# Septuagesima Sunday

## The Third Sunday before Lent

Sunday, February 17, 2019

11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer, Sermon & Children's Church

# St. John's Church

## SAVANNAH

***The Truth of the Bible***
***In the Beauty of the Anglican Tradition.***
***Believe. Worship. Love. Serve.***

# Welcome to St. John's

**Mission:** St. John's Church is building a community in Christ that is grounded in historic faith and reverent worship and is committed to sharing the life-transforming truth of the Gospel.

**For Guests and Visitors.** We extend a warm welcome to guests and visitors worshipping with us. If this is your first visit to Saint John's, please let us know by filling out the visitor card in the pew and dropping it in the collection plate. All are invited to join us in the Parish House immediately after the service for the abundant and delicious refreshments at Coffee Hour. We look forward to getting to know you!

**Children's Nursery** for birth - age 3 (1st floor) is available from 8:45 a.m. until 12:15 p.m.

**Children's Church Children** (age 4 - 5th grade) begin in church with their parents, and may follow the cross to Cranmer Hall.

**Interactive Worship.** The congregation participates actively in worship, and this booklet is a guide to taking part in it. For many parts of the service it will refer you to one of the two books in red bindings in the pew racks – **the 1940 Hymnal**, and the smaller **1928 Prayer Book**.

# A Brief History of St. John's Church in Savannah

Founded in 1841, the first rector, Stephen Elliott, was also the first bishop of Georgia, and he consecrated the present church on May 7th 1853. In 1943, one of Savannah's historic mansions, the Green-Meldrim House, became its Parish House and Rectory. Later, Macon Street in the block between the church and Green-Meldrim House was closed and laid out as the present garden Mall. Cranmer Hall, the Christian Education building, was renovated and enlarged in 2004. St. John's is one of a handful of parishes in the Episcopal Church that continues to worship using the classical Book of Common Prayer (in its 1928 edition). We are committed to transmitting unimpaired to our posterity the historic Faith and Order it sets forth, within the fellowship of the Anglican Communion.

# How We Worship and Why – Creation and Worship

The sin that disrupts our relationship with God and separates us from him consists in this – that we trust, love, worship and serve the creature instead of the Creator (Romans 1:25). We treat creatures (such as wealth, power, pleasure) as if they could give us the security and happiness that only God can give. That is treating creatures as if they were gods – idolatry. Ironically our idolatry of the creature takes the form of exploitative or abusive greed. In restoring us to right relationship to the Creator, therefore, Christ also restores us to right relationship with the creature. That is expressed in a variety of ways in worship. In the canticles Venite and Te Deum the Prayer Book service of Morning Prayer trains us to worship God in Creation, as its Creator and Lord. Then there is the canticle Benedicite (pronounced "Ben-na-DIE-see-tee) which is said or sung in Lent and in the three weeks that prepare us for Lent. It is a kind of paraphrase of Psalms 148-150, and calls on all the creatures in the whole created order to bless the Lord, "praise him, and magnify him forever". What does this have to do with the coming season of Lent? In Lent we practice a measure of fasting and abstinence (reduction in quantity and quality of food, drink, and other pleasures), in repentance for the ways in which we have misused created things (especially, though not only, food and drink). The canticle shows that this self-denial is not a denigration of the goodness of these creatures, but trains us to see and use them as gifts rather than as gods – gifts designed to manifest his glory and draw us to him in love and worship. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31).

If you have questions or topics for this feature, please send them to the rector gdunbar@stjohnssav.org

# Septuagesima Sunday

## The Third Sunday before Lent

February 17, 2019

***Nursery*** *Infants to age 3 from 8:45 a.m. until 12:15 p.m.*
*Please silence all electronic devices. In the time before the service begins, we prepare our hearts and minds for worship.*

## 11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer, Sermon & Children's Church

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of thy faithful people, and kindle in them the fire of thy love. *Amen.*

