I must agree.

COVID may have brought many horrible things to us over the past year, but it also brought our church the CORE Project. The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer is extremely grateful to CORE and is so proud to have a bright light during this dark time.

CORE Project can be found at www.coreprojectinc.com or at redeemerepiscopalmobile.com.



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

April Birthdays



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



Kat & Chris Velaski 05/31

PRAYER Requests

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

Paula Ross, Will Anderson, Lisa Chestang, David Rich, Carolyn Pearce, Mary Jones, Cookie Rich, Bob Ross, Jean Brown, Ashley Garris, Jerry Fulford, James Christiansen, Audrey Garner, Joyce Lee, Marian Boykin, Ron Brown, Jayson Chestang, Budd McLean, Mary Catherine Warren.

For our Family and Friends:

Carol Wiggins, Shirley Cochran, Lynn Strange, Peggy Sheffield, Cliff Federle, David Sheffield, Patrick Henry, Patsy Christiansen, Gwendolyn Carey, Helon Jones, Helen Guthrie, Eddie Hun, Katelynn Tillman, Karen Twilley, Nancy Payne, Donna Pigg, Robert Levy, Tiffany Matthews, Betty Williams, Latecia Cushion Knight, Bonnie Jernigan, Britney Butler, Neal Tourné, Sandy Michel, Connor Crist, Paul Nelson, Krystal Hiatt.

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

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

Contact Us

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Bootsie Cieutat

Cindy Gass, *senior warden*

Connie McLean, *treasurer*

Geri Moulton

Nikki Shaw, *clerk*

Mary Sheffield

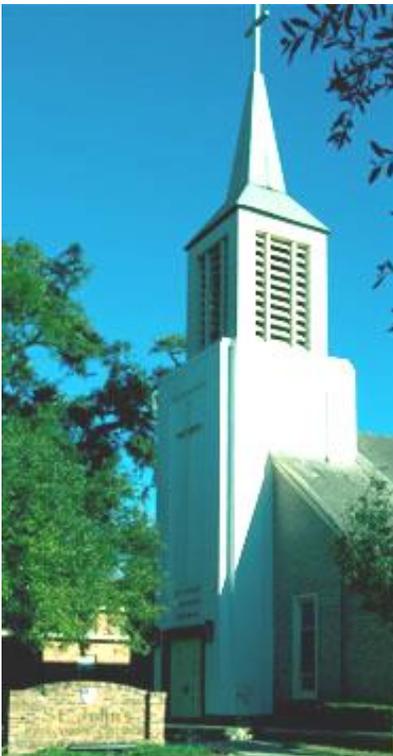
Kristen Turner

Butch Yeager

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.