

The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 57 No. 1

The First Sunday in Advent

November 30, 2025

THE STATE OF THE PARISH (II)

An Annual Congregational Meeting is an opportunity to review the state of the parish, and much of this is necessarily concerned with reports on finances, buildings, attendance, and programming. But it is also an opportunity for us to remind ourselves of our larger purpose, the reason why we exist, and what has formed us as a parish. The transmission of memory, which is the activity of tradition is foundational to Christian faith. When memory is lost, understanding falters and hope fails. Likewise, the transmission of memory is critical to mission. "I delivered unto you that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins, and that he rose again the third day...." "This do, in remembrance of me".

As noted in last week's essay, there are many ways in which this mission is fulfilled, but at the heart of them all is the work of worship. That is our primary mission: to testify to the grace we have received of God by Christ, and to render him thanks and praise. In worship, we learn to do all things in dependence on his grace, and in devotion to his glory. In the historic Book of Common Prayer, together with the Articles of Religion, (familiar to us in its 1928 edition, but rooted in the 16th century reformation of the ancient catholic tradition of worship), we have a vehicle of matchless clarity and power for that work of worship.

In the later decades of the last century, the Episcopal Church was swept by a series of radical transformations, in worship, ministry, in doctrine and morals. At their core was an act of intentional deracination, the elimination of the historic Prayer Book, and the relegation of the Articles of Religion to merely historical status. In the face of intense institutional pressure, many parishes knuckled under and sold their birthright for a mess of pottage; but by a certain providence, the rector of St John's was William Ralston, a man of conviction, courage, and eloquence. Under his leadership the parish made the conscious decision not to abandon the tradition of faith and worship at the heart of the Anglican identity. And the parish flourished. People who knew the value of that tradition flocked to it. I know it, because I was one of

them, hired in 1997 as the low man on the totem pole. I didn't come here for the weather, but for the opportunity to be part of this faithful witness. And that also is why I stayed, and accepted the call in 2006 to be your rector. Yes, we have the best tomato sandwiches – but it is the religion of the old Prayer Book that sets us apart. Precisely because it was so ruthlessly stamped out in most of the Episcopal church, it is a heritage we hold in trust for the wider church, a living tradition to be treasured, transmitted, and, if need be, fought for, with holy obstinacy.

To be clear, this obstinate attachment to the old Prayer Book is not a matter of nostalgia. (Both the Rector and the Associate Rector came to this tradition as adults.) Its language *is* beautiful – but it is not the purple prose of greeting-cards. It is plain but dignified language that bears the weight of conviction, and gives shape to gospel-centered worship in matchless clarity. Our faithfulness to it is the form of our faithfulness to the gospel – it's the particular way that has been given for us to abide in Christ. It enables us to have such deep roots in the gospel, that we may bear much fruit to the Father's glory. And thus our attachment to worship finds its proper complement in all the works of witness by which we testify to, and draw people into, the grace we have ourselves received.

In his remarks at the annual meeting, Fr Jameson made the connection between this deep-rootedness in the gospel and our witness to the world around us:

"The good news about St John's is that it is a beautiful and time-tested place to gather to hear and

Continued on back page

All are invited to join us to make wreaths.

Advent Wreath Making

Sunday, November 30 at 10 AM
First Floor of Cranmer Hall



Church Office: 1 West Macon St, 31401(912) 232-1251

Bishop of GA.....The Rt. Rev. Frank Logue
Rector The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar
Associate Rector The Rev. Jonathan Jameson
The Rt. Rev. Paul E. Lambert [Retired].....(931) 327-5489
Hon. Assisting Priest Rev. J. Patrick Hunt
Hon. Assisting PriestRev. David Thurlow
Organist and Choirmaster..... Mr. William Douglas
Verger Mr. B. Ray Summerell
VergerMr. James E. Morris
Acolyte Director/Master of Ceremonies...Mr. Carter C. Hubbard

Sr. Warden: Mr. Graham P. Sadler; Jr. Warden: Mrs. Duncan Pindar (Terry); Treasurer: Mr. Floyd Whittington, Jr; Assistant Treasurer: Mrs. Stuart C. Clifford (Susan); Clerk of Vestry: Mrs. Elizabeth H. Schubert; Chancellor: Dolly Chisholm

The Vestry: Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr. (Barbara), Mrs. L. Allan Reynolds, Jr. (Beverley), Mr. Douglas P. McManamy, Mrs. Jonathan D. Sprague (Mary), Mrs. Patrick Worsham (Jane), Mr. Charles J. Ezelle, Mr. Stephen D. Ezelle, Mr. R. Scott Howard, Mr. Richard Wright (Rick), and Mrs. James F. Holtzclaw (Sherry); Chancellor Emeritus & Vestryman Emeritus: M. Tyus Butler, Jr., Esq.; Vestry Emeriti: Mr. George Fawcett, Mr. Edwin H. Culver, Mr. J. Earl Gilbreath, Jr.

