

The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

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Fourth Sunday after Trinity

June 28, 2026

PRAYING FOR THE CHURCH (2)

The Church in the World

One of the striking features of the Prayer for the Church is how quickly it turns our attention away from ourselves. In the opening petition, we ask God to unite his Church in truth of God's Word and in the love of the Spirit. Yet the purpose of this unity is not self-preservation. The Church does not exist for itself. It exists for the glory of God and the salvation of the world. That conviction appears at the very beginning of the prayer: "Almighty and everliving God, who by thy holy Apostle hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all men..." The Prayer is alluding to St. Paul's first letter to Timothy: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men" (2:1).

The phrase is easily overlooked, but it is remarkable. Christians are not taught to pray only for themselves, their families, their friends, or even fellow Christians. They are commanded to pray for all humanity. Why? Paul immediately supplies the reason. God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (2:4). Christian prayer is the alignment of man's will with God's – and that means with the universal scope of God's saving purpose. This universal concern distinguishes Christianity from every merely tribal religion. Ancient peoples commonly prayed for their own nation, city, or clan. Their gods belonged to a particular people. The God of Israel revealed himself as the Creator of heaven and earth. The Father revealed by Jesus Christ is the God of all mankind. The Church, therefore, cannot be content with concern for "people like us." The gospel continually pushes us beyond the boundaries of family, class, race, language, nationality, and political allegiance. The God who created "all men" has sent his Son

for "all men" and therefore we pray for "all sorts and conditions of men".

This universal mission follows naturally from the central confession of the Christian faith. Paul continues: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Modern people often assume the opposite. They imagine that if Christians believe there is only one God and one Mediator, then Christians must be narrow and exclusive. In reality, the New Testament draws the opposite conclusion. Because there is one God, every human being stands in relation to him. Because there is one Mediator, every human being is invited to come to him in faith. Because Christ died for the world that did not know him, the Church's mission extends to the same rebellious world. Christianity combines what appears at first to be a paradox: an exclusive faith and an inclusive mission. The Church confesses one Lord, one faith, one baptism. Yet precisely because it does so, it seeks the salvation of all.

This outward orientation explains the next petition of the Prayer for the Church: "We beseech thee also, so to direct and dispose the hearts of all Christian Rulers..." Modern Americans often find this surprising. We are accustomed to thinking of religion as a private matter. Yet Scripture repeatedly instructs Christians to pray for those entrusted with civil authority. Not because rulers are sacred or human governments infallible – and certainly not because the Church seeks political power. The reason is much simpler. When Paul instructed Christians to pray for kings and rulers, the Roman Empire was not governed by Christian emperors. He was not seeking a confessional state (though that would arise in Christian Europe). He was asking God to grant conditions in which Christians might "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." The

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Bishop of GA..... The Rt. Rev. Frank Logue
Rector The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar
Associate Rector The Rev. Jonathan Jameson
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Hon. Assisting Priest Rev. J. Patrick Hunt
Hon. Assisting Priest Rev. David Thurlow
Organist and Choirmaster Mr. William Douglas
Verger Mr. B. Ray Summerell
Verger Mr. James E. Morris
Acolyte Dir./Master of Ceremonies Mr. Carter C. Hubbard

Sr. Warden: Mrs. James F. Holtzclaw (Sherry); Jr. Warden:
Mr. Douglas P. McManamy; Treasurer: Mr. Floyd
Whittington, Jr; Assistant Treasurer: Mrs. Stuart C.
Clifford (Susan); Clerk of Vestry: Mrs. Elizabeth H. Schu-
bert; Chancellor: Dolly Chisholm

The Vestry: Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr. (Barbara),
Mrs. L. Allan Reynolds, Jr. (Beverley), Mr. Charles B.
Compton, Jr. (Chip), Mrs. Jonathan D. Sprague (Mary),
Mr. Patrick Worsham, Dr. Janet S. Morris, Mr. R. Scott
Howard, Mr. Wiley A. Wasden III, Mr. Charles J. Ezelle,
Mr. Graham P. Sadler, and Mrs. Duncan Pindar (Terry);
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: Mrs. Clarkson C. Logan
(Meta), Chancel Society: Mrs. Jeanne H. McMillan and
Mrs. Linda H. Pounds; President, Men of St. John's:
Mr. Benjamin W. Baxter

UPCOMING HOLY DAYS

Monday, June 29

Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, Apostles

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

Thursday, July 2

Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer with*

Holy Communion, Chapel

Wednesday, July 22

Feast of St. Mary Magdalene

Noon *Holy Communion*, Church

Saturday, July 25

Feast of St. James the Apostle

11 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Chapel

UPCOMING WORSHIP

Week of Trinity 4

Online Morning Prayer

No online Moring Prayer this week.

**Monday, June 29: Feast of
Saints Peter & Paul, Apostles**
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

Tuesday, June 30

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

Wednesday, July 1

Noon *Holy Communion*, Church

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

No Compline today

**Thursday, July 2: Visitation of the
Blessed Virgin Mary**

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*

with Holy Communion, Chapel

Friday, July 3

The Church office will be closed today.

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

Sunday, July 5:

The Fourth Sunday after Trinity

8 a.m. *Said Holy Communion*, Church

9:15 a.m. *Nursery*, Cranmer Hall

9:30 a.m. *Fr. Dunbar's Class (next class July 12th)*

10:30 a.m. *Sung Eucharist*, Online/Church
with a short children's activity in the Chapel
during the sermon.

