

The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 45 No. 4

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

January 26th, 2014

ELLIOTT HOUSE THIS WEEK

This week St. John's welcomes participants to the Thirteenth Annual Elliott House Clergy Seminar, to be conducted Tuesday to Thursday by the Dr. Neil Robertson of King's College, Halifax on writings of Montaigne, Descartes, and Pascal. Elliott House is a ministry of St. John's Church for the theological education of the clergy, ordinands, and theological students.

ABIDING IN LIGHT (PART III)

Christmas is a threefold celebration - of the coming forth of the Word of God *from all eternity*, in the begetting of God the Son outside of time; of his coming forth *in time*, conceived and born of the Virgin Mary; and in his coming forth *in the soul's* regeneration, that we may be made the children of God by adoption and grace. As the Church Fathers said, the Son of God became Son of Man, that the children of men might become the children of God: "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:4,5).

The doctrine appears in John's account of the Word of God made flesh: "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor

of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (1:9-13). It is easy to read this as if it is reporting a sequence of events - we receive the Word by faith, and then we are reborn of God. More likely, however, it is the other way around - John is saying that we are able to receive the Word of God in faith, and receive the adoption of sons, *because* we have already been reborn of God, and made capable of responding to God, by the prevenient grace of regeneration - the grace that precedes human willing, and moves it to will the things of God. Grace precedes and awakens into life the human response of faith; and so opens the way for the further grace of justification and adoption: "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" (1:16).

The best way to understand this is to consider the work of the Holy Spirit. Although not explicitly named in either of the Christmas day lessons, it is taught in the ancient lesson for Christmas Day at dawn (Titus 3:4-7), from which Cranmer derived the language of the collect for Christmas: "after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared", that is, in the incarnation, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our

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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 and recordings of Services and Sermons are to be found on our web site: www.stjohnssav.org

VESTRY OFFERING CHAIRMEN

8:00 Mr. Arthur D. Weed
10:30 Mr. W. Howard Helmken, Jr.

USHER CHAIRMAN

Robert Vinyard Esq. and Mr. William Willingham

The flowers at the altar on are given to the glory of God and in living memory of Dr. Robert Burnett by Mary, Wendy and Decie. and in loving memory of Julia Floyd Smith, Sanford G. Simmons and John Pindar Bradshaw Schaller and loved ones by Mrs. Sanford G. Simmons.

CHANCEL SOCIETY

Mrs. Martin R. Sullivan, Mrs. Rhett N. Willis
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Mrs. Edward J. Derst III, Mrs. F. Debele Maner
Mrs. Howard Kearns, Mrs. Sanford G. Simmons
Mr. John Forbes

ACOLYTES

8:00 Lindsay Pindar
10:30 Chris Dixon
Charles Perrie, Hunt Wasden
Finn Repella, Philip Inglesby
Turner Stevens, Edwin Shepherd

COFFEE HOUR CHAIRMAN

Mrs. J. Earl Gilbreath, Jr.

9:30 A.M. SUNDAY YOUTH & ADULT EDUCATION

- Fr. O'Brien Upper School, Fellowship Hall
• Fr. Dunbar: St. Mark, Reading Room
• Dr. Noble: Shakespeare's History Plays
3rd Floor Cranmer Hall

WEEKDAY STUDY GROUPS

NO MEETINGS THIS WEEK

THURSDAY NOON MEN'S FORUM

"To Preserve and Protect:
Stewardship of the Gospel"

Fr. Jess Reeves, Parish Priest
Otey Memorial Parish Church, Sewanee, Tennessee.

Good food for body and soul. Guests welcome.
Donation requested
Talk starts at 12:10 ends sharp at 12:50.

THE WOMEN OF ST. JOHN'S

The Board of the Women of St. John's meets on Monday, February 3rd at 10:00 a.m. in the Parish House.

The General meeting of the Women of St. John's will be on Wednesday, February 5th, following Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.. Speaker: Hugh Golson, Savannah's expert on — and collector of — Herter Brothers furniture, the firm that was commissioned to make much of the original furniture for the Parish House. This talk should be a significant contribution to our understanding of the original design of the house. The doors are open to ALL!

PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR CHURCH IN YOUR WILL

Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life". Where the Word made flesh goes forth, the Spirit goes with him, to make effectual his calling. As the Word of God addresses us from without, so the Spirit poured out on all flesh transforms and elevates our human nature, enlightening our minds, enkindling our wills, that we may receive him in faith, and enjoy all the blessings of his Sonship. In the image of one author (Austin Farrer), the Spirit is the fifth column, opening the gates of the occupied city from within, that the liberating army of the Word may take possession. For where the Spirit comes first in regeneration, he also comes in adoption, in the joyful consciousness of God's fatherly goodness towards us: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Galatians 4:6, 7).

At Christmas we celebrate the truth which is from above, and our deliverance from our ancient bondage to ignorance, idolatry, evasions, lies, fantasies, and half-truths; and we pray that our hearts being enlightened through the Spirit by the holy radiance of the Son's incarnation we may attain by his guidance to the country of everlasting clearness. What is chiefly required of us is simply the resolve to live in the light of God's Word, by the illumination of his Spirit, as fully and as honestly as we can. That is a commitment to the exercise of the intellect and the will - in reading the Bible, hearing sermons, taking part in the Church's common prayers, receiving the Sacraments, thinking

rigorously and acting obediently. Our model for receiving this Word, and abiding in this light, is Mary, who "kept all these things" which the angel had proclaimed to the shepherds, "and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). May we too abide in his light! GGD

PARISH KALENDAR THIS WEEK

Monday to Friday

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

Morning or Evening Prayer

In addition, on Wednesday

9:45 a.m. *Litany*

10 a.m. *Sung Eucharist*

5:30 p.m. *Evening Prayer
& Holy Communion*

THE ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE

Saturday February 8th

If you are cleaning out your closets, please keep this Sale in mind! Donations received Monday to Friday February 3rd - 7th.

THE CHILDREN'S SCHOOL AT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

16 months old to Pre-K

New enrollment is open to St. John's families (before it is opened to the general public) Wednesday January 29th to Tuesday February 4th. Contact: Cathy King childrenschool@stjohnssav.org or 232-1225.

ADULT CATECHISM

Adults seeking baptism, confirmation, or reception into the Episcopal Church (from another denomination in which they have been confirmed by a bishop in historic succession) - or adults seeking a refresher course in the fundamentals - are requested to take part in the Adult Catechism class at 9:30 a.m. which begins **Sunday February 16th**. Confirmation is set for Sunday, May 4th. To register, please email Dr. Jeremy Bergstrom jbergstrom@stjohnssav.org.
Note: If you have been confirmed - but not by a bishop in historic succession - please speak to the clergy.

8:00 A.M. - HOLY COMMUNION

Collect, Epistle, and GospelPrayer Book page 112, 114
A continental breakfast is available in the Cranmer Hall following this service.

9:30a.m.-12:00 (Noon)—Nursery (Cranmer Hall)

9:30-10:15 A.M.: ALL AGES CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (Cranmer Hall)

10:30 A.M.-END OF SERVICE: PRE-SCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN

(Activities in Cranmer Hall for children during the 9:30 education and/or 10:30 service times)

10:30 A.M.—SUNG EUCHARIST AND SERMON

HYMN #46 *Brightest and best of the sons of the morning*Morning Star

ANTE-COMMUNION

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SERMON.....Fr Dunbar

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Everyone is invited to a Coffee Hour in the Parish House immediately following the 10:30 service. If you are visiting, please make yourself known.

12 Noon—HOLY COMMUNION (Church) Collect, Epistle, p. 112; Gospel p. 114