

THIS SUNDAY AT ST. JOHN'S

The nursery is available from 8:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

8:00 A.M. HOLY COMMUNION, Church

Introit: Psalms 99, BCP pp. 462-463

The Collect, Epistle, and Gospel: BCP pp. 117-118

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

9:00 A.M. FAMILY MORNING PRAYER, Church

10:00 a.m. Sunday School (all ages), Chapel & Cranmer Hall

11:00 A.M. MORNING PRAYER, Church & Online

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION, Church

MUSIC FOR THIS SUNDAY:

Impromptu, Op. 78, No. 2, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

#278 *All People That on Earth Do Dwell*, OLD HUNDREDTH

Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies, Thomas Candlyn

#396 *The Church's One Foundation*, AURELIA

Ordination of a Deacon

The Bishop of Central Florida, the Rt. Rev. Justin Holcomb, will ordain parishioner Matthew Sparks to the Diaconate on **Sat., Nov. 16, at 11 a.m.** (please note the time change) in the Cathedral Church of St. Luke in Orlando. The diaconate is not a lay ministry but the first degree of Holy Orders.

Men of St. John's Meeting

The Men of St. John's annual meeting and presentation by Fr. Mark Perkins of St. Dunstan's Academy is **Monday, Nov. 18**, at 5:30 p.m. in the Green-Meldrim. Visit StJohnsSav.org/men to RSVP. Members \$15; Guests are free.

1841 Society Members Reception

St. John's Church will host a reception for 1841 Society Members on **Sunday, Nov. 24**, at 5:30 p.m. in the Green-Meldrim House. Formal invitations have been mailed. We will welcome those parishioners who have recently chosen to provide a legacy gift to St. John's Church.

EYCS Scholarship Drive

We'll have a special collection on **Sunday, Nov. 24**, for the Episcopal Youth and Children's Services scholarship drive. You may place cash or checks in the collection plate (made out to EYCS; St. John's in memo); visit StJohnsSav.org/give (Choose "special collection" with EYCS in memo), or mail to the church office.

Thanksgiving Day

Plan to give thanks to the Lord for his many blessing during our 11 a.m. Holy Communion on Thanksgiving Day, **Thursday, Nov. 28**, in the church. This service will be live-streamed as well. No other services will be held that day or Friday, Nov. 29, and the church office will be closed both days as well.

December's Faith + Fiction

Our next one will be **Wednesday, Dec. 11**, at 5:30 p.m. in the Green-Meldrim House. The book is *A Christmas Carol*, by Charles Dickens.

The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

FEAR AND HOPE

Last week I travelled with Fr Jameson and St. John's lay delegates (Skip Jennings, Stacy Jennings, John Bradshaw, and Rick Wright) to the annual Convention of the Diocese of Georgia, held in Tifton, about four hours drive west of Savannah. As we passed through the small towns of the hinterland we saw the damage wrought by storm Helene – huge trees uprooted, roofs patched in blue tarpaulin, piles of debris, and devastated pecan groves. It was an appropriate setting for the main topic of the Convention, which was the reality of institutional decline in the Episcopal Church, especially in the smaller congregations of a largely rural diocese. If the secularizing headwinds of recent decades have not come as suddenly as hurricane, their long-term impact has been equally damaging. Formal religious affiliation in the USA has been declining right across the spectrum, but especially in mainline denominations like our own. The impact falls hard on small rural congregations, which are increasingly unable to afford to pay full-time clergy, and are often in areas without part-time or retired clergy to call on. Developing strategies for survival in such circumstances is critical, and the Convention's conversations naturally had their needs in focus.

Though it does not face the challenges that beset smaller congregations, St. John's is not immune to these big changes in American religious habits, either, and though we have seen a welcome growth in numbers since our return from the Covid lockdowns of 2020 and 2021, we have no reason to

be complacent or triumphalist. In a consumerist culture like ours, the formation of faith and the building of congregations is a challenge for all.

Fear is helpful when it jolts us out of ignorance or complacency, but its effect is short-lived, and easily collapses into apathy, fatalism or despair. Fear

UPCOMING WORSHIP: WEEK OF TRINITY 25

Online Morning Prayer:

8:15 a.m. Monday-Friday

Monday, Nov. 18:

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

Tuesday, Nov. 19:

8:30 a.m. *Morning Prayer with Holy Communion*, Chapel
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

Wednesday, Nov. 20:

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, Nov. 21:

8:30 a.m. *Morning Prayer with Holy Communion*, Chapel
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer with Holy Communion*, Chapel

Friday, Nov. 22:

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

Sunday, November 24:

Sunday Next Before Advent (EYCS Collection)

8 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Church
9 a.m. *Family Holy Communion*, Church
10 a.m. *Sunday School (all ages)*, Chapel & Cranmer Hall
11 a.m. *Morning Prayer & Sermon*, Church/Online
12:15 p.m. *Coffee Hour*, Green-Meldrim
5 p.m. 1841 Reception, Green-Meldrim

THE PARISH PAPER
of
St. John's Church
ONE WEST MACON STREET
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401
www.stjohnssav.org

To receive the Parish Paper digitally, please send your name and email address to information@stjohnssav.org.