# Preparing in Penitence

**(At the sound of the bells all kneel.)**

**HYMN (all stand)** #288 *O Worship the King*.....Hanover

**Sentences and Exhortation**.....Prayer Book, pages 3-5

**Confession (said by all, kneeling)**

**ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father;** We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent; According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake; That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy Name. *Amen.*

**(Continue kneeling as priest stands to pronounce the Absolution)**

**Absolution**.....Prayer Book, page 7

**Lord's Prayer (said by all, kneeling)** .....Prayer Book, page 7

**OUR Father, who art in heaven,** Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

# Proclaming God's Praise

**Opening Versicles and Responses**.....Prayer Book, pages 7-8

Minister: O Lord, open thou our lips.
*Answer: And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.*

*(all stand)*

Minister: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
*Answer: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

Minister: Praise ye the Lord.
*Answer: The Lord's Name be praised.*

**VENITE #608 (all stand)**.....Prayer Book, page 9 or Hymnal #608, page 705

**Psalm** #18:1-20 .....Prayer Book, page 359

**First Lesson (all sit)** Genesis 1:1-2:3 *God's work of creation and Man's work for him.*

***The first day of creation** - light separated from darkness*

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the
earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and
darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit
of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God
said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God
saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the
light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day,
and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and
the morning were the first day.

***The second day** - The separation of the firmaments*

6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of
the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.
7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters
which were under the firmament from the waters which
were above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God
called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the
morning were the second day.

***The third day** - The separation of waters from dry land*

9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be
gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land
appear: and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land
Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he
Seas: and God saw that it was good. 11 And God said,
Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed,
and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose
seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.
12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding
seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose
seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was
good. 13 And the evening and the morning were the
third day.

***The fourth day** - lights in the firmament of heaven*

14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of
the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let
them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and
years: 15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of
the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.
16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to
rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he
made the stars also. 17 And God set them in the firma-
ment of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18 And
to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide
the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was
good. 19 And the evening and the morning were the
fourth day.

***The fifth day** - living creatures below and above*

20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly
the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly
above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 21 And
God created great whales, and every living creature that
moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, af-
ter their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and
God saw that it was good. 22 And God blessed them,
saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in
the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. 23 And the
evening and the morning were the fifth day.

***The sixth day** - living creatures on the earth*

24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living
creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and
beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. 25 And
God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cat-
tle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon
the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

*The creation of man - his dignity and vocation*

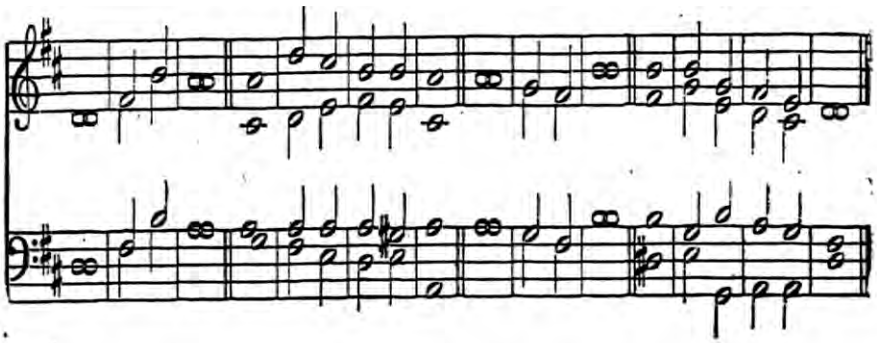
26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after
our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish
of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cat-
tle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing
that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in
his own image, in the image of God created he him;
male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed
them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multi-
ply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have do-
minion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the
air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the
earth. 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every
herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the
earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree

yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. [30] And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. [31] And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

*The seventh day - the rest of God*

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. [2] And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. [3] And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

**BENEDICITE (all stand)** ..... Joseph Barnby



O all ye Works of the Lord, / bless · ye the / Lord: praise him and magnify / him for / ever.

