FROM THE RECTOR:

A few weeks ago, Cheryl and I had quite a catastrophe occur at our house. Fortunately it was a weekday, so very few of you had to endure the fallout from it.

What happened? Our beloved and reliable coffee maker stopped working. It was a fabulous and very simple machine that served us for nearly fifteen years. That morning, we had French press coffee, a delight in its own right, but not the same as what was produced by our beloved Braun.

Cheryl spent a good part of the day looking for a replacement, only to discover that Braun doesn’t seem to make coffee makers for the U.S. anymore. Before this one, we had a series of Krups units that lasted a short time each. When we found the Braun, it was perfection. We felt like we had had it all of our lives, it was such a good friend.

Now we were faced with a huge problem: what coffee maker could we use instead of a Braun? A most unsettling task! What could we find that did the same job, would last as long, would make us feel at home?

We looked, we considered, and we looked some more. Finally we settled on a new coffee maker: it is white not black, the buttons are smaller and the labels even smaller, and the carafe is stainless steel and you can’t see through it. Not much about it is like our Braun, except that it makes coffee. And, did I mention that it was cheap?

But neither one of us likes it. Sure, it brews coffee just as well and the carafe keeps it hot without using any energy. It’s just not the same and never will be.

You see where this is going, don’t you?

We humans hate change. I think Episcopalians are a special class of human that hates change even more. But, it might not be about change as much as trying to recover past times.

If we are honest with ourselves, we secretly harbor a time in our lives that was “perfect”. Our memories of it make it out to be a utopian era where everything was good, nothing was bad, and it should have lasted for ever. For the most part, though, these memories don’t match up with the reality that was; they are a safe haven for us when things are challenging. A way for us to try to cope with current difficulties, remembering “better times.” Unfortunately, the times probably weren’t all that good and we don’t really get any solace from them.

Daniel Deng Bull, Bishop of the Diocese of Lui in Sudan, said in an address to a diocesan convention, “Change, or change will change you!” We are not static beings and we don’t live in a static world. Change is all around us. Embracing change is probably the best way for us to cope with it: we aren’t entirely subject to it.

Moreover, as Christians, we are called to be agents of change. Jesus announced that the Kingdom of God was here. We see it in Jesus’ healings and exorcisms. We see it in his inclusion of the marginalized of his society. We see it in his ministry of reconciliation. Love God, Love Each Other.

We are called to continue Jesus’ work, helping to bring the Kingdom from its incomplete “not yet” state to universal presence. We are to break down barriers between people, to ease the suffering of others, to work for systemic change to benefit all mankind.

Paul says, “I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.”

God brought about great change in the world that Easter morning! Nothing would ever be the same, nothing would be the way it used to be.

And thanks be to God.

-Thomas
Saint Mark the Evangelist

We will commemorate the life and work of Saint Mark the Evangelist on Sunday, 25 April at 10:00AM. Mark, as the author of the Gospel bearing his name, is not precisely identified. Various traditions have him filling roles ranging from being one of Jesus’ disciples to being the cousin of Barnabas in Paul’s letters. The Church of Alexandria claims that Mark was its first bishop and a martyr, killed while on a missionary journey. It is Mark’s Gospel that gives us the shortest account of Jesus ministry, but we must be careful not to equate short with simple. Mark’s Gospel leaves us with many questions, but gives us many clues to the answers.

Anselm of Canterbury

We will commemorate Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury at our Wednesday Said Mass at 10:00AM on 21 April. Anselm served as Archbishop from 1093 to 1109. It was a stormy time as conflict between the King and the Church raged. His great gifts were in theology and spiritual direction. As theologian, Anselm is most remembered for the “Satisfaction theory” of the atonement. In short, Jesus’ offer of his life was done in satisfaction of his bond to God. It isn’t very popular anymore, but in his day, in feudal England, it seemed to make sense.
The Vestry met on 16 March at 7:00PM in the Great Hall.

Ron Waites reported that Outreach has sent $1,000 to Episcopal Relief & Development for Earthquake Relief in Haiti.

The Vestry has called the Annual Meeting of the Parish for 18 April 2010 following the morning service. As in years past, it will be a pot luck dinner.

Scott Escobio requested permission from the Vestry to conduct a fundraising effort for Venture Crew 3 to help them offset the boys’ expenses for the canoe trip in Wisconsin this summer. The Vestry approved the request.

John Hobbs requested funding to attend the Sewanee Music Conference this year. The Vestry approved his request, and asked that an appeal to the congregation be included to help defer this cost.

The Vestry approved the creation of a Garden Fund to hold gifts designated for the garden.

The Vestry approved the acquisition of a new copier.

The Vestry approved the acquisition of new equipment to upgrade the Carillon.

Fr. Thomas will be attending an eight day CREDO conference beginning on Monday, 26 April. The conference is in Richmond, VA and is funded extensively by the CREDO organization. During the conference there will be plenary presentations, workshops, worship, group activities, reflection time and individual consultations. The CREDO mission is to provide opportunities for people to examine significant areas of their lives and to discern prayerfully the future direction of their vocation as they respond to God’s call in a lifelong process of practice and transformation.