President, Women of St. John's: Melanie Finnegan; Co-Presidents, Chancel Society: Mrs. Jeanne H. McMillan and Mrs. Linda H. Pounds; President, Men of St. John's: Mr. Benjamin Baxter

THE AQUILA MUSIC FOUNDATION

MUSIC ON MADISON SQUARE



The Choirs of St. John's "Christmas Oratorio"

The Choirs of St. John's Church
with members of the Savannah Philharmonic
Orchestra perform the Christmas Oratorio
by Saint-Saens along with other Christmas
choral favorites!

Music that awakens the heart

SUNDAY, DEC 14 AT 5 PM

St. John's Church
325 Bull St, Savannah GA 31401



UPCOMING WORSHIP

WEEK OF ADVENT 1

Monday to Friday:

8:15 a.m. *Online Morning Prayer*

Monday, December 1

No in-person services.

Tuesday, December 2

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

Wednesday, December 3

Noon *Holy Communion*, Church

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

9 p.m. *Sung Compline*, Church

Thursday, December 4

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*

with Holy Communion, Chapel

Friday, December 5

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

Saturday, December 6

11 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Chapel

Sunday, December 7

Second Sunday in Advent

8 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Church

8:45 a.m. *Nursery*, Cranmer Hall

open until 12:15 p.m.

9 a.m. *Family Morning Prayer*, Church

10 a.m. *All Ages Sunday School*,

Cranmer Hall & Chapel

11 a.m. *Sung Eucharist*, Church/Online

Women of St. John's Membership

Meeting and Holiday Gathering

Thursday, Dec. 4, 5:30 p.m. Green-Meldrim

Refreshments beginning at 5:30 p.m. with meeting at 6 p.m. Holly Days Bazaar results will be announced. Spouses and friends are welcome!

Offering Envelopes for 2026

For parishioners who use offering envelopes, they are available for pick-up in the Fellowship Hall. Please take a moment to grab your box, which is arranged in alphabetical order, from the table.

THE ADVENT SEASON AT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SUNDAY, NOV. 30: ADVENT I

- **Angel Tree Kickoff** – Take a tag from the tree in Cranmer Hall and purchase gifts for the moms and babies at The Living Vine Maternity Home.
- **Advent Wreath Making** – At 10 a.m., all ages are invited to make wreaths in Fellowship Hall.
- **Christmas Decorating & Cookie Making** – Youth are invited to our annual Christmas decorating and cookie making at the Living Vine Maternity Home. Email ssross@stjohnssav.org for details.
- **Come and Sing!** – Join us in the Green-Meldrim House at 5 p.m. to sing Advent & Christmas hymns. RSVP at StJohnsSav.org/music.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 3

- **Faith + Fiction** – At 5:30p.m. in the Green-Meldrim participate in a discussion of “Christmas at Thompson Hall,” by Anthony Trollope. All welcome!

SUNDAY, DEC. 7: ADVENT II

- **Tree Trimming in the Mall** – Parishioners of all ages are invited to decorate the tree at 4 p.m. in the Garden Mall. Plan to stay for festive music at 5 p.m.
- **The Sunday Night Sessions** – At 5 p.m. on the Green-Meldrim House steps, Andy Squyres performs a special Advent music concert (free & open to public). Plan to come early and help decorate the Christmas tree in the Garden Mall at 4 p.m.

SATURDAY, DEC. 13

- **Breakfast with Santa** – The Children’s School at St. John’s holds their annual fundraiser, 9:30 a.m. in the Green-Meldrim Mall. Tickets at StJohnsPreschool.org.

SUNDAY, DEC. 14: ADVENT III

- **Angel Tree Collection Concludes** – Plan to drop off gifts in the box in Cranmer Hall by this Sunday.
- **Music on Madison Square** – At 5 p.m., The Choirs of St. John’s perform *Christmas Oratorio*. Tickets at StJohnsSav.org/mms or at the door.

SUNDAY, DEC. 21: ADVENT IV

- **Lessons & Carols and Eggnog Coffee Hour** – At 11 a.m., join us in the church for a beautiful liturgy followed by a special reception in the Green-Meldrim House featuring eggnog.
- **Christmas Pageant Rehearsal** – At 12:15 p.m., the youth and children meet in Cranmer Hall to dress and practice for the Christmas Eve pageant.

