



THE FOURTH EPISTLE SAINT JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH MOBILE, ALABAMA

The Protestant Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast
The Right Reverend James Russell Kendrick, Bishop

Vol. XXXII, Issue 8

August 2022

INTRODUCING FATHER JOHN TALBERT

St. John's Family,

It is a great joy to me to be joining you in worship, fellowship and ministry at St. John's. I have met many of you over the past few months during my visits as a supply priest. Thank you for taking the time to introduce yourselves and share stories about your family and love of St. John's.

For those that I haven't been able to meet yet, I'd like to share the years that have led me to your doors. I love to reminisce a good faith journey; this one is a tall cup of coffee long. ☺

I am blessed to be able to claim the Gulf Coast as my home for nearly all my life. I was born and raised in Fairhope and baptized as a child at St. James. With both parents and sets of grandparents as active members of the Episcopal Church I grew up singing the Hymnal 1982 and learning the liturgies we still celebrate today. During my earliest years, my grandfather, Jack Miller, was approved for holy orders by Bishop Charles Duvall, and after a year of study at Sewanee, became the Vicar of St. John's in Robertsdale. There I served as an acolyte and have some of my oldest memories of the "behind the scenes" parts of the church that I've come to love so much as an adult. I was as often found in the sacristy as on the playground.

A few years later my father, Keith Talbert, also received a call to ordination. We moved to Sewanee for his seminary studies, and for three great years I got to roam the Domain and soak up the beauty of the Episcopal holy mountain. Upon his

graduation and ordination, we returned to St. Paul's in Daphne where he was assigned Curate with the Rev. Dick Schmidt. Graduating up from torch bearer and crucifer, I found regularity as a server by the altar, observing and assisting many of those little details that show the beauty of the Episcopal church's liturgies.

After graduating from Daphne High, I found my way to Mississippi State and a whole new community of Episcopalians from the Diocese of Mississippi. While singing in the university choirs I met my wonderful wife, Leslie. We just celebrated 16 years of marriage. We moved together from Mississippi State to Alabaster, AL for her to continue her education at UAB Dental School, and I found my way back into the church as the Director of Youth Ministries at St. Luke's in Mountain Brook. The time I spent there in full time ministry was both

wonderful and exhausting. The size of St. Luke's was unlike any other parish I had been involved with previously, and over my three years with them I learned how critical volunteer training, shepherding, and healthy lay-driven ministry is for the future of the whole church.

As Leslie began a residency in Orthodontics at UAB, we found a new church home with the people of Holy Spirit in Alabaster, a church less than one-tenth the size of St. Luke's. Our parish priest, Fr. Lee Lowrey, had been a classmate of my grandfather's and we quickly developed a great friendship. For the first time since our mutual graduation, Leslie and I found ourselves in choir together again.

Fr. Lee encouraged me to share and

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Fr. John and Leslie Talbert with Lilly (10) and Emma (7).

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apply what I'd learned during my time at St. Luke's with our small but growing parish. With a very passionate and active vestry we reformed ministry structures, established stewardship rhythms, and brought a new face to parish communications. The systems we developed at Holy Spirit during those years still inspire much of my work in parish leadership today.

In the spring of 2013, Leslie completed her residency and we moved back to Baldwin County with a 10-month-old in tow, our oldest daughter Lilly. We joined the congregation of St. Paul's in Foley as my father Keith was entering his 10th year as their rector. His curate, Rev. Steve Pankey, quickly became a close friend and spiritual guide for me. At the time, I was working with a copyright consulting group that helped churches secure licensing for music products. But each year I began to offer more and more time to the service of the church through St. Paul's, until I was eventually able to devote all of my time to their ministry. Over almost two full lectionary cycles I served as a youth minister, primary musician, ministry coordinator, lay-preacher, and member of the stewardship team. It was a blessing to me and my family to be able to share in so much ministry over those years.