Through this discernment and visioning process, and with the help of a faculty team, each participant builds a CREDO Plan—a personal covenant based on their CREDO work and a formal expression of their CREDO experience. The CREDO Plan provides a personal baseline and strategy for effective implementation. The CREDO Plan is taken home, carried in the heart, and hopefully provides guidance through the coming years. Some past participants have seen their plan as a kind of sacrament in their ongoing transformation.

John Hobbs will be attending the Sewanee Music Conference as part of his Continuing Education program. The Vestry feels that continuing education is very important for all professionals; however, it omitted funding for John’s program from this year’s budget. The Vestry will fund John’s attendance from the Music designated fund. If you would be interested in contributing to this fund to offset the expenses, please contact Fr. Thomas or Mr. Hobbs.
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Greeters: Grice, Yeager, Ross, Anderson


Intercessor: Winters-Heard, Ross, Ross, Winters-Heard, Escobio, Johnston


**Courtyard Notes**

Spring is here and that means digging in the dirt, trimming dead bushes, sowing seeds and putting new plants in the ground. My niece—and Godchild—Laura, helped me put in a tray of petunias last Saturday (thank you very much, Laura). I worked on impatiens. Our goal is to have the courtyard looking “spiffy” for Easter. Hope this cold snap doesn’t harm all our hard work. Time will tell!

Happy Gardening,
Joyce Lee

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**Annual Parish Meeting**

Sunday, April 18
following the Service

Watch the bulletin board for a signup sheet for the potluck dinner to follow the meeting.

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**Happy Birthday**

Corinne Duke 04/04
Jessica Dennis 04/05
Sebra Strong 04/08
Mike Johnson 04/13
Alice Ciecutat 04/14
Betty Taylor 04/14
Mary Lou Varnes 04/14
John Hobbs 04/18
Joyce Lee 04/18
Frances Barbour 04/22
Madelyn Hurt 04/26

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**Happy Anniversary**

Jimmy & Stephanie McCormick 04/03
William & Corinne Duke 04/23

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**Venture Crew 3 News**

The scouts in Venture Crew 3 have settled into our second Sunday monthly meetings and are making wonderful progress in bringing the Crew up to speed.

We have our uniforms, we are buying needed equipment and we have started a fundraiser. The boys will be selling Krispy Kreme coupons for the next few weeks to help raise money for the Northern Tier trip in July. The coupons are $6 for a dozen glazed, so be on the look out for the guys and help support them if you can.

Speaking of the trip, we did a training activity during our last meeting where the scouts practiced lifting and carrying a canoe around the church grounds. This was to get them familiar with the weight and balance of the craft in order to make the portages easier during the six day canoe trip. They caught on quickly and all finished the course with flying colors. The scouts are very excited to take part in this great adventure into the Canadian border waters.

The crew also wanted to say thank you to St. John’s for accepting us into the church family. To show our appreciation, we will be giving the Men of the Church the day off and take over the breakfast cooking duties on April 11th. Expect the traditional menu but be ready for some new additions. You'll not want to miss this one, so please mark your calendars and come out to have a fantastic breakfast and meet the boys in Venture Crew 3.

Crew Advisor
Scott Escobio

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We will be updating the church directory in the month of April. If your address or phone number has changed, please call the church office and let us know. Also, if you have noticed that your birthday and/or wedding anniversary are not appearing in the newsletter, please call and tell us those dates so we can be sure your celebrations are recognized. New directories will be available in May.
For healing grace and continued strength, we pray for our members:
Margie Mattoon, Bessie Southall, Bill Southall, Alice Schablinski, Leah Betts, Shannon Newberry, Ashley Garris

For our Homebound:
Alice Cieutat, Mae Dunn, Will Elam, Corinne Faust, Gwen Johnson, Violet Kosko, Vevia Lund, Angela McGuire, Audrey Meador, Jane Tate Moore, Betty Plash, Dot & Chick Wohlert

For victims of war and their families, and members of our Armed Forces and their families:
Steven Garris, Jeffery Yeager, Ellis Eugene Garner, Eric Mattoon, Cheryl Garner

For our Friends and Family:
Jane Johnson, Sara Scrivener, Mary Lou Johnston, Olivia Thompson, Nevaeh Hall, Bill Staley, Morgan Kwan, Vevia Steele, David Yeager, Mark Stiber, Robbie Hinson, Anne Brabner, Marian Yearby, Julie Hinton, Helen Baker, Joe Stroeker, Gracie Stroeker, JoAnn Alioto, Shirley Mayson, Michelle Walker, Jim Owens, Gloria Lee, Maddie West

Give Gifts That Work: Gifts for Life

Episcopal Relief & Development's Gifts for Life catalog offers you a special way to share the joy of giving during the Easter season.

Purchase a gift in honor of a friend or loved one through this unique gift catalog and you'll give direct support to people in need around the globe.

From the insecticide-treated net that will protect a sleeping child from malaria to a flock of chickens that can be a family's first step toward economic independence, through Gifts for Life you can become part of a community's long-term solution to alleviating poverty.

Visit our website at www.er-d.org/GiftsforLife. Copies of the catalogue are in the back of the Church.
Saint John’s Episcopal Church
1707 Government Street
Mobile, Alabama 36604

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; 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

Thee Store Episcopal Books
Mon-Wed & Fri:
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Sundays after church and by appointment

Telephone: 251-479-5086

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