

The Parish Paper

OF
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 57 No. 33

The Sixth Sunday after Trinity

July 12, 2026

PRAYING FOR THE CHURCH (4)

Hearing and Receiving

Having prayed for the Church as a whole, for the rulers of society, and for those entrusted with the ministry of Word and Sacrament, the Prayer for the Church now turns to the people who are to receive that ministry: “And to all thy People give thy heavenly grace; and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear, and receive thy holy Word; truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.” The order of this petition is significant. Before the congregation acts, it receives. Before it serves, it listens. Before it speaks, it hears. Indeed, the order mirrors the whole economy of grace. God always acts first. He speaks before we answer. He gives before we return. He calls before we follow. The Church is, above all, a community that lives by receiving. The Church is not an association formed by common interests or voluntary choice. It is a people called into being by God himself. This calling comes through the Word. The sheep become a flock because they hear the Shepherd’s voice. “My sheep hear my voice,” says Jesus, “and I know them, and they follow me.” The Church is created wherever the gospel is truly proclaimed and truly believed. It is what happens when the living God addresses human beings, and human beings answer in faith.

That is why the Prayer does not ask first that God’s people may become active, influential, or successful. It asks that they may “hear, and receive thy holy Word.” Those two verbs deserve attention. To hear is more than