In the Fall of 2016, I served on staff at a Cursillo weekend at Beckwith. During the weekend I dove into some very personal and discerning conversations with Rev. Thack Dyson and Rev. Steve Bates, who both encouraged me to consider transitioning to ordained leadership in the church. They helped me identify and proclaim my gifts as a leader, pastor, and teacher for the service of the church. The next week I spoke with Fr. Steve and entered formal discernment and, after an internship with Rev. Massey Gentry at St. Peter's Bon Secour and approval of the Commission on Ministry and Standing Committee, was approved as a postulant for Holy Orders.

That Spring, Bishop Russell Kendrick was bringing together the first class of our Diocesan School for Ministry. Along with seven of my now dearest friends, we spent 30 weekends together over three years under the tutelage of many of our Diocesan clergy, lay-teachers, and Dean Rev. Joy Blaylock. During the weeks between gathering we studied and wrote papers, read the scriptures, and prayed for each other. Finally, just after COVID had interrupted the world, we were ordained as deacons on June 28th, 2020, and I was assigned to my first clerical cure at Holy Spirit in Gulf Shores with the Rev. Will Lowry. Will and I navigated the complexities of covid-tide and found creative ways to maintain connection and continue ministry under those unfortunate circumstances that we still see the residual presence of today.

After my transitional deaconate, I was assigned as Curate at St. Paul's in Daphne under the guidance of Rev. Thack Dyson. I was ordained as a priest on the Feast of the Presentation 2021 and have been blessed to love and serve my church family in Daphne ever since. Being at one of the few congregations in the Diocese with multiple clergy on staff, Fr. Thack generously allowed me to offer pastoral services when other churches were without clergy. Celebrating at the table and offering a sermon in pulpits around the Diocese reinforced for me the beautiful uniqueness of all the individual parishes. Every church is truly a family, big or small, waiting to welcome their new brothers and sisters as they come through their doors for the first time.

This of course has let me to you. In May Bishop Kendrick asked that I visit as a supply priest to St. John's. Many of you were there as we celebrated Christ's Ascension. Over the following few months, your vestry, Bishop Kendrick, Fr. Thack and I discussed how my time could be shared between two parish families, and after a few more visits felt ready to formalize a role for me as your Priest-in-charge.

I'm both thrilled and honored to be able to continue my relationship with you in this way. I have been blessed to have shared a table with you so much already and look forward to discovering what is in store for us over the coming months. Although I am currently only able to be with you one Sunday a month, I plan to be in the office most Tuesdays. If you'd like to have coffee or lunch at the church, I'd be happy to put some dates down on the calendar for us. I also realize that a significant portion of our St. John's family is unable to travel from home as often as they would like. I have already begun to meet some of you in your homes and would be happy to schedule those visits as well. I am making my way through the directory as I am able. However, if you feel so moved to go ahead and reach out to me, I welcome it. My cell phone is below, texting is preferred.

There are lots of ideas and items I'm sure we will be discussing soon, but that can wait for another newsletter. Our next Sunday together will be August 28th, if I don't see you during the week before then – I hope to break bread at the Lord's table that day and enjoy a potluck with you after services.

Have a blessed month!

Your Priest and friend,

Fr. John
(205) 354-3699



Vestry

The Saint John's Vestry met on July 10, 2022. Senior Warden Nikki Shaw chaired the meeting.

Treasurer Cindy Gass reviewed the financial reports from June: Plate and Pledge total for June was \$8,711.70. Total income for the month was \$16,120.28. Total expenses for the month were \$10,366.46. We ended the month of June with an excess of \$5,753.82.

Janet Buckley reported for the Outreach Committee. The books for the Head Start children have arrived. Plans are to put the Saint John's "stickers" in the books on Sunday, July 31, 2022.

As part of stewardship activities, we will be having an electronics recycling drive during the month of July. Parishioners can bring their old computers, laptops, cords, screens and TV's to the church (the EFM room will be used to house the recyclables until pick-up). It will cost \$.15 per pound to have them hauled away to be recycled; contributions are requested.

