

The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 51 No. 7 Epiphany I (In the Octave of the Epiphany) January 12, 2020

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8 A.M. – THE HOLY COMMUNION, Church

COLLECTS, EPISTLE, and GOSPELPrayer Book, 109, 107, 110
A continental breakfast is available in Cranmer Hall following this service.

8:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. – Nursery for birth to age 3 in Cranmer Hall, 1st Floor

9 A.M. – FAMILY MORNING PRAYER, Chapel

10 A.M. – ADULT, YOUTH & CHILDREN'S EDUCATION, Cranmer Hall
(Note: Fr. Dunbar's class is not meeting this Sunday.)

11 A.M. – MORNING PRAYER & SERMON, Church

HYMN #46 <i>Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning</i>Morning Star	
Sentences, Confession, Absolution and Lord's PrayerPrayer Book, pages 3-7	
Versicles and Responses7-8	
VENITE (Hymnal #606 with Epiphany Antiphon, page 704)8, 9	
Psalm #66, 67 <i>All the World Shall Worship Thee</i>417-419	
First Lesson: 1 Kings 3:5-15 <i>Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom</i>	
JUBILATE DEO (Hymnal #645, page 721)15	
Second Lesson: Romans 12:1 and Luke 2:41110	
BENEDICTUS (Hymnal #634, page 716)14	
Apostles' Creed15	
Versicles and Responses16	
Collects of the Day109, 107	
Other Collects & Prayers, Commemoration of the Departed17-20	
HYMN #48 <i>Earth Has Many a Noble City</i>Stuttgart	
SermonFather Dunbar	

OFFERING

Sentences

ANTHEM <i>As With Gladness</i>Herbert Sumsion	
Presentation of Alms: Doxology #139 and Hymn #141 (Stanza 4)	
General Thanksgiving (<i>kneeling; said by all</i>) and Aaronic Blessing19	
HYMN #52 <i>As with Gladness Men of Old</i>Dix	
VOLUNTARY <i>Epilogue on 'Dix'</i>William H. Harris	

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

12:15 P.M. – HOLY COMMUNION, Chapel

Please remember St. John's Church in your will.

IS JESUS GOD?

(Essay reprinted from 1/13/19.)

Nothing comes from nothing. Things do not “just happen”. For every effect, there must be a cause adequate to explain the effect. This is a basic principle of natural science, of course, but also of all fields of rational inquiry - including the study of religion. So where did faith in Jesus as God come from? How did Christians come to affirm, that the man Jesus is not only truly human but also truly God? Many people would give an answer like this: the belief evolved over time, as the original traditions were embellished or misunderstood, at a time when such beliefs were common and easily accepted. We may therefore conclude that the “real” meaning of such language is that Jesus was very close to God. Or so it is said.

In fact, however, none of that explanation is true. First, the belief did not evolve slowly, but with astonishing speed. It is attested in the letters of Paul (which can be reliably dated to the 50s AD, well within the lifetime of many disciples who knew Jesus on earth), and in those letters, where so many matters of controversy are addressed, it is utterly uncontroversial. Which is to say, there is no evidence in them of Christians who had other points of view (as there is, for instance, on many other matters), or that the belief in Jesus' deity had undergone a process of development. This is also true of the New Testament writings in general. Though there is some difference in the way they affirmed it, the deity of Jesus is not in dispute. Evidence indicates the belief in Jesus' deity did not evolve slowly over time, but appeared all at once, among all the followers of Jesus.

What makes this unanimity all the more striking, is that it emerged within a culture where such ideas were unthinkable. Belief in gods who appeared in the likeness of human beings, and human beings who became gods, was common enough - in the pagan Greco-Roman world (a fact acknowledged in the New Testament.) But belief in the deity of Jesus does not emerge from the pagan Greco-Roman world, but from Jews who clung tenaciously to the religious tradition of Israel, in which the blurring of lines between divine and human was repudiated. The fundamental principle of Israel's ancient religion is the distinction of the one Creator God and the creatures he made and rules - and this distinction is not abandoned or blurred by the early Christians. Someone like Paul, for instance, can criticize the pagans because

UPCOMING AT ST. JOHN'S

◆ WEEKDAY WORSHIP ◆

Monday – Friday

8:15 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.

Morning & Evening Prayer, Chapel

In addition, on Wednesday

9:45 a.m. *Litany, Chapel*

10 a.m. *Holy Communion, Chapel*

In addition, on Thursday

5:30 p.m. *Holy Communion with Evening Prayer, Chapel*

◆ NEXT SUNDAY ◆

Jan. 19th, Epiphany 2

8 a.m. *Holy Communion, Church*

9 a.m. *Family Morning Prayer, Chapel*

11 a.m. *Sung Eucharist, Church*

12:15 p.m. *Holy Communion, Chapel*

Monday, Jan. 20th, MLK

No services today.

Church office closed.

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STANDING NOTICES

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 or hospice.

Vestry Offering Chairmen

8 a.m. Mr. Arthur D. Weed
11 a.m. Mr. Holden T. Hayes

Usher Chairman

Mr. Charles B. Compton, Jr.