O ye Angels of the Lord, / bless · ye the / Lord: praise him and magnify / him for / ever. ye Heavens, / bless · ye the / Lord:

O ye Waters that be above the / firma · ment / bless · ye the / Lord:

O all ye Powers of the Lord, O ye / Sun and Moon,

O ye Stars of / heaven, / bless · ye the / Lord:

O ye Showers and Dew, O ye / Winds of / God,

O ye Fire and / Heat, / bless · ye the / Lord:

O ye Winter and Summer, O ye / Frost and Cold,

O ye Ice and / Snow, / bless · ye the / Lord:

O ye Nights and Days, / bless · ye the / Lord:

O ye Light and / Darkness, / bless · ye the / Lord:

O ye Lightnings and Clouds, / bless · ye the / Lord: praise him and magnify / him for /ever

O let the Earth / bless the / Lord: yea! let it praise him and magnify / him for /ever.

O ye Mountains and Hills, O all ye Green Things up-/ on the / earth,

O ye Wells, O ye Seas and / Floods, / bless · ye the / Lord.

O ye Whales and all that move in the waters, / bless · ye the / Lord:

O all ye Fowls of the air, O all ye Beasts and / Cattle, / bless · ye the / Lord:

O ye Children of Men, / bless · ye the / Lord: praise him and magnify / him for / ever.

O let Israel / bless the / Lord: praise him and magnify / him for /ever.

O ye priests of the Lord, O ye Servants / of the / Lord,

O ye Spirits and Souls of the / Righteous, / bless · ye the /Lord:

O ye holy and humble Men of heart, / bless · ye the / Lord: praise him and magnify / him for / ever.

Let us bless the Father and the Son and the / Holy / Ghost: praise him and magnify / him for /ever. Amen.

**Second Lesson (all sit)** 1 Corinthians 9:24 & St. Matthew 20:1 ..... Prayer Book, page 119

**BENEDICTUS #638 (all stand)**..... Prayer Book, page 14 or Hymnal #638 page 716

*Children (K-5th Grade) may exit by following the cross to Cranmer Hall for Children's Church.*

# Prayers For God's Grace

**Apostles' Creed (all stand)** ..... Prayer Book, page 15

**I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty**, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost: The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of sins: The Resurrection of the body: And the Life everlasting. *Amen.*

**Versicles and Responses**..... Prayer Book, page 16

Minister: The Lord be with you.
*Answer: And with thy spirit.*

Minister: Let us pray *(all kneel)*

Minister: O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.
*Answer: And grant us thy salvation.*

Minister: O God make clean our hearts with in us.
*Answer: And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.*

**Collect of the Day**..... Prayer Book, page 118

**Collects for Peace and for Grace, Other Prayers** ..... Prayer Book, pages 17-20

**Commemoration of the Faithful Departed**

Minister: Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord.
*Answer: And let light perpetual shine upon them.*
Minister: May they rest in peace. *Amen.*

**Welcome and Announcements (all sit)**..... Father Dunbar

**HYMN (all stand)** #573 *Go, Labor On!* ..... Angel's Song (Song 34)

**Sermon (all sit)**..... Father O'Brien

# Offering in Gratitude

**Sentences (all stand)**

**ANTHEM (all sit)** *Fight The Good Fight*.....Eric H. Thiman
(Text: J.S.B. Monsell)

Fight the good fight with all thy might, Christ is thy strength and Christ thy right; Lay hold on life and it shall be thy joy and crown eternally.

Run the straight race through God's good grace, lift up thine eyes and seek His face; life with its way before us lies, Christ is the path and Christ the prize.

Cast care aside, lean on thy guide; His boundless mercy will provide; trust, and thy trusting soul shall prove Christ is its life, and Christ its love.