Parish Life: The Parish Picnic will be on Sunday, July 24th (4th Sunday) in the Great Hall.

James Christiansen agreed to coordinate the Junior Warden Team. He will be the point-of-contact for working with contractors and individuals taking care of the repairs on the church. All Vestry members will be available to provide assistance to the Junior Warden when asked.

The Vestry chose Chestang Tree Services as the contractor to remove the dead and dangerous trees on the church property.

The Vestry approved The League of Women Voters' request to rent the Great Hall for a meeting in August.

The transition conversations are still in process between Saint John's, the Bishop and Fr. John Talbert. The contract should be signed in the next two weeks.

Deacon Terry Goff spoke to us about the Clothesline Project. This is a clothes closet for homeless and low income individuals. This is a joint project involving the Mobile Episcopal Churches. She has asked to use some of the rooms upstairs in the Sunday School Building. The Clothesline will only be open a few days a month; volunteers will be working upstairs to sort clothes and get them on racks. The Vestry agreed to be a partner in this project and have it housed in some of the upstairs former Sunday school rooms.

Saint John's Annual Audit will start this month. Kim Enikeieff will be our auditor.

There will be a Vestry Retreat in September with Fr Talbert.

Janet Buckley
Acting Clerk of the Vestry

SOLEMN MONASTIC PROFESSION OF BR. JACOB LUKE, OSB

On July 11, the Feast of St. Benedict, family and friends from various faith communities gathered at St. Pierre's Episcopal Church in Gautier to celebrate the Solemn Monastic Profession of Brother Jacob Luke, OSB. Brother Jacob is a member of the Community of St. Joseph. Brother Vincent Ignatius, son of Neva Bache, was the Superior who led Br. Jacob in his Act of Profession. It was a beautiful, moving service with lovely hymns and the sharing of the Eucharist. Following the service, a reception was held in the Parish Hall.





THE CLOTHESLINE

*A Clothing Outreach Ministry Supported by
Mobile Area Episcopal Churches
Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast*



With the support of Bishop Russell, Deacon Terry Goff has asked to locate The Clothesline in the upstairs classrooms of Saint John's. This ministry's purpose is to provide good, clean, used or new clothing to community members experiencing homelessness or those in need.

Saint John's was chosen to house this ministry because, in addition to having the space, we are located in an area frequented by individuals in need, and we are accessible since we are on a Mobile Wave Bus route. Donations will be solicited from the Mobile area Episcopal Churches along with other groups who have donated items previously for Project Homeless Connect. Donations include: Clothing, coats, new socks and under garments, used or new blankets, sleeping bags, back packs, caps and toboggan type hats, warm scarves, and belts.

Volunteers from the Mobile area Episcopal churches will be sought to sort, size and hang items as they are received as well as participate in the life of this ministry by greeting guests, assisting in locating sizes, passing out blankets, etc.

Initial plans are for the Clothesline to be open for guests at least two days each month and extra days in the winter months when freezing temperatures require those living outdoors to seek additional blankets or coats in order to survive. The days will be determined once all rooms are cleared and the ministry is set up to receive guests.

It is the hope that this ministry will encourage our Mobile churches to enjoy ministry together serving some of God's most vulnerable people. This ministry may also open the way for additional outreach ministries and services to be operated out of the Saint John's.



MORE THAN ENOUGH

Here are some thoughts on Stewardship that I came across from an article by Jay Morris in *The Wayward Journey* that I thought might be of interest to you. It identifies some characteristics of good stewards.

- Good stewards are committed to selfless service- they have no desire for power
- Good stewards believe in sustainability – building for the future
- Good stewards practice inclusiveness- everyone is welcome
- Good stewards embrace innovation and change-

welcoming new ideas and fresh perspectives

- Good stewards are team players- working together to reach goals
- Good stewards believe in communication and transparency

Most importantly- Good stewards always acknowledge and thank the master they serve.

Colossians 3:23 – Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.

