

The Parish Paper

OF
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 55 No. 35 The Ninth Sunday after Trinity (Trinity 9) July 28, 2024

THIS SUNDAY AT ST. JOHN'S

8 A.M. – HOLY COMMUNION, Church

Introit: Psalm 54, BCP p. 406

The Collect, Epistle, and Gospel: BCP pp. 201-203;

A light breakfast is available in Cranmer Hall following this service.

9:30 A.M. – ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL, Chapel

The Rector's class has been reading in St. Matthew's gospel.

10:30 A.M. – MORNING PRAYER & SERMON, Church & Online

The nursery will be available for this service; childrens' lesson & activity will be held in the Chapel during the sermon, led by Mr. Vanderlip & Mrs. Ross

11:45 A.M. – SPECIAL COFFEE HOUR, Green-Meldrim House

Today we mark a threefold occasion:

Dr. Jonathan Murphy's last Sunday at St. John's as Interim Organist and Choirmaster, and the conclusion of a year of excellent music;

The anniversary of Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar's ordination on July 18, 1992; And the anniversary of Bishop Paul Lambert's consecration to the Episcopate.

Please join us for cake and beverages!

All are welcome to this time of fellowship & refreshment.

Music for this Sunday:

#370 Spirit Divine, Attend Our Prayers (Graefenberg)

Canticles: *Venite, exultemus; Te Deum Laudamus*

Benedictus (Tonus Peregrinus), Philip Moore

#567 Lead Us, Heavenly Father (Dulce Carmen)

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing, arr. Mack Wilberg

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah (Cwm Rhondda)

CHANGE IN PARISH PAPER MAILING & DELIVERY

Due to recent postal delays and rising costs, we will stop sending the Parish Paper by bulk mail after July 28, 2024. Instead we will "deliver" it on time by e-blast newsletter each Wednesday. We will also mail a print copy first class to any of our subscribers who wish; (call the office to be placed on that list).

Paper copies will still be available for the 8 a.m. Holy Communion service.

To be added to the digital list, or for any questions and comments:
Abbey Terry, Communications Coordinator aterry@stjohnssav.org

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NO LONGER OUR OWN—PART I

This essay is based on the sermon preached by Mr Steven Vanderlip for the Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene.

On the feast of St Mary Magdalene we read in Scripture an erotic love poem between a man and a woman - the Song of Songs. Mention of the erotic, of Eros, is likely to make us uncomfortable. Eros is indeed an unsettling thing, but not for the obscenities attached to the term. It is unsettling because in erotic love, the Beloved becomes the very center of our being. In Eros, we are unsettled out of ourselves, for we are no longer our own.

By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth. In the bower of her bedroom, within that intimate space, the woman tells us that she seeks the object of her love, *him whom her soul loveth*, and though he is absent, yet he holds court at the very center of her soul's longing. He is at the center of her being so that even on her bed, she is not her own. This is not simply infatuation - though that common experience (one perhaps we first knew as awkward middle-schoolers) is enough to show us how another person can take possession of us. But here in the Song of Songs, the Beloved is longed for by the soul - the very center of the self. What is the Beloved's name? It is *him whom my soul loveth*, so complete is the woman's entire self given over to him.

Erotic love is a kind of movement towards the Beloved - the woman

loves, therefore she seeks. *I sought him*, she says. But the movement is frustrated: *I sought him, but I found him not.* Should she remain on her bed, within her private chambers, the love would come to no fruition - but instead, this movement of love draws

UPCOMING WORSHIP: WEEK OF TRINITY 9

Online Morning Prayer:

8:15 a.m. Monday-Friday

Monday:

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

Tuesday:

8:30 a.m. *Morning Prayer* Chapel

12 p.m. *Holy Communion*, Chapel

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

Wednesday:

8:30 a.m. *Morning Prayer*, Chapel

12 p.m. *Holy Communion*, Church

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

9 p.m. *Sung Compline*, Church

Thursday:

8:30 a.m. *Morning Prayer*, Chapel

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

Friday:

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

**Sunday, August 4:
The Tenth Sunday after Trinity
(Trinity 10)**

8 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Church

9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School, Chapel
(Rector's class only)

10:30 a.m. *Sung Eucharist & Sermon*, Church/Online

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

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The Rt. Rev. Paul E. Lambert [Retired].....(931) 327-5489
The Rev. J. Patrick Hunt.....Assisting Priest
Dr. Jonathan Murphy.....Interim Organist & Choirmaster
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Mr. Sinisa Domazet.....Buildings Manager
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Verger.....Mr. B. Ray Summerell

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Junior Warden.....Mr. John G. Bradshaw, Jr.
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Chancellor.....Dolby Chisholm

The Vestry: Mr. John G. Bradshaw, Jr., Mr. E. Brian Culver, Mr. Charles J. Ezelle, Mr. Stephen Ezelle, Mrs. James F. Holtzclaw (Sherry), Mr. R. Scott Howard, Mrs. Richard C. E. Jennings (Stacy), Mrs. Thomas C. McCay (Connie), Mrs. Duncan Pindar (Terry), Mr. Graham P. Sadler, Mrs. Elizabeth H. Schubert, Mr. Robert L. Sparks, and Mr. Richard Wright (Rick)

Vestry Emeriti: Mr. George Fawcett, Mr. Edwin H. Culver, and Mr. J. Earl Gilbreath, Jr.

