



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. XXXII, Issue 1

January 2022

FROM THE RECTOR:

We started a new liturgical year on the First Sunday of Advent. We have entered Christmastide which will run until Epiphany.

I had hopes that we'd be able to get back to "normal" in all aspects of life, but COVID seems to have other ideas. I do want to restart our Sunday morning Formation time.

The Year 2021 has been challenging for many. Our country seems to be deeply divided over issues that shouldn't be divisive. Civil discourse appears to be dying, being replaced with a sense of entitlement and self-importance.

So that's where I am. And then, on the First Sunday of Christmas, I awoke to the news that Archbishop Desmond Tutu had died. I felt gut-punched. Tears welled up in my eyes. I felt so much loss, for myself, and for our world. A significant force in the world has gone away from us.

You might be wondering why this is so personal for me. When I was in seminary in New York City, Tutu visited at least twice. One of the visits was for the dedication of the Desmond Tutu Center.

I met him quite unexpectedly. We were both passing through the lobby of the administration building. He was in sneakers, shorts, and a polo shirt, with a floppy hat on his head. The way he moved and the sparkle in his eyes made me think that I'd encountered an elf! Of course, I knew who he was and why he was here, but I hadn't expected to run into him. He crossed to where I was, held out his hand, and said, "Hello, I'm Desmond. How about you?" We chatted for a few minutes, mostly about me, why I was here, what my vocation was, where I was from. I was immediately put at ease.

I think that was one of his special gifts: to put others at ease and making them feel valued. What surprised me the most was the joy that he exuded. And those twinkly eyes, so full of life, and a little mischief I suspect.

Desmond Mpilo Tutu was born on 7 October 1931 to a schoolteacher and laundress in Transvaal, South Africa. His dream was to be a doctor, but that wasn't financially feasible. Instead, he followed his father and became a high school teacher. That career ended as a result of an act that relegated Blacks to inadequately funded schools.

Bishop Trevor Huddleston was Desmond's inspiration and spiritual mentor. Tutu tells the story that Huddleston tipped his hat to his mother when he passed her on the street. Huddleston was a vocal opponent of Apartheid, which eventually got him expelled from South Africa.

Tutu earned his Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees from King's College, London. He returned to South Africa and taught school and administered scholarship funds. He was already known for his preaching. His approach was to put into words the things that governed his life.

In 1975 he was elected Bishop of Lesotho and became General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches in 1978. In the 1980s, racial unrest due to the lack of equality was a daily news item. Tutu became one of the predominant voices for equality and nonviolence. His opposition to violence as retribution was legend. In 1984, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

His most important work came in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the aftermath of Apartheid. His theology of restorative justice and introduction of *ubuntu* to the rest of the world have borne marvelous fruit worldwide. We are better because we have known Desmond Tutu.

Well done, good and faithful servant. ...

Enter in to the joy of your master.

Matthew 25:23

-- Thomas

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JANUARY LITURGICAL CALENDAR

The Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ

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 Saturday, 1 January at 5:30 PM.

The Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ

“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 at 12:00 PM on Thursday, 6 January.



Baptism of Our Lord

10:00 AM on Sunday, 9 January

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.



Aelred of Rievaulx

We celebrate the life of Aelred, Abbott of Riveaulx on Wednesday, 12 January at 10:00 AM. From 1143, Aelred founded a new Cistercian monastery at Revesby and was abbot of Riveaulx from 1147 until his death in 1167. His great work is *Spiritual Friendship*, where he teaches that while love is universal, friendship is a gift

of God and a human creation, requiring great love and commitment to another.

The Confession of Saint Peter

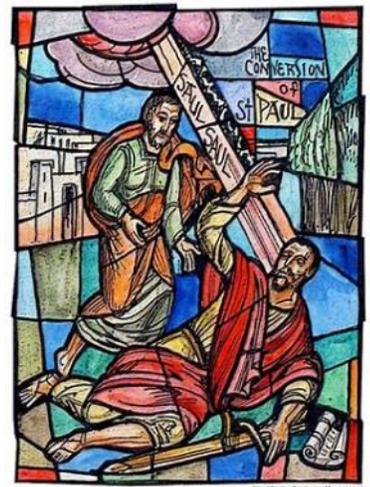
We commemorate Peter’s confession of Jesus as the Christ at 12:00PM on Tuesday, 18 January. This feast also marks the beginning of the annual Week for Christian Unity.

Wulfstan of Worcester

One of the few Anglo-Saxon bishops to retain his see following the Norman invasion of England in 1066, Wulfstan was particularly beloved for his humility, charity and courage. We will celebrate his life on Wednesday, 19 January at 10:00 AM

The Conversion of Saint Paul

At 12:00 PM on Tuesday, 25 January, we mark Paul’s acceptance of Jesus as his Lord and Savior. 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. This feast concludes the Week for Christian Unity.