Coffee Hour Chair

Mrs. William S. Burdell, Jr.

Roaming Greeter

Robert A. Vinyard, Esq.

Acolytes

11 a.m. Jack McClellan, William Sills,
Ryder Small, Haddon Watson,
and Whit Watson

Chancel Society

Mrs. John G. Bradshaw, Jr., Mrs. Jayne G.
Holland, Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr.,
Mrs. James C. Pedrick, Mrs. Edward J.
Derst III, Ms. Maury Weed, Mrs. Shack B.
Wimbish, Jr., Mrs. Timothy E. Coy, and
Miss Margaret G. Livingston

ALTAR FLOWERS

The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in memory of Miss Louise Strong Falligant by the Chancel Society.

And in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. William J. Deal and Mr. Edward J. Derst, Jr. by Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Derst III and family.

And in honor of the 60th anniversary of Barbara and William Strickland on December 27th, 2019 by their children and grandchildren.

And in honor of the marriage of Louise Lane and Harold Talbot on November 28, 1964 in beautiful St. John's Church – 55 years ago.

10 A.M. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

For Children: Cranmer Hall, 2nd Floor

For Youth: Cranmer Hall – 3rd Floor

- Middle & High School *God with Us*
- Confirmation Class (5-6th grades)

Sunday School for Adults:

- *Gospel of Luke* will not meet this Sunday.
- *Faith and Fellowship*, CH3-Ralston

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Thursdays 7 a.m. Men's Bible Study of
1 Corinthians with Fr. Dunbar, Cranmer
Hall, Reading Room (301)

LADIES' STUDY

Tuesdays 5:30 p.m. *Prayers and Inter-
cessions of the Bible* with Fr. Dunbar,
Offsite. (No study on Jan. 21st)

they “changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever” (Romans 1:25). Compared to the Creator God of Israel, the pagan gods are not in fact gods, but angelic (or rather, demonic) super-creatures, arrogating to themselves the honor that belongs to God alone, and tyrannizing the human worshippers they deceive. So far from being a natural or easily-accepted idea, that someone born of a woman could also be god, it is one that Jews would be least likely to adopt.

And yet this, of course, is precisely what happened, and with (as I say) astonishing speed. In Acts, Luke tells how, just a few years after the crucifixion, Stephen provoked outrage among Jewish opponents in Jerusalem when he proclaimed a vision of the “Son of Man” (Jesus) “standing at the right hand of God” (i.e. exercising the authority of God himself as Savior and Lord); and when the lynch mob stoned him, Luke says that he “called upon God, and said, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’” The implication, is that a prayer to Jesus is a prayer to God. The created human Jesus is found on the side of the Creator, and is worthy to receive worship that only God can receive. And Stephen (and Luke, and the other writers of the New Testament) accords Jesus this status without abandoning the fundamental distinction of Creator and creature. In the same book, for instance, Luke records Paul's preaching the one true Creator God to pagan audiences, and calling them to abandon their false gods. Belief in Christ as God is not an idea borrowed from pagans, but a startling development from within the Jewish confession of the one Creator God.

The question one must ask is, how did this happen? What made devout Jews who had walked and talked with the man Jesus begin in a very short space of time to speak of him as God? The New Testament writers trace it to the Resurrection (John 20:28) and it is hard to discern any other cause that could have produced such an unlikely and unexpected effect.

“Nothing comes from nothing”. If it is not the Resurrection than what is it?

If Jesus is just a man who was close to God, then we may admire him and learn from him, but he has no claim on our allegiance. But if God and Lord, Creator and Savior, he has a claim on our allegiance, trust and obedience, which we cannot evade.

— GGD

PARISH OUTREACH

Cookie Baking for Urban Hope Dinner: On Sunday, Jan. 12th after the 11 a.m. service (12:30-2:30 p.m.), the Youth of St. John's will bake cookies in the Cranmer Hall kitchen for the Urban Hope dinner being held on Monday, Jan. 13. All youth (and adults) are invited to help us prepare cookies for our ministry partner's dinner the next night. Lunch will be provided. If you are interested, please email dsvihel@stjohnssav.org.

ALTAR FLOWER WORKSHOP

We will hold a basic altar flower arranging workshop entitled, “Simplifying Altar Flowers” on **Saturday, Jan. 18th** from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the church. To register, please call the Church office at 912-232-1251.

OYSTER ROAST & BARBEQUE

Hosted by the Men of St. John's this event is **Saturday, Jan. 25th** from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Camp Villa Marie. Advance reservations with payment are \$35 (adults), \$25 (guests), \$10 (teens). All prices are \$5 higher at the door. Your reservations with payment may be made after our Sunday services or by stopping in the Church office.

FEBRUARY'S SUNDAY SUPPER

Please note that this supper has been moved to **Sunday, Feb. 16th**. Please call the Church office at 912-232-1251 to make reservations by **Friday, Jan. 31st**.

For a full list of events, sign up for our weekly emails, visit StJohnsSav.org, or check the Sunday Service Booklet.