Mary Sheffield

PARISH LIFE

LET'S STAY TOGETHER

...and one way we can do this is keeping in touch with each other, through communication (coming to church and fellowship, emails, telephone calls, and cards). Are you receiving my Friday emails, letting all know about what will be happening Sunday, throughout the week, and special prayers for our church family and others? If not, please let me know. Email bobpaulaross@aol.com, or you can call me or call the church office and they will let me know. If you do not do email, and would like a telephone call from me on Saturday, letting you know 'what's happening', then let me know. Also, sometimes I send out special emails, asking for prayers. If you have someone you would like our church family to remember in their prayers, we can do that also. But we depend on you letting us know. If you have blessings you would like to share, also let us know. I will start!

Did you know that every Sunday on their way home after church, Audrey Garner, Thelma Lomers and Julie Garner come by for a visit and lots of times with goodies in their hands. Bob so enjoys seeing them. He says, 'they bring the church to us', and they do. Also, Eugene Johnston has for months come for a visit and communion. What a blessing! Bob and I recently celebrated our 67th anniversary, and the Rev. John Talbert (Father John) visited us, and had a blessing of our marriage. Another blessing. How about you? Anything you would like to share?

Bob and I miss our church family, and always, if you are ever 'over the bay,' please stop by at the top of the hill for a visit. We love you, we miss you, and God's blessings to each and everyone of you.

Paula Ross



July Birthdays



Celebrating July birthdays at Saint John's with Tina Cieutat. (Photo by Irene Yeager)



St. John's extends a sincere thank you to those who made memorial donations last month:

Ron Brown

James Christiansen

Irene Yeager

Mike & Fran Barbour

Bootsie & Tina Cieutat

Bob & Connie Anderson

Budd & Connie McLean

Joyce Lee

Mark & Jan Joseph

Jean Meador Brown

Kay & Buddy Braswell

Howard Yeager

Geri Moulton

Elsewhere in the Diocese

80TH GENERAL CONVENTION WRAP-UP: SHORTENED, MASKED, TESTED, LEGISLATED

[Episcopal News Service – Baltimore, Maryland] The 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church is one for the history books, and not just for the decisions made but also for how the COVID-19 pandemic changed the way the church conducted its business.

The July 8-11 gathering – postponed a year because of COVID-19 and shortened from eight days – conducted what Presiding Bishop Michael Curry had referred to during the planning process as “matters essential for the governance and good order of the church.” Still, 412 resolutions were filed for consideration.

Legislative committees acted online most of the resolutions before gathering in Baltimore. That cleared the way for the House of Bishops and House of Deputies to devote the in-person gathering only to legislative floor sessions. They passed most of the resolutions in batches through consent calendars. Bishops and deputies had floor debates only on more controversial measures or on actions that they wanted to raise to greater prominence.

The streamlined convention had been scheduled to run until 5 p.m. EDT but both houses finished their work before 1 p.m. on July 11.

For more information visit: <https://www.episcopalnewservice.org/2022/07/12/80th-general-convention-wrap-up-shortened-masked-tested-legislated/>



EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT COMMENDED FOR WORK WITH UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

Resolved, that the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church condemn the aggression launched by the Russian Federation on the sovereign and independent nation of Ukraine on February 24, 2022; **and be it further**

Resolved, that this convention call on the leaders of the Russian Federation and its supporters to cease their aggression and enter immediately into good-faith negotiations in which Ukraine’s sovereignty and security are assured and call those among the nations of the world who may have the capacity to influence the choices made by those directing this war urgently to do so; **and be it further**

Resolved, that as faithful Christians we call upon our siblings in the churches of Russia and Ukraine to remind their leaders of Christ’s commandment that we love our neighbors as we love ourselves—a commandment we believe provides no justification for violent conflict unless in the defense of the vulnerable and defenseless; **and be it further**

Resolved, that this Convention commend the work of **Episcopal Relief and Development**, and our congregations in Europe, in their ongoing efforts to provide support and succor to all refugees seeking safety and shelter in Europe; and helping them rebuild shattered lives; **and be it further**

Resolved, that all refugees, regardless of the reasons for their flight or the country of their origin, be received with equal dignity, equal hospitality, and equal treatment; and that all congregations be aware of, and guard against, the dangers of human trafficking to which refugees are especially vulnerable; **and be it further**

Resolved, that this Convention commend the ongoing work of diplomats and peacemakers, and call upon all those in authority to labor without ceasing to bring a swift and just end to this conflict, and a restoration of Ukraine’s independence and autonomy under conditions of tranquility.