Timothy and Titus

Timothy and Titus are remembered as companions of Saint Paul. Paul frequently mentions them for their youth and their ability to handle great administrative duties and proclaiming the Gospel. We will commemorate their witness to Our Lord at a Said Mass on Wednesday, 26 January at 10:00 AM.



Vestry

The regular meeting of the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of Saint John's Church was called to order at 11:36 PM on 12 December 2021 by the Rector. The meeting was held in the Parlor.

The proposed agenda was adopted. Geri Moulton's absence was excused. The minutes of the 14 November meeting were approved as submitted.

Connie McLean reviewed the financial statements and the Vestry discussed asking the diocese to extend our loan to the maximum amount.

Cindy Gass presented the budget committee's work concerning the deficit in the budget. These involve altering Fr. Heard's status with the parish: full time, part time, retired, or supply. The committee is meeting with Bishop Kendrick on 21 December.

Mary Sheffield reported that the Outreach project Angel Tree gifts are going to Ashland Place Nursing Home.

Mary also reported that 2 additional pledges have been received, bringing the total to 39.

Bootsie Cieutat reported that the ECW is sending Christmas Cards to the residents of Murray House.

Fr. Heard noted that a workday at the church is needed.

Fr. Heard reviewed his written report to the Vestry. The highlights include

- ⇒ Thomas Roofing has updated their proposal for the Parlor roof to \$53,655.
- ⇒ Thompson Engineering has proposed \$650 to collect and analyze a roof tile to determine if it is ACM.
- ⇒ Campbell Law is sending its repair estimation team to conduct a detailed inspection and comprehensive estimate of repairs. We are not to permit repairs to the church or the rental house without the attorney's approval.
- ⇒ The Chiller and Chilled Water Pump have been replaced, completing these projects.
- ⇒ We have a bid from Modern Sound for \$4,320 to replace the main speaker of the sound system.

The retirement reception for Jack Ruppe will be 26 December; the annual Christmas Luncheon will be on 2 January.

The Meeting was adjourned with prayer at 12:30 PM



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

Robert Meaher
Paul & Ann Burkholder
Jamo & Sandra Ladd

OFFICER ELECTIONS

Congratulations to our new Vestry members and Convention Delegates:

Elected to three-year terms on the Vestry are Janet Buckley, Eugene Johnston, and David Jones.

Serving as Convention Delegates are Janet Buckley, Eugene Johnston, and Mary Sheffield. They will be backed-up by Alternate Delegate James Christiansen.

Thanks to all who stood for election.

PARISH LIFE

GREENING OF THE CHURCH: MANY HELPING HANDS

Everyone helped get the church looking beautiful for the Christmas services. A few pictures tell the story but definitely miss some of the helping hands.



Audrey Garner affixes the bow to a wreath



Julie Garner gives the bows to those decorating the wreaths



Julia Heard "fluffs" a bow for the wreaths and sconces



Mary and David Jones fasten the magnolia leaves to the window votive candle holders



Cheryl Winters-Heard arranges the crèche in the chapel



Cindy Gass checks the magnolia leaves she just pinned on the window candle holder. Cindy brought the magnolia leaves from her garden.

Every Perfect Gift

2022 PLEDGE SUMMARY

As this newsletter goes to print, we have received financial commitments from 39 pledge units for 2022 totaling \$129,211. In 2021, we received 38 pledges totaling \$124,655.

If you plan to pledge to the 2022 operating budget, please turn in a pledge card as soon as possible. Extra cards are available in the church office.

December Birthdays



Celebrating November birthdays at St. John's with Lisa Chestang and Sue Dyess. Photo by Irene Yeager.

OUTREACH

ANGEL TREE

Thank you to everyone who participated in providing gifts for the residents of Ashland Place Health and Rehabilitation facility. We provided gifts for 50 residents who would not otherwise have had a Christmas present. Thanks to all who brought presents and thanks to those who provided funds for the Outreach Committee to shop for you.



Angel Tree presents all lined up ready to be delivered to Ashland Place by Saint John's Outreach elves (Connie McLean, Fr. Thomas Heard and Janet Buckley)



Ashland Place staff placed the presents under their tree to be delivered to the residents at their Christmas party (they are smiling behind those masks!).



EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT RESPONDS TO DECEMBER TORNADOES

Episcopal leaders and church members are working with their communities to provide disaster relief and assistance to areas affected by the powerful storm system overnight Dec. 10 that produced deadly and destructive tornadoes across a wide swath of the central United States.

Communities in western Kentucky were among the hardest hit. At least 64 people there were killed in the storms, Gov. Andy Beshear said in an update on Dec. 13, and more deaths were reported from the tornadoes that ripped through parts of Arkansas, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee.