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The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar.....Rector
1 West Macon Street, 31401.....(912) 429-3384
The Rev. Jonathan Jameson.....Associate Rector
The Rt. Rev. Paul E. Lambert [Retired].....(931) 327-5489
Rev. J. Patrick Hunt.....Assisting Priest
Mr. William Douglas.....Organist and Choirmaster
Mr. Wesley Perkins.....Assistant Conductor
Mrs. Angela Fisher.....Assistant Organist
Mrs. Janice W. Woods.....Business Manager
Ms. Doreen L. Karls.....Parish Administrator
Mrs. Daniel J. Mahfiet.....Financial Administrator
Mrs. Jeremy J. Harvey (Heather).....Communications
Mrs. Joseph Ross, Jr. (Sarah).....Children's Ministry Director
Mr. Steven D. Vanderlip, Jr. Minister w/Youth/Pastoral Intern
Mr. Sinisa Domazet.....Buildings Manager
Master of Ceremonies.....Mr. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr.
Verger.....Mr. B. Ray Summerell
Verger.....Mr. James E. Morris
Senior Warden.....Mr. Robert L. Sparks
Junior Warden.....Mr. John G. Bradshaw, Jr.
Clerk of Vestry.....Mrs. Elizabeth H. Schubert
Treasurer.....Mr. Floyd Whittington, Jr.
Assistant Treasurer.....Mrs. Stuart C. Clifford (Susan)
Chancellor.....Dolly Chisholm

The Vestry: Mr. John G. Bradshaw, Jr., Mr. E. Brian Culver, Mr. Charles J. Ezelle, Mr. Stephen Ezelle, Mrs. James F. Holtzelaw (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.

President, Women of St. John's.....Melanie Finnegan
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

Church Office.....(912) 232-1251
Parish House.....(912) 233-3845
Cranmer Hall.....(912) 232-8887
E-mails.....(firstinitiallastname)@stjohnssav.org

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. Stephen D. Ezelle

USHER CHAIRS

Mr. Stephen D. Ezelle
Mr. Frank Somoskey

CHANCEL SOCIETY

Mrs. Jayne G. Holland
Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr. (Barbara)
Mrs. John G. Bradshaw (Sally)
Mrs. Nohl A. Braun, Jr. (Alyce)
Mrs. Timothy E. Coy (Dorothea)
Mrs. I. David Futrell, Jr. (Penny)

FLOWERS

The flowers in church this Sunday are given to the glory of God, and in loving memory of Kippy Adams on her birthday from Dicky, Caroline, Ted, Reid, Katharine, Dee, Ellie and Mary-Porcher.

And in honor of the wedding anniversary of Amanda and Tom Heath, who were married on November 2, 2002 at St. John's Church by Dorothy and Susan Kingery.

And in loving memory of
Dr. and Mrs. Jules Victor, Jr.
by Mr. and Mrs. Neil H. Victor.

And in loving memory and in honor of the birthday of our sweet mother and grandmother, JoAnn Clark Troxler by her family.

And in thanksgiving for, and on the occasion of, the birthday of William Reese Cooper by Mrs. Patti Cooper.

And in loving memory of
Mr. and Mrs. Henry King McCormick
and Mr. and Mrs. L. Rodgers Wells
by Mr. and Mrs. R. Gilbert Wells.

And in honor of
Charles & Julia Lawton Williams
on their 46th Wedding Anniversary
on November 19th.

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

alone leads nowhere good unless there is also a real hope to embrace, and we embrace it. Bishop Logue wisely pointed the Convention to the "living hope" we have in Christ – the "sure and certain hope" set before us in the gospel, the hope for us to embrace in faith. There is no strategic vision or action for the church's future that does not begin again from the gospel hope. In my own observation, however, though lip service is often paid to the gospel, it gets little sustained attention, and its character and implications are not carefully explored. Bishop Logue's exhortation needs to be followed up, not treated as a box to be checked. The perennial temptation of Episcopalians (along with other mainline liberals) is to endorse superficial worldly optimism in place of the true gospel – the false gospel skewered so memorably by Richard Niebuhr: "A God without wrath brought men without sin into a Kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a Cross." If this is the version of the gospel we embrace, then we are embracing a delusive hope.

Inevitably, the Convention's deliberations on a strategic vision took the form of a listening process conducted by consultants. While this supplied a useful baseline for this conversation, the results were inevitably somewhat predictable and superficial, motherhood and apple pie, and only vaguely grounded in the gospel. Instead of self-criticism, there was a good deal of self-validation, and that is not what is needed at this time. An openness to self-criticism is a necessary step to renewal, otherwise we are just pursuing the same failing approaches that have got us where we are now. Managing a process of self-criticism that allows all voices to be heard in a climate of civility is no easy trick in our culture. Even the most prestigious academic institutions in our time have failed to establish a climate in which disagree-

ments can be aired with civility. To its credit, the Episcopal Diocese has sought to hold together a range of views and practices in a "big tent", one that finds space within a liberal denomination for theological conservatives like ourselves; and the tacit commitment we have made to each other is not to bring the big tent down. It's easy to see how feelings could be hurt and divisions exacerbated as disagreements are brought out into the open, and the temptation will be to shut down such difficult conversations. Learning how to explore our disagreements within the big tent – speaking the truth in love – will require courage and wisdom, humility and charity. Whether or not we are ready for that is a question. We may think it is better to just muddle through the way we have done before.

There is another aspect to hope, and that is the providence of God. Whatever one thinks of the recent election results – and of course opinion is sharply divided about this! – it seems that we are moving from the predictable and placid flow of recent history into a stretch of white water. That means a time of fear, and quite possibly disruption and destruction – but it also may be a time when hope appears in surprising ways. It is not unthinkable, for instance, that the secularizing world and its secularizing churches may be caught up in a religious and spiritual revival. A church that is serious about its mission will be alert to such movements of the Spirit.

– GGD

Next Sunday Night Session

Join us this **Sunday, Nov. 17**, at 5 p.m. for our next session entitled, "Pop Culture & Christian Witness" by Stephen Aduado. Visit StJohnsSav.org/arts to RSVP. Next month's session is Sunday, Dec. 8, entitled "What's Good About Marriage?" presented by priest and theologian, Victor Lee Austin.