

# The Parish Paper

OF  
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH  
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 52 No. 7

The First Sunday after Epiphany

Jan. 10, 2021

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## THIS SUNDAY FROM ST. JOHN'S

### 8 A.M. HOLY COMMUNION (IN-PERSON WORSHIP)

By reservation only. Visit [StJohnsSav.org](http://StJohnsSav.org) or call 912-232-1251.

### 9:30 A.M. – ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL: THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Will meet via Zoom with Fr. Dunbar.

Email [mnelson@stjohnssav.org](mailto:mnelson@stjohnssav.org) for connection information.

### 9:30 A.M. – YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

Will meet via Zoom with David Svihel.

Email [dsvihel@stjohnssav.org](mailto:dsvihel@stjohnssav.org) for connection information.

### 9:30 A.M. – CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

A short video lesson will be posted to St. John's Children's Facebook group at [www.Facebook.com/groups/StJohnsSavChildren](http://www.Facebook.com/groups/StJohnsSavChildren).

### 10:20 A.M. SERMON (LIVESTREAMED)

### 10:40 A.M. CHOIR (LIVESTREAMED)

### 11 A.M. – FAMILY MORNING PRAYER (IN-PERSON WORSHIP & LIVESTREAMED)

By reservation only. Visit [StJohnsSav.org](http://StJohnsSav.org) or call 912-232-1251.

Available on St. John's Facebook and YouTube.com channel.

Have your Prayer Book ready. Additional resources will be in Friday's email.

Morning Payer begins on page 6 of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP).

**Opening Voluntary:** "Brightest and Best", Mahlon Balderston

**Sunday Collects:** BCP p. 109, 107

**Lessons:** Psalms 67 & 100 (at 11 a.m.);

Romans 12:1-6 and St. Luke 2:41-52 (at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.)

**Soloist:** Hymn #50 *Saw Ye Never in the Twilight* (Chartres)

**Offertory Chorale:** *Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern*, Harm. J. S. Bach

**Communion Voluntary:** (8 a.m.) *Of the Father's Love Begotten*  
(Divinum mysterium, 13th Cent. Mode V), Wayne Barlow

### ON THE FEAST OF STEPHEN

Many people will tell you doctrine doesn't matter. What matters, they say, is what you do, not what you believe. "Deeds not creeds" – that's their doctrine! So you can't escape the question of doctrine: but we are right to ask, what deeds are produced by our creeds. The Christian creed affirms that Jesus is both God and Man. At the heart of this doctrine of the Incarnation is God's gratuitous love for sinners. It's the idea that though we turned away from God, God did not turn away from us; and he gave his Son to be made man, to be born of the Virgin Mary, to die and rise again for us, so that we might share in his Sonship. Stephen, the first martyr, whose feast falls on the second day of Christmas, is an outstanding witness both to this creed, and to the deeds it engenders.

Stephen appears in Acts 6, in ministry to the needy in the congregation; and as a bold witness to the gospel, formidable in debate with its opponents, who had him arrested on false accusations of blasphemy. At his trial, Stephen did not back down from his claims, but made a searing indictment of those who rejected the Messiah. At the end of his speech, Stephen, "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son

of man standing on the right hand of God". The place of Jesus at God's right hand, is the place of authority; it means he is the mediator of God's power and kingdom to mankind. These words infuriated his listeners, who lynched him. Even when they were stoning him, however, St. Luke tells us that "he was calling upon God, and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive

### UPCOMING WORSHIP AT ST. JOHN'S

Sunday, Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>

#### First Sunday after Epiphany

8 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Church  
In-person by reservation only

11 a.m. *Family Morning Prayer*,  
Church, In-person by reservation only  
and livestreamed

#### Monday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> – Friday, Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>

8:15 a.m. *Morning Prayer*, Chapel  
Livestreamed

#### In addition, Thursday, Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer with  
Holy Communion*, Chapel  
In-person only

Sunday, Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>

#### Second Sunday after Epiphany

8 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Church  
In-person by reservation only

11 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Church,  
In-person by reservation only  
and livestreamed

#### Monday, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>: MLK Day

*Church office closed.*

THE PARISH PAPER

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ONE WEST MACON STREET  
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401

www.stjohnssav.org

To receive the Parish Paper by email (on Fridays), send name and email address to information@stjohnssav.org

