

The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 42 No. 10

The Conversion of St. Paul (Resumed 4th Sunday after Epiphany)

January 29, 2012

THE ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4TH

10:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.

If you are cleaning out your closets, please keep this sale in mind!

Donations received Monday January 30th to Friday February 3rd

CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL

(An abbreviated sermon of the late Robert Crouse, Priest, and Founding Patron of the Elliott House of Studies)

“I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (Galatians 2:20). The festival we keep today ... was introduced in the twelfth century – just at the point at which European Christians began to become deeply conscious of the historical dimensions of the Church’s life. And what more dramatic moment could the historian fix upon than the conversion of the Apostle to the Gentiles? One can think, of course, of other spectacular conversions of vast historical consequence But all of these hinge upon, and depend so much upon, the conversion on the Damascus Road. St. Paul was in some sense the father of the Gentile church, and in that same sense, the day of his conversion was its birthday. It was he above all others, “in labours more abundant than they all” who was the preacher of the Gospel to the world of Greece and Rome. (...)

[It] is the conversion of St. Paul that must concern us now, and what are we to make of that? The blinding light on the Damascus Road, and the

voice that cried, for the hearing of Saul alone, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?”, and Saul of Tarsus, persecutor of the infant Church, became the Apostle Paul. No doubt, such a bare description of the incident leaves us dissatisfied; we’d like to probe the matter and say, in other terms, ‘what really happened’. But ... the conversion of St. Paul was fundamentally an inner thing, an event which cannot be seen in itself, but only in its effects; it was the conversion of a *soul*.

St. Paul himself regarded it as a meeting with the risen Christ, who appeared, he says, “to me also, as one born out of due time”, and thus he saw his vocation and apostleship; that is to say, as a witness to the Resurrection, as witness to the living Christ. “I live”, he says, “yet not I, but Christ in me”. And we can hardly improve upon that as a description of conversion, because conversion is not fundamentally a matter of blinding lights and secret voices, but a matter of a new integration of personality around a new centre, a new focus of insight and energies.

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OF
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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.

HOSPITAL VISITATIONS

Please call the Church Office to inform the clergy if you or a loved one is in the hospital.

ST. JOHN'S WEB SITE
Parish Paper essays may be read on our web site: www.stjohnssav.org

VESTRY OFFERING CHAIRMEN

8:00 Mr. Arthur D. Weed
10:30 Dr. J. Davidson Carson

USHER CHAIRMAN

Mr. Robert A. Vinyard
and Mr. William S. Willingham

The flowers at the altar are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Julia Floyd Smith, Sanford G. Simmons and John Pindar Bradshaw Schaller and loved ones by Mrs. Sanford G. Simmons.
And in memory of Col. and Mrs. William H. Atkinson by their sons.

CHANCEL SOCIETY

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8:00 Cord Helmken
10:30 Chris Dixon
Lawson Turner, Lindsay Pindar
Mikell Kelly, Peter Stein
Hunt Wasden, Henry Bowden

COFFEE HOUR CHAIRMAN

Mrs. David Young

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASSES

- Clergy: *Epistle to the Galatians* – (Chapel)
- David Noble—*Canterbury Tales*—Reading Rm

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY & DISCUSSION GROUPS

Tuesday 6:45 a.m. Men's Breakfast & Study—
(Parish House Dining Room, enter by Kitchen)
Thursday 7 a.m. *Acts of the Apostles*
(Reading Room, with the Rector).

WOMEN'S STUDY & DISCUSSION GROUPS

Reading Rm, Cranmer Hall.
Wednesday: 10:45 a.m.-Noon Study on
Philippians.
Thursday: 9:15 a.m. - Saint Athanasius' *On the Incarnation* (with Fr O' Brien)

ECW SENIORS LUNCHEON

All Ladies 70 and older are invited to join the ECW on **Wednesday, February 15th, (NOT January 18th)** at 11:30 a.m. for a luncheon in their honor. Call the Church Office to make your reservation or if you need transportation.

