

# The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 42 No.14

The First Sunday in Lent

February 26, 2012

## 5:30 P.M. CHORAL EVENSONG & PARISH SUPPER

*Bring a Covered Dish. Church will provide Fried Chicken. Nursery available.*

### GRIEF

The last decade or so has seen a great resurgence of radical skepticism not only about God - the "new atheism" - but also about Man. It is skepticism updated with reductionist attempts to explain human existence and experience, thought and feeling, in terms of matter alone. The mainstream view trumpeted in the "intelligent" media is that the moral sense, love, and reason are really just survival mechanisms developed in the course of human evolution. The mind is just the tool of a social primate developed in order to give it a competitive edge in procreation. As the effort of 'the selfish gene' to replicate itself, the mind can have no inherent claim on our loyalty. And God is just another construct, one which we would do well to discard. (The self-contradictory nature of such radical skepticism is rarely noticed. If reason is just a construct of the selfish gene, then the claim that reason is just a construct is itself a construct.)

The new atheists proclaim their gospel with the fervour of believers: God is dead, man is free, free from the destructive illusions of religion and morality, of reason and virtue. But then a someone dies, suddenly and cruelly, like the young man known to many in the parish who was killed in a freakish

accident last weekend. And his death casts a pall of grief over his family, his friends, their families, his school, and many others. Yet if he was no more than an arrangement of molecules, a selfish gene struggling to replicate itself, there can be no reason for grief, or for the love that grieves, since these are (we are told) essentially selfish survival mechanisms left over from some earlier stage in hominid evolution. Friendship is just another illusion. But of course we *do* grieve, even the atheists. And in so grieving, they grieve better than they know (or think they know).

The grieving atheist cannot provide any reason why he grieves, or why he (rightly) respects the grief of others. For to grieve the death of such a young man is implicitly to affirm the reality of the soul. Man is embodied, to be sure; but what is embodied is a soul, capable of memory, reason, and love. To grieve the loss of anyone then is to lament the departure of a unique being, whose mind and heart have touched our lives in spontaneously beautiful and inimitable ways. To grieve is to travel even beyond the lost life of a loved one to the origin and source of the love we have known, and there to register our gratitude. To grieve,

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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](http://www.stjohnssav.org)

**VESTRY OFFERING CHAIRMEN**

8:00 Mr. Arthur D. Weed  
10:30 Mrs. Neil H. Victor

**USHER CHAIRMAN**

Joseph R. Ross, Esq. and Mr. Robert F. Brannen, Jr.

The flowers at the altar are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mary Lizzie Kitchengs by her family.

**CHANCEL SOCIETY**

Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr., Mrs. Philip F. Kirk, Ms. Anne H. Mingleдорff, Mrs. Edwin H. Culver  
Mrs. Wynton J. Ezelle, Mrs. F. Debele Maner  
Mrs. Michael Maloney, Mrs. William E. Osborne

**DAILY LENTEN SERVICES**

Mrs. Neil H. Victor, Mrs. Timothy E. Coy  
Ms. Anne H. Mingleдорff, Mrs. Jonathan D. Sprague  
Mrs. David A. Young

**ACOLYTES**

**8:00** John DeBacker  
**10:30** Cord Helmken  
Kameron Sallee, Peter Stein  
Charles Perrie, Mikel Kelly  
Patrick Perrie, Hunt Wasden  
**5:30** Evensong  
Mikel Kelly

**COFFEE HOUR CHAIRMAN**

Mrs. Duncan M. Pindar

**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 Discussion on the Psalms* – Fr Dunbar (Parish House Dining Room, enter by Kitchen)

**Thursday** 7 a.m. *Acts of the Apostles* (Reading Room, with the Rector).

**Thursday: Noon** - MEN'S FORUM

**WOMEN'S STUDY & DISCUSSION GROUPS**

Reading Rm, Cranmer Hall.

**Wednesday:** 10:45 a.m.-Noon *Philippians*.

**Thursday:** 9:15 -10:30 a.m. - *Athanasius On the Incarnation* (with Fr O' Brien)

**GREEN-MELDRIM HOUSE CONCERT**

*To benefit Green-Meldrim House Restoration Fund and Savannah Philharmonic: acoustic folk duo, "Naming the Twins".*

**Saturday March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7pm** To reserve a place, **RSVP** [mmconsults@comcast.net](mailto:mmconsults@comcast.net)

*No charge but donations welcomed.*

PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR CHURCH IN YOUR WILL

therefore, is to affirm that there is a higher source of value than 'the selfish gene' - there is a God, who is absolute truth and goodness, the very possibility of knowledge and love.

To love, to grieve, is to affirm the dignity of man; and to affirm the dignity is to acknowledge gratefully a special instance of God's creative and lifegiving power expressed in one whose unique nature is gone. When we can no longer grieve, it is not God who dies, but we ourselves.

As C. S. Lewis says somewhere, God "whispers to us in our pleasures and shouts to us in our pains". In our griefs God shouts, 'the Lord thunders out of heaven', and his thunder dissolves the attempt to live as if he does not exist. We easily forget him; but he does not forget us, nor does he forsake us; and he permits these pains and griefs to fall upon us that we may turn to him again, and know him truly, not as our enemy but as our friend: as the one who "bears our griefs and carries our sorrows". Our first need "in all our troubles" is (as the Litany teaches us) "to put our whole trust and confidence in him". He confronts our grief and bears it, that he might transform sadness to joy, despair to hope, and death to new life. He does this in our souls and minds - a space from which the selfish gene is banished by necessity, and the soul that dies to itself inherits eternal life.

God shouts in our pains; and we awaken from dreams to the fact that he has travelled this way before. "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4) up to and into his Cross. The young man who died, the friend of so many,

once - wonderfully! - said, "If we really believe in God, there is nothing to be afraid of." The friend who takes our grief and carries our sorrows confirms his testimony: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he ... said, Behold I make all things new" (Revelation 21:4, 5). GGD

**PARISH KALENDAR THIS WEEK**

**MONDAY-FRIDAY:**

8:15AM - *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*

5:30PM - *Evening Prayer & Holy Communion*

**WEDNESDAY**

8:15 - *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*

9:45 - *Litany*

10am *Sung Eucharist*

5:30PM - *Evensong, Supper, & Adult Classes (6:30- 7:30 p.m.)*

**ADULT CATECHISM:**

*For Inquirers, Newcomers, and adults seeking baptism and/or Confirmation -*

*Fr Dunbar*

**NEW CLASS**

**- T. S. ELIOT'S *FOUR QUARTETS*.**

*Fr O'Brien*

**SATURDAY:**

10 AM - *Holy Communion*

**SAVANNAH CONVOCATION  
LENTEN SCHOOL OF RELIGION**

Tuesdays in Lent

7:00 - 8:15 p.m.

*At St. Thomas Church, Isle of Hope*

Classes are offered on: Holy Week

readings from Isaiah; Passion

Narratives; the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

*Leaflet available at Church Office.*

**8:00 A.M. –HOLY COMMUNION—***(No organ during Lent)*

Collects, Epistle, and Gospel (Exhortation p.85)..... 125, (124), 126  
*A continental breakfast is available in Cranmer Hall following this service.*

**9:00—12 Noon NURSERY** *(Cranmer Hall)*

**9:30 A.M. —ADULT, YOUTH, & CHILDREN’S CLASSES** *(Cranmer Hall)*

10:30a.m. –Pre-school Worship—3 year olds through Kindergarten *(Cranmer Hall)*

**10:30 A.M. —SUNG LITANY, SUNG EUCHARIST & ADDRESS**

The Litany..... Prayer Book page 54 or Leaflet  
 HYMN #55 *Forty Days and Forty Nights*..... Heinlein

**ANTE-COMMUNION**

Collect for Purity ..... Prayer Book, page 67  
 The Summary of the Law ..... 69  
 KYRIE ELEISON (Hymnal #702)..... John Merbecke  
 Collects ..... 125 (124)  
 The Lesson: Genesis 22:1-18 *The Testing of Abraham*  
 The Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:1-10..... 126  
 HYMN # 59 *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days*..... St. Flavian  
 The Holy Gospel: St. Matthew 4:1-11 ..... 126  
 The Nicene Creed..... 71  
 HYMN #550 *Am I a soldier of the cross?*..... Marlow  
*1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grade children enrolled in Jr. Choir will exit following the Cross.*  
 ADDRESS..... Fr. Dunbar

**OFFERTORY**

Sentences  
 Anthem: *Call to Remembrance* ..... Richard Farrant  
 Presentation of Alms #732 *All Things are Thine*  
 Prayer for the State of the Church..... 74

**THE HOLY COMMUNION**

Exhortation ..... 85  
 Invitation, Confession and Absolution ..... 75  
 Sursum Corda ..... 76  
 SANCTUS and BENEDICTUS (Hymnal #704)..... John Merbecke  
 Prayer of Consecration: Institution, Oblation, Invocation ..... 80  
 The Lord's Prayer, Prayer of Humble Access *(said with the congregation)* ..... 82  
 AGNUS DEI (Hymnal #706)..... John Merbecke  
 MOTET: *Hide Not Thou Thy Face* ..... Richard Farrant  
 Thanksgiving *(said with the congregation)* ..... 83  
 The Blessing *(Kneeling)*..... 84  
 HYMN #553 *Go forward, Christian soldier*..... Lancashire  
 ORGAN: *Litanies* ..... Jehan Alain

*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 as at 8 a.m.)  
 5:30 P.M.—CHORAL EVENSONG FOR LENT**