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The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar ..... Rector  
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Mr. R. Steven Branyon ..... Organist/Choirmaster  
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Junior Warden ..... Captain John K. Ross  
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President, Chancel Society ..... Mrs. Roland S. Summers  
President, Men of St. John's ..... Mr. Sean F. Finnegan

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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 CHAIR

8 a.m. Mr. Arthur D. Weed

11 a.m. Mr. Rusty Ross

USHER CHAIR

Mr. Robert L. Sparks

CHANCEL SOCIETY

Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr.,  
Mrs. Jayne G. Holland, Jr.,  
Mrs. H. Emerson Thomas, Jr.,  
Mrs. Roland S. Summers,  
Mrs. Shack B. Wimbish, Jr.,  
and Mrs. Linda H. Pounds

MUSICIAN

Sheila Berg, soloist

ALTAR FLOWERS

The Christmas decorations are retained in honor of the Epiphany.

A Christmas poinsettia was given in loving memory of Suzanne Fauber Butler by Margaret Butler and Ralph Maurer.

JOIN OUR USHER MINISTRY

Our usher ministry requires more time, more work, and more volunteers! If you are able to lend your services, please contact Rob Sparks at rsparks2007@gmail.com or (912) 433-1562, or you may contact Chip Compton at ccompton@sspins.com or (912) 660-5603.

FAMILY MORNING PRAYER RETURNS IN JANUARY

Starting this Sunday, Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>, we invite families and parishioners to our 11 a.m. Family Morning Prayer (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of each month). This will be a shorter service with a children's talk and address. Unfortunately, no nursery care will be provided, so attendees should be prepared to welcome infants and toddlers and their spontaneous contributions to the liturgy! Reservations will be required, though parishioners with children will have priority.

my spirit". What Luke is emphasizing to his readers is the astonishing content of Stephen's prayer. Not only is Stephen himself praying to the man Jesus as one prays to God alone, he also addresses him as Lord, a title Jews reserved for God; and asks for him to receive his spirit, an action only God can take. In the first century Judaic context, this testimony was explosive. Pagans might confuse Creator and creature, and ascribe divine honors to a man, but it was unthinkable that a devout Jew would do so. Only the strongest evidence could have compelled testimony like Stephen's, and it reflects a conviction that emerged very quickly after the death of Jesus and without any evidence of disagreement about this point among Christians. The only possible explanation for this radical unanimous shift is the resurrection of Jesus. For it belongs to one who is a man to die, but it belongs to the one who is also God to rise from the dead (Romans 1:3-4). If Christians like Stephen were confessing Jesus as God as well as man, even at the cost of their own death, it was because he died and rose from the dead. Stephen was content to suffer and die for this faith, because he believed fervently that the one he had died for was greater than death; and that the one he prayed to was able to hear his prayers, and answer them.

There is no question then about Stephen's creed, and its convicting power. It is the doctrine of the Incarnation that moves Stephen to bear fearless public witness to Christ, and to suffer persecution and death for his sake, confident of future vindication in the resurrection. But it also moved him to love and pray for his persecutors. As they were stoning

him, Stephen was praying earnestly for them on his knees, and with the loud voice of empowerment by the Spirit, he was saying, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*. It's an echo of Jesus' own words on the cross – *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do* – with this difference, that as Jesus prayed to God as Father, Stephen is praying to Jesus as Lord. In the following chapters of Acts, we learn how Stephen's prayer is answered, when Saul, who was named as present and complicit in his death, and who was a ferociously zealous persecutor of the church, was called on the road to Damascus into the service of Christ, and became a fervently zealous preacher of the gospel. Stephen's prayer was not unheard, and his faith and witness in Jesus as Lord was not in vain. But we need next to consider *why* it moved him to prayer for his persecutors.

— GGD

(To be continued)

CONDOLENCES

We extend our condolences to the family of Olga Vivian Brannen Usher, mother of parishioner, Carolyn Oxenrider, who died Monday, Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021. A graveside funeral will be held Friday, Jan 8<sup>th</sup>.

We also extend our condolences to the family of JoAnn Clark Troxler, wife of Lt. Col. Paul Drewry Troxler, U.S. Army (Ret.), who died Tuesday Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Funeral arrangements have yet to be finalized.

For a full list of events, sign up for our emails, visit [StJohnsSav.org](http://StJohnsSav.org), or check the Sunday Service Booklet.

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