Next Sunday

February 5th, 2012
5:30 EVENSONG FOR CANDLEMAS
Reception to follow.

PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR CHURCH IN YOUR WILL

“I live, yet not I, but Christ in me”. It is death to the old self and resurrection of the new.

Much can be said ... about the “experience” of conversion.... But high emotional temperature is no symptom of conversion. Conversion is, of course, experienced and it does inevitably involve revision of one’s feelings, sometimes a revision long drawn out and painful, as one sees with St. Augustine. But that is not the fundamental point. What is fundamental is that one’s whole understanding and will be united in one principle understood and willed as altogether true and good. “I live, yet not I, but Christ in me”. It is not a feeling; it is insight and vocation, “casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 16:5).

What we celebrate today is the conversion of a soul, to find its life, its truth, and its good in its living Lord; and as we do so, let us be mindful, with Saint Paul himself, of the broad dimensions of that conversion: it means not just the conversion of the soul itself but the vocation of conversion – the conversion of the Gentiles, the conversion of our social life to find the principle of that life in the charity of God; and indeed, the conversion of the whole creation which “groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now”, awaiting the redemption.

Conversion means the tuning and forming of all existence towards its centre, source, and end in God. And the best of all acts and symbols of

conversion is this very sacrament we celebrate, this sacrament of death and resurrection; this sacrament wherein Christ offers death and resurrection. We offer earthly life in bread and wine, and here by the word of God they are converted – they are transformed – to be to us the life of God himself, that we may dwell in him and he in us. “I live, yet not I, but Christ in me”.

RDC

PARISH KALENDAR THIS WEEK

MONDAY – FRIDAY (CHAPEL)

8:15AM - *Morning Prayer*

5:30PM - *Evening Prayer*

Except WEDNESDAY

8:00 A.M. *Holy Communion*

8:15AM - *Morning Prayer*

9:45am *Litany*

10AM – *Sung Eucharist*

5:30 PM *Evensong (Girls Choir)*

6pm *Supper & 6:30pm Class*

Fr Dunbar on *Galatians*

EXCEPT THURSDAY, 2ND

FEBRUARY--CANDLEMAS

8:15 A. M. *Morning Prayer*

& *Holy Communion*

THURSDAY

Noon Men’s Forum—TBA

ANNUAL OYSTER ROAST Saturday, January, 28th

1:00—4:00 p.m. at Derst Park

Tickets are on sale after 8 a.m. service, during Coffee Hour and in the Church Office. **Advance tickets \$20 Adults, \$5 children 6-12.** 5 and under free. Tickets at the gate are \$25 Adults and \$5 Children 6-12.

8:00 a.m. –HOLY COMMUNION

COLLECTS, EPISTLE, and GOSPEL.....229

*A continental breakfast is available in Cranmer Hall following this service.***9:00—12 Noon NURSERY** (Cranmer Hall)**9:30—ADULT, YOUTH, and CHILDREN'S CLASSES** (Cranmer Hall)**10:30 –Pre-school Program continues—**3 year olds through Kindergarten (Cranmer Hall)**10:30 a.m. —SUNG EUCHARIST and SERMON**HYMN #545 *Hail to the Lord's Anointed* Woodbird**ANTE-COMMUNION**

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SERMON Fr. O'Brien

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GLORIA IN EXCELSIS (Hymnal #739)..... Old Scottish Chant

The Blessing (*Kneeling*)..... 84HYMN #54 *Alleluia, Song of Gladness*..... Dulce CarmenORGAN: *Voluntary in D*..... John Alcock*Everyone is invited to attend the Coffee Hour in the Parish House immediately after the 10:30 service.**If you are a guest and visiting our Parish, please make yourself known.***12 Noon—HOLY COMMUNION (Chapel - Collect, Epistle, Gospel BCP pp. 229, 114)**