Mac Pearce	08/01
Julia Heard	08/03
Andrew Lee	08/03
Kat Velaski	08/03
Kathe Gieseler	08/07
James Christiansen	08/11
Eugene Johnston	08/21
Erin Delaporte	08/25
Bootsie Cieutat	08/26
David Rich	08/27
Marion Wallace	08/27
David Jones	08/29



Robert & Charlynn Will	08/10
Curtis & Cindy Gass	08/19
Mac & Carolyn Pearce	08/23

Prayer List

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

Mary Jones, Mitchell Schlegel, Irene Yeager, Carolyn Pearce, Ashley Garris, Jerry Fulford, James Christiansen, Audrey Garner, Joyce Lee, Jayson Chestang.

For our Homebound:

Marian Boykin, Bob and Paula Ross, Marie Brown, Budd McLean, Mary Catherine Warren.

For our Family and Friends:

John Anderson, Betty Boudreaux, Evi Valera, David Brunner, Mary Horner, Doug Turner, Darrell Thaxton, Bob Sheffield, Steve Wood, Susan Hansen, Karl Gieseler, Keith Matthews, Randy Dunn, Sharon Lee Nolan, Willie Douglas, Daniel Day, Peggy Sheffield, Cliff Federle, Helen Guthrie, Eddie Hun, Katelynn Tillman, Karen Twilley, Nancy Payne, Donna Pigg, Tiffany Matthews, Betty Williams, Latecia Cushion Knight, Bonnie Jernigan, Britney Butler, Neal Tourné, Sandy Michel, Connor Crist, Paul Nelson, Steven Campbell (*priest*).

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

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

Contact Us

Staff:

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(205) 354-3699

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music@stjohnsmobile.org

Lella Lowe
Financial Secretary
finance@stjohnsmobile.org

Vestry:

Janet Buckley

James Christiansen

Cindy Gass, *treasurer*

Eugene Johnston, *clerk*

David Jones

Connie McLean

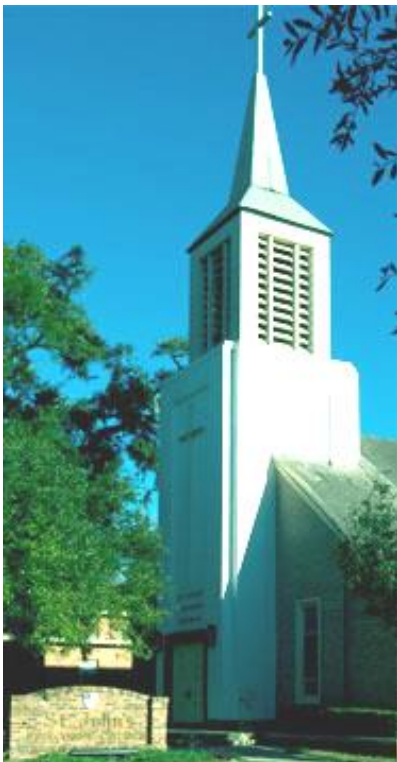
Geri Moulton

Nikki Shaw, *senior warden*

Saint John's Episcopal Church
 1707 Government Street
 Mobile, Alabama 36604

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 Mobile, Alabama
 Permit No. 607

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Come Worship With Us!

Sunday:

9:00AM Adult and Youth Christian Formation

10:00AM Holy Eucharist

Other Feasts and Holy Days are observed throughout the year; please see our website for the latest schedule.

Parish Office

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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.