5 p.m. *Music on Madison Square, Category V*

Brass : Patriotic Extravaganza, Church

**NOTE: The Church office will be closed
at noon on Fridays during the summer.**

MUSIC IN THE MALL: JACOB EVANS

*Wednesday, July 1, at 7 p.m. in the Garden Mall
(Free & Open to the Public)*

Our next summer concert features Jacob Evans, a beloved presence on the Savannah music scene who captivates audiences with his soulful voice, smooth guitar work, and signature blend of R&B, soul, and pop. He gives an intimate, one-of-a-kind performance you won't want to miss. Bring a chair or blanket and enjoy an unforgettable evening of live music in a beautiful historic setting!



Photo: Sonni Studios

MUSIC ON MADISON SQUARE



Category V Brass: Patriotic Extravaganza

Sunday, July 5, at 5 p.m., St. John's Church

Join us for a concert inside historic St. John's church to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence with this powerhouse brass ensemble performing uplifting and patriotic works.

Recognition of Service Members

As we gather to give thanks for the freedoms we hold dear, we want to remember the service members who have protected and defended the rights and liberties of our citizens. If you would like to give an honorarium or memorial to be included in the concert program, you may scan this QR code to fill out the form and submit your names along with your donation.

**Scan QR Code to
Purchase Tickets or Visit
stjohnssav.org/mms**



Guest Preacher This Sunday, June 28th *The Rev. Dr. Porter C. Taylor*

We are honored to welcome The Rev. Dr. Porter C. Taylor as our guest preacher. He was ordained in the Diocese of Central Florida and has served parishes in Augusta, Ga., and Cocoa Beach, Fl. Porter holds a PhD from the University of Aberdeen in the field of liturgical theology and is the author of the forthcoming book, *A Re-Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (Wiley Blackwell, 2026) and co-editor of *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Liturgical Theology*.

FLOWERS FOR SUNDAY

The flowers this Sunday are given to the glory of God, and in thanksgiving for our 78th wedding anniversary, by Mr. and Mrs. George Fawcett.

And in loving memory of
Dorothy Mather Thompson,
by Mr. And Mrs. William Thompson.

To the glory of God and in celebration
of the baptism of
Sawyer Sherwood Cooper Holbrook

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.

THIS SUNDAY AT ST. JOHN'S

Summer schedule runs until Sept. 6th.

The nursery (infants to five-year-olds) is available on the 1st floor of Cranmer Hall from 9:15 a.m. until after the 10:30 a.m. service.

8 a.m. Said Holy Communion, Church

Breakfast in Cranmer Hall after 8 a.m. service.

Introit: Psalm 27 BCP pp. 371–372

The Collect, BCP p. 194

The Epistle and Gospel, BCP pp. 194–195

9:30 a.m. Fr. Dunbar's Class (*Next class July 12th*)

10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, Church/Online

with a children's talk during Morning Prayer

11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour, Green-Meldrim

Join us for special piano music by Alex Hencinski during coffee hour in memory of Frank Somoskey's wife, Martha Dennison "Denny" Somoskey, whose birthday was June 28.

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Vestry Offering Chair

8 a.m. Mr. B. Ray Summerell

10:30 a.m. Mr. Charles J. Ezelle

Ushers

Mr. Charles B. Compton, Jr. (Chip)

Mr. Robert L. Sparks

Choir

10:30 a.m. Choir of Adults

Coffee Hour

Mrs. James McClellan (Joyce)

Chancel Society

Mrs. Timothy E. Coy (Dorothea)

Mrs. Jayne G. Holland

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

Mrs. B. Ray Summerell (Melanie)

Mrs. Nohl A. Braun, Jr. (Alyce)

Mrs. John G. Bradshaw (Sally)

Laura C. Wimbish

Mrs. Jeanne H. McMillan

Mrs. Martin Sheehan (Kristine)

Church's mission can best be carried out where law restrains violence and upholds property rights, where justice is administered impartially, and where freedom permits the gospel to be preached openly.

The American Prayer Book inherits this biblical concern for the organizing structures of human society. In line with the Founding Fathers, it acknowledges the mission of the state to uphold justice. Though freedom of religious conscience prohibits legal establishment of religion, it does not seek a public square in which religion has no place. Rather it assumes that the authorities of church and state, though separate, have a common interest in the moral well-being of the people they serve, and to supporting the conditions where religion and virtue can flourish among them. The Church prays for rulers not because politics is ultimate, but because politics is *not* ultimate. Earthly governments cannot save the world. Yet they can either hinder or help the conditions under which the gospel is proclaimed and Christian life is lived.

In the end, however, even this prayer for rulers serves a larger purpose. The Church's horizon is always the world that God loves. The Church gathers around Word and Sacrament, but never as a closed circle. Every Sunday, we are reminded that Christ died not merely for us but "for the sins of the whole world". The Church is called out of the world, but it is sent back into the world. It receives the truth so that it may bear witness to the truth. It receives mercy so that it may become an instrument of mercy. It receives the gospel so that the gospel may be proclaimed to all nations.

That is why, before we come to the altar, the Prayer Book teaches us to lift our eyes beyond ourselves. The Church that prays only for itself has forgotten its mission. The Church that prays for all mankind remembers the heart of God. – GGD

(Continued next week.)

Nursery Update

The church nursery is returning to the first floor of Cranmer Hall this Sunday. We look forward to welcoming our youngest (babies to five-year-olds) in the new space! Note that the check-in process will remain the same.