The Diocese of Kentucky, based in Louisville, announced on Facebook that it was working with Episcopal Relief & Development and the staff of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry to coordinate assistance to those impacted by the storms. Episcopal Relief & Development is accepting donations online.

Some of the worst destruction was found in Mayfield, a city of about 10,000 people about a half hour south of Paducah. The tornado leveled a Mayfield candle factory where an estimated 110 people were working, raising fears of mass casualties. At least eight people died in the factory, though the latest updates suggest most workers survived the disaster.

That tornado reached wind speeds estimated as high as 206 mph along a path that stretched more than 200 miles, according to state and federal authorities.

No Episcopal churches are located in Mayfield. Some of the congregations in surrounding communities offered their support, including St. John's Episcopal Church in Murray, southeast of Mayfield.

"We are praying for all those affected by the tornadoes and storms, especially the people of Mayfield," St. John's Episcopal Church said in a Facebook post on Dec. 11. The storms had knocked out power to St. John's.

Bowling Green, Kentucky, was another community hit hard overnight Dec. 10 by a tornado, which killed at least 12 people, leveled homes and left a shocked and battered community to pick up the pieces.

The Rev. Steve Pankey, rector at Christ Episcopal Church in Bowling Green, told Episcopal News Service in a phone interview that the tornado cut its path of destruction mere blocks from his home. From his porch he said he can see where neighbors lost roofs or sections of their homes in the storm, which packed winds estimated at 155 mph.

"Yesterday, in a sort of big empty parking lot, there were just dozens, if not hundreds, of pick-up trucks and folks unloading chain saws and trash bags, whatever they could, and walking into the affected neighborhood and helping people," Pankey said. Members of his congregation also spent part of the day clearing and sorting through debris with one of the parishioners whose homes were destroyed.

"It's been pretty awe-inspiring, seeing the community come together," said Pankey, who also serves on The Episcopal Church Executive Council.

A tornado that touched down in Monette, Arkansas, killed one person and injured five at a nursing home while damaging other buildings in the small northeastern city near the Missouri state line. The few Episcopal congregations in that part of the state reported no injuries or building damage, according to the Diocese of Arkansas officials.

"We are currently checking on families in the Monette-Leachville area with whom we have relationships and will determine the best ways we can assist them once we know more," communications director James Matthews told ENS by email on Dec. 13.





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



Craig & Shirley Hall 01/31

FLOWER CHART SIGN-UP

It's time to sign up for flowers for 2022! Please use the cards on the bulletin board to begin signing up to supply altar flowers for Sundays in 2022. As Sundays are covered we will update the flower chart and post it for all to see. Altar flowers cost \$55 per Sunday.



Prayer List

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

Connie Anderson, Bob Anderson, Mary Jones, Marie Brown, David Rich, Carolyn Pearce, Bob Ross, Jean Brown, Ashley Garris, Jerry Fulford, James Christiansen, Audrey Garner, Joyce Lee, Ron Brown, Jayson Chestang, Budd McLean, Mary Catherine Warren.

For our Family and Friends:

Allie Barker, Bill Cutts, Dave Snow, Pam Garner, Karl Gieseler, Keith Matthews, John Ike Atchison, Randy Dunn, Sharon Lee Nolan, Willie Douglas, Gail Savage, Daniel Day, Shirley Cochran, Peggy Sheffield, Cliff Federle, Patsy Christiansen, Gwendolyn Carey, 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, Stephen Campbell(*priest*), Andrew St. John(*bishop*).

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

Staff:

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 Financial Secretary
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Vestry:

Janet Buckley

James Christiansen

Cindy Gass

Eugene Johnston

David Jones

Connie McLean

Geri Moulton

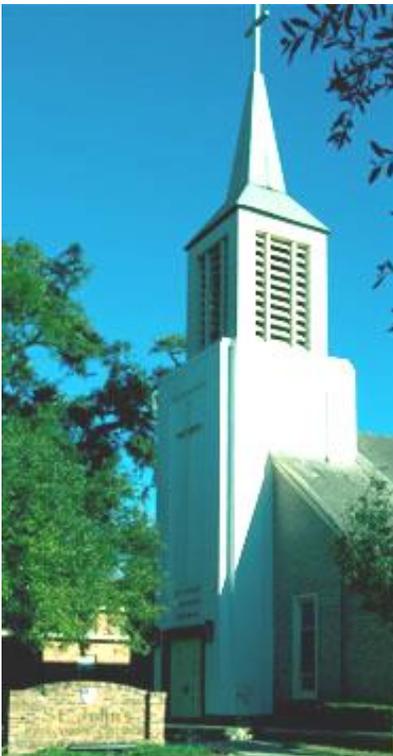
Nikki Shaw

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.