COME AND SING!

Sunday, Nov. 30, at 5 p.m. Green-Meldrim Join us to sing some of the great Advent & Christmas hymns of our faith. Everything you need to participate will be provided. Bring friends and family to enjoy singing together.

This event is free and open to the public. Register and submit your hymn requests by scanning the QR code or by calling the Church office.



DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!
HELP US REACH
THE CRITZ FAMILY'S
\$15,000 MATCH
CHALLENGE



HOPE HAVEN

Donate today and help Hope Haven continue making a difference for families living with brain changes like dementia. Every gift is DOUBLED thanks to a generous match of up to \$15,000 through Dec. 31. Thanks to early supporters, we’ve already raised \$3,500!

Your generosity helps our growing program provide connection, care, and community for members and caregivers. Every gift truly makes a difference.

SavannahRespite.com/donate

St. John's Church Presents
A VERY **ANDY SQUYRES**
ADVENT

The Sunday Night Sessions:
Small Bites + Drinks
Music. Laughter. Meaning.



DEC 7, 2025
DOORS OPEN 5PM

GREEN-MELDRIM HOUSE
14 W MACON ST, SAVANNAH, GA

THIS SUNDAY AT ST. JOHN'S

*The nursery (infants to four-year-olds)
is available from 8:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
on the 2nd floor of Cranmer Hall.*

8 A.M. HOLY COMMUNION, Church

*NOTE: No breakfast in Cranmer Hall following
the 8 & 9 a.m. services this Sunday.*

Introit: Psalm 25, BCP pp. 369–370

The Collect, BCP p. 90

The Epistle and Gospel, BCP pp. 91–92

Exhortation, BCP pp. 85–86

9 A.M. FAMILY MORNING PRAYER, Church

10 A.M. ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Cranmer Hall & St. Mary's Chapel

10 A.M. WREATH MAKING, 1st Fl, Cranmer Hall

*All ages are invited to join us in Fellowship Hall
to make Advent wreaths.*

11 A.M. SUNG EUCHARIST, Church & Online

FLOWERS THIS THANKSGIVING

The flowers on the altar on Thanksgiving Day are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. Albert Sidney Newton by Dr. Roland S. Summers.

And in honor of Mrs. Roland Summers (Sylvia) for her many years of love and devotion to the Chancel Society.

And to the Glory of God and for the unfaltering kindness and friendship of Dr. Wesley Krulic by Dr. Jonathan Murphy.

FLOWERS THIS SUNDAY

The flowers in church this Sunday are given to the glory of God, and in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Richard A. Belford, Sr. by Mr. and Mrs. W. Lee Belford.

To offer flowers for the altar, please call the Church office. After Sunday, the flowers are delivered to the sick, sorrowing, and shut-ins. To volunteer for this ministry, call Margaret Wylly at 912-656-6235.

Continued from front page

participate in the good news of *Jesus Christ*. We do not preach ourselves, but Christ crucified, as St Paul writes. This is the good news that God has commissioned St John's to continue to bear right here in the center of Savannah – the message of God's grace for sinners, the message of forgiveness of sins and of reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ. The good news that by God's grace we have been made members of one another, brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ.

“And so because St John's is, by God's grace, such a good and healthy place to encounter the gospel, to hear the Word proclaimed, to receive the inestimable benefits of the sacraments, to gather as the body of Christ, we need to be bold in our invitation. People need the good news of Jesus Christ, it's what they are desperately looking for, and they will find it *here*. So, let's be confident as we invite people to St John's. We not inviting them to a nice concert, or a pretty building, we are inviting them to encounter the living God, and to come to know that that living God knows them and loves them, and that he is inviting them to be a member of his family here in this beloved church.” To which I say – and I trust you will all say – Amen, So Be It. – GGD

CONDOLENCES

We extend our condolences to the family of Marshall Stone of this parish who died Sunday, November 23.

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

VESTRY OFFERING CHAIR

8 a.m. Mr. Arthur D. Weed

11 a.m. Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr. (Barbara)

USHERS

Mr. Frank Somoskey

Mr. Robert L. Sparks

CHOIR

Choir of Adults

CHANCEL SOCIETY

Mrs. Timothy E. Coy (Dorothea)

Mrs. Jayne G. Holland

Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr. (Barbara)

Mrs. Clarkson C. Logan (Meta)

Ms. Linda H. Pounds

Dr. Robert Jarman (Bob)