**Presentation of Alms (all stand)** Doxology #139 and America Hymn #141 (Stanza 4)

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow; / Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; / Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

Our fathers' God, to Thee, / Author of liberty, / To Thee we sing; / Long may our land be bright /
With freedom's holy light; / Protect us by Thy might,/ Great God, our King. *Amen.*

**General Thanksgiving (all kneel; said by all)**.....Prayer Book, page 19

**ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercies**, we, thine unworthy servants, do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men; We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

**Aaronic Blessing** Numbers 6:24-26

**HYMN** #279 *Praise to the Lord, The Almighty*.....Praise to the Lord

**VOLUNTARY** *Chorale Prelude on "Hanover"*.....Alec Rowley

*Everyone is invited to attend the Coffee Hour in the Parish House immediately after the 11:00 a.m. service.*
*If you are a guest and visiting our Parish, please make yourself known.*

## 12:15 P.M. – Holy Communion (Chapel)

# This Sunday at St. John's

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| 8:00 a.m. | **Holy Communion,** Church |
| 8:45 a.m. | **Continental Breakfast**, Cranmer Hall |
| 8:45 a.m. | **Nursery** for children (newborns to kindergarten) until 12:15 p.m. |
| 9:00 a.m. | **Family Holy Communion**, Chapel |
| 10:00 a.m. | **Adult Classes:** *Gospel of Luke,* Fr. Dunbar, CH3-Reading Room |
| | *The Church Fathers V: Irenaeus,* Fr. O'Brien, Will & Mary Helen Burdell, Green-Meldrim, library |
| | *The Gospel According to John* with Jack Wray, CH3-Room 309 |
| | *Faith & Fellowship*, a moderated, informal discussion of today's readings, CH3-Ralston |
| | **Children's Ministry:** Sarah Ross, Cranmer Hall, 2nd floor |
| | **Youth Classes:** Middle School: *Genesis* with David and Kalista Svihel |
| | High School: *The Apostles' Creed,* Rick Wright and Martin Sullivan, Cranmer Hall - 3rd Floor |
| 11:00 a.m. | **Morning Prayer, Sermon and Children's Church** |
| | **Nursery** for children (newborns to kindergarten) until end of the service, Cranmer Hall |
| 12:15 p.m. | **Holy Communion,** Chapel |

# Assisting in Worship Today

**Chancel Society:** Mrs. John G. Bradshaw, Jr., Mrs. Jayne G. Holland, Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr., Mrs. James C. Pedrick, Mrs. T. Herbert Guerry, Mrs. Edward J. Derst III, Mrs. Howard Helmken, Mrs. Jeanne H. McMillan, Mrs. William E. Dillard III and Mrs. Thomas Hairston

**Vestry Offering Chairmen:** 8:00 a.m. Mr. Arthur D. Weed; 11:00 a.m. Mr. Edwin Culver

**Usher Chairman:** Robert A. Vinyard, Esq. and Mr. Robert J. Merritt, Jr.

**Coffee Hour Chairman:** Mrs. William C. Rodgers

**Roaming Greeter:** Mrs. R. Gilbert Wells

**Acolytes:** 8:00 a.m. Henry Osborne; 11:00 a.m. Phillip Inglesby, Jack McClellan, Jake Perkins, Daniel Sills, William Sills, Malcom Worsham, and Wesley Worsham

*Women parishioners of St. John's Church are invited to serve Christ and his Church in the St. John's Chancel Society, taking care of the linens, silver, flowers, vestments, and preparing the altar for services on Sunday and weekdays. For more information, contact the President, Mrs. Roland (Sylvia) Summers at ralstonspeaches@yahoo.com or through the church office at 912-232-1251.*

# Worship this Week at St. John's

**Monday, February 18th:** In observance of the national holiday, there will be no daily services today. The Church office will also be closed.

**Tuesday to Friday:** 8:15 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. *Morning & Evening Prayer*, Chapel

**In addition, on Wednesday:** 9:45 a.m. *Litany* & 10:00 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Chapel

**In addition, on Thursday:** 5:30 p.m. *Holy Communion with Evening Prayer*, Chapel

**Next Sunday, February 24th – Sexagesima (The Second Sunday Before Lent):**
8:00 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Church; 9:00 a.m. *Family Morning Prayer*, Chapel;
11:00 a.m. *Sung Eucharist*, Church, and 12:15 p.m. *Holy Communion*, Chapel

# Fellowship & Service at St. John's

**Weekly E-Newsletter** To stay up-to-date with our weekly Church email, send your name and email address to information@stjohnssav.org

## Upcoming Events

### Antiques & Architecture Weekend

Plan to attend the **Friday, March 1st** Lunch & Learn with Interior Designer Carleton Varney. This lunch will be held at the Mansion on Forsyth Park from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. This event is part of the 3rd Annual Savannah Antiques & Architecture Weekend (**February 28 – March 2**). Weekend proceeds will benefit the Andrew Low and Green-Meldrim Historic Houses.

For those who enjoy antiques, architecture and jazz many additional events are scheduled that weekend. Visit www.savantiquesweekend.com for a full schedule, tickets, and sponsorship information.

## Men of Saint John's

### Men's Weekday Study & Discussion

**Tuesday Men's Breakfast** and *Ephesians* with Father O'Brien, 6:45 a.m., Parish House.

**Thursday Men's Bible Study** *Jeremiah* with Father Dunbar 7:00 a.m., CH3-Reading Room.

## Women of Saint John's

### Women's Weekday Study & Discussion

Join Father O'Brien on **Thursdays at 9:15 a.m.** in Cranmer Hall, 3rd Floor, Reading Room to discuss the book *Austerlitz* by W.G. Sebald.

Starting March 7th the women's study will begin a new book, *Gaudy Night* by Dorothy L. Sayers.

## Youth of St. John's

### Food + Fellowship on Wednesdays

Our next weekly Food + Fellowship will be **Wednesday, February 20th**. Join us for dinner, fellowship, and faith from **6:30-8:00 p.m.** at the Svihel's home (24 N. Parkwood Dr., Savannah). Please RSVP by emailing David Svihel, Minister with Youth at dsvihel@stjohnssav.org. Bring a friend or two!

### YSJ Mini-Golf Sunday ~ Feb. 24th

Come join the Youth of St. John's (6th-12th grade) for mini-golf and games! We will meet at Island Miniature Golf and Game (7890 U.S. 80, Savannah) from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. This cost is $8.50 for 1 game of mini-golf. Everyone will play 1 game of mini-golf together upon arrival. Bring extra money for bumper cars ($5 for 4 min.), or batting cages ($2 for 14 balls), or arcade games if you want. You may also choose to play yard games: cornhole, bocce ball, ladder golf, or ping pong for free. Complementary lunch provided. Parents and friends are welcome! Please RSVP to David Svihel at dsvihel@stjohnssav.org so we can bring enough food.

### YSJ Summer Mission ~ July 21-27, 2019

The Youth of St. John's will make a mission trip to South Carolina to help repair flood-damaged homes. The cost is $419 per person which includes: food, lodging, supplies, discipleship materials, and a t-shirt. Scholarships are available. Transportation will be provided. The deadline to register, which includes a $200 deposit, is **Friday, March 29th, 2019.** Contact David Svihel at dsvihel@stjohnssav.org

### St. Michael's Summer Conference

Consider attending this week-long conference that centers on the Anglican tradition for young adults from **July 28-August 3, 2019** in West Hartford, CT with Father O'Brien. For more details, email Father O'Brien at cobrien@stjohnssav.org. Scholarships are available.

# Music of St. John's Church

## Sunday, March 24, 2019

**5:05 p.m. Prelude**
Guest Organist, Richard Morgan, Sacred Heart, Savannah

**5:30 p.m. Choral Evensong**

## Sunday, April 21, 2019

**8:00 a.m.** Easter with music for trumpet and organ

**9:30 a.m. Solemn Eucharist**
Featuring Willan's Missa de Sancta Maria Magdelena; Brass Quintet

**11:30 a.m. Solemn Eucharist, Choral**
Featuring Hassler's Missa Secunda; Brass Quintet

## Friday, May 10, 2019

**7:00 p.m. The Chicago Recorder Quartet**
"Double Take": Musical Paintings Through the Ages

## Sunday, May 19, 2019

**5:05 p.m. Prelude**
Organist, Steven Branyon and Friends

**5:30 p.m. Choral Evensong**

## Sunday, June 2, 2019

**4:00 p.m. Ashley Adams in Concert**
Featuring works of Gounod, Malotte, Verdi, Mozart and Donizetti.

## Sunday, June 30, 2019

**4:00 p.m. Murray Somerville in a pre-July 4th Concert**
Sponsored by St. John's & St. Paul's Lutheran Churches at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 10 West 31st Street, Savannah. Works of Albright, Bach & Calvin Hampton.

# New and Noteworthy

## Outreach Survey

Tell us what you think of our Parish's Outreach and give us your suggestions for our next three year's community outreach partner.

Please take a minute and share your thoughts with us by visiting our online survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/BPDNSYL

We hope you will join us for our final outreach day at the Fresh Air Home on **Saturday, May 4th**.

## St. John's Church Hat Society

Next **Sunday, February 24th** will be a Hat Sunday. Plan to wear your finest hat!

The **Saturday, February 23rd** Hat Society event at Holly Montford's home in Long Point. has been cancelled. We plan to reschedule for sometime in April. Look for more details coming soon.

## Group Trip to England ~ May 18-27th

Fr. Dunbar is leading a small group to London and Oxford to look at art, architecture, gardens, and historic sites from May 18-27, 2019. There are three rooms available. If you would like more information, email Elaine Barrow, who is handling accommodation arrangements, at Elaine@fourseasonstrvl.com or 912.856.1774.

## Service Recordings

You are able to access full service recordings with music, lessons and sermons by selecting the gold button labelled "Sermons, Lessons & Music" on our home page at www.StJohnsSav.org.

## Sacraments

The occasional Sacraments of Baptism, Matrimony, Penance, Communion and Unction of the Sick, and the Office of Burial of the Dead are always available by appointment, at announced times, or as necessary. Please call the Church Office to notify the clergy if you or a loved one is in the hospital.

## This Week's Daily Psalms & Lessons

You are able to download the week's daily psalms and lessons via our website or the weekly e-newsletter. If you prefer, paper copies are available by the Church door and in the Chapel.

## Church Directory

For access to the Church Directory, download the Church*Life* app on your smartphone. If you have any question about downloading the app, please call the Church office at 912.232.1251.

# Parish Paper Essay

## Count Down to the Cross

This Sunday we come to a major turning point in the Christian year. It is the first of three Sundays before Lent, which bear the old Latin names of Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima–which mean, respectively, "seventieth", "sixtieth", and "fiftieth". Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany are left behind: as the number suggest, we now begin a countdown that will take us through the forty days of Lent (in Latin, Quadragesima) all the way to Easter.

In these three Sundays before Lent, we are prepared for the new direction the Church's year is about to take, and we need all the preparation we can get! As noted by the Eastern Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemann, "Long before the actual beginning of Lent, the Church announces its approach and invites us to enter into a period of pre-Lenten preparation.... the Church knows our inability to change rapidly, to go abruptly from one spiritual or mental state into another. Thus, long before the actual effort of Lent is to begin, the Church calls our attention to its seriousness and invites us to meditate on its significance. Before we can *practice* Lent we are taught its *meaning*."

To grasp its meaning, recall first the meaning of the season just past. In Epiphany the church celebrates the manifestation of God's glory in Christ –manifested to us, on successive Sundays–as wisdom, power, goodness, love, that it may be manifested in us, as we are transformed by it. But now we move on to the next stage in the unfolding of the Church's year, to the necessity of disciplined effort in our ongoing transformation. That's why, on Septuagesima we hear of the labourers in the vineyard, and the athletes' training; on Sexagesima the labours of the apostle and the patience that receives and keeps the seed to fruitful harvest; on Quinquagesima the journey up to Jerusalem, from blindness to vision; and St. Paul speaks of the inward pilgrimage of spirit as we grow up into the maturity of faith, hope, and charity. The images vary, but the theme is one – the transformation, the conversion of our minds, hearts and lives, does not just happen, it requires effort, training, labour, and discipline.

In this theme of works, there is an organic connection with grace, which is acknowledged and addressed right away, in the lessons for Septuagesima. On the one hand, this disciplined effort is required "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection;" as St. Paul says, "lest, when I have proclaimed [the gospel] to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor 9:24-27). On the other hand, in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard (St. Matthew 20:1-16), the Lord pays a full day's wages to all his workers, even to those who have not worked a full day. Justice is served because those who worked all day have lost nothing; but mercy is added to those who came late. Those who grumble ungratefully and enviously at such generosity are rebuked ("is thine eye evil, because I am good?"). God rewards his servants according to his free and unmerited grace: our works do not put him under obligation to us. It's a broad hint that the necessity of effort in the Christian life does not overthrow the principle that are justified freely by grace alone, through faith, apart from works. Works are not the cause of God's grace and favor toward us, but its effect, and the evidence that we have received it.

In the end our disciplined effort and labour is this, not to earn God's favor, or to put him under some imagined obligation to us, but to bring our hearts and minds into alignment with the grace we have received. The Biblical "works worthy of repentance" are fasting, prayer, and almsgiving (Matthew 6), through which we die more fully to self, that we may live more fully unto God. We practice fasting, abstinence, self-denial, "bringing the body into subjection", because if we can't say "no" to our bodily appetites, we can't say "yes" to God. We practice prayer, because saying yes to God means aligning our wills with his, hearing, receiving, and keeping his word. And we practice the giving of alms, because his will for us is charity, love of neighbour. In these practices we deepen our communion with Christ, living out our baptism into him, which results in further dying to sin, and rising again to righteousness (Romans 6), so that we may come prepared to keep the feast of his death and resurrection.

GGD

# St. John's Church - Savannah

*Worship in the Anglican Tradition*

*Parish Chartered in 1841 Church Consecrated in 1853*

325 Bull Street On Madison Square OFFICE: One West Macon Street 31401

***Our Mission: Saint John's Church is building a community in Christ***
***That is grounded in historic faith and reverent worship***
***And is committed to sharing the life-transforming truth of the Gospel.***

www.stjohnssav.org Office: 912.232.1251 Fax: 912.232.5559 Parish House: 912.233.3845

Bishop of Georgia.....The Rt. Rev. Scott Benhase
Rector - The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar.....(912) 429-3384 gdunbar@stjohnssav.org
Priest Associate - The Rev. Craig E. O'Brien.....(912) 308-4441 cobrien@stjohnssav.org
Assisting Priest - The Rev. J. Patrick Hunt.....(912) 777-9968
Organist/Choirmaster - Mr. R. Steven Branyon.....sbranyon@stjohnssav.org
Business Manager - Mrs. Janice W. Woods.....(912) 232-1251 jwoods@stjohnssav.org
Administrative Assistant - Mrs. John C. Nelson (Margaret) ..... (912) 232-1251 mnelson@stjohnssav.org
Communications Coordinator - Mrs. Jeremy J. Harvey (Heather) ..... (912) 232-1251 hharvey@stjohnssav.org
Financial Administrator - Mrs. Daniel J. Mahfet (refer financial inquiries to Mrs. Woods) .....(912) 232-1251
Minister with Youth - Mr. David M. Svihel..... dsvihel@stjohnssav.org
Children's Ministry Director - Mrs. Joseph R. Ross, Jr. (Sarah) ..... (912) 232-1251 sross@stjohnssav.org
Buildings Manager - Mr. Sinisa Domazet .....sdomazet@stjohnssav.org
Senior Warden - Jonathan D. Sprague, Esq. .....jsprague@tsgwater.com
Acolyte Director and Master of Ceremonies - Mr. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr.....chubb44850@aol.com
Verger - Mr. B. Ray Summerell .....(912) 777-9532 rsummerell@stjohnssav.org

Junior Warden - M. Tyus Butler, Jr., Esq.; Clerk of Vestry - Mr. R. Leslie Johnson
Treasurer - Mr. Holden T. Hayes; Assistant Treasurer - Mrs. Stuart C. Clifford
Chancellor - M. Tyus Butler, Jr., Esq.; Vice Chancellor - Richard C.E. Jennings, Esq.

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