Chancellor Emeritus & Vestryman Emeritus: Mr. M. Tyus Butler, Jr., Esq.

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Co-President, Chancel Society..... Mrs. Jeanne H. McMillan
Mrs. Linda H. Pounds

Pres. Emeritus, 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
10:30 a.m. Mr. Robert L. Sparks

USHER CHAIRS

Mr. Robert L. Sparks

CHANCEL SOCIETY

Mrs. Jayne G. Holland

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Mrs. Timothy E. Coy (Dorothea)

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Mrs. William T. Moore, Jr. (Jane)

Mrs. Jeanne Howell McMillan

Mrs. Jonathan Glen (Marilyn)

COFFEE HOUR CHAIR

Mrs. Thomas M. McCay (Connie)

FLOWERS

The flowers in church this Sunday are given to the glory of God, and in loving memory of Suzanne Dillon Fauber Butler, on the occasion of our 54th wedding anniversary, and my mother, Laurie Eugenia Walker Butler, on the occasion of the 104th anniversary of her birth by Tyus Butler, Jr;

And in loving memory of my husband E. Pomeroy Williams by Victoria Diane Fulmer

To offer flowers for the altar, please call the Church office. After Sunday, the flowers are delivered to the sick, sorrowing, and shut-ins.

Please keep our St. John's outreach partner, **The Living Vine**, in your prayers. Please pray for the mothers, babies, and staff of this Christ-centered program providing protection, provision, and preparation to empower pregnant women in crisis.
www.thelivingvine.org

her out: *I will rise now and go about the city in the streets and in the broad ways will I seek him whom my soul loveth.* In that sense, erotic love is 'ecstatic' [which comes from the Greek word meaning 'put out of one's place'], it quite literally draws her out of her bedroom, out of her private sphere, out of herself. She is entirely concerned with the Beloved and in the grip of her love she fears no danger. The woman goes out into the night, through deserted streets in search of *him whom her soul loveth.* And in this being drawn out of herself, even at risk to herself, her love is no longer about her gratification or the satisfaction of some itch, it is truly about the Beloved. It is all about *him* whom my soul loveth. And though her search for the Beloved is twice fruitless, yet the woman's love is still drawn onward, or rather I should say upward; such love is pitched differently because the Beloved is not within or without, he is not to be found in moving from point A to point B, from emptiness to satisfaction, rather such love is more like an expectation, the promise of him whom she cannot find yet, the woman's love is oriented towards the man not yet present.

The woman encounters the watchmen of the city and she inquires *Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?* She turns to those who have watched to see what she has not seen, and since he is not present, she asks that *he whom her soul loveth* might be presented to her - *saw ye him?* But erotic love passes on from the watchmen and with all the abruptness of stumbling upon him, the woman sings out *I found him whom my soul loveth; I held him and would not let him go.* Such love

effects a mutual indwelling; the lover and the Beloved are not simply presented to each other but are present in each other. She clings to him and does not let him go as a physical intimation of that mutual indwelling.

I held him and I would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me. "Until" does not mean cessation here, as if the lover would let the Beloved go upon entering her mother's house; rather it means transformation - something greater will happen at this point. And indeed here at the end, love's effect is one of union. The man and woman are united as one in a place of eternal fecundity.

That is the nobility of erotic love - to be caught up by another, to love with such abandon, to give oneself entirely to another in devotion. That is the sublimity shared between lovers. "In one high bound," writes CS Lewis, "[Eros] has overleaped the massive wall of our selfhood; it has made appetite itself altruistic... and planted the interests of another in the centre of our being. Spontaneously and without effort we have fulfilled the law [to love another as oneself]" [*The Four Loves*, p. 130]. This is the stuff of song - if only the lover sings, then Eros gives us the Song of all Songs! The greatest song - how great it is. Yet here, we need to be careful, not that we risk loving another too much but that Eros, in speaking "like a god" [p 124] as Lewis says, in sounding so divine and commanding total devotion, might lead us short of love's end. (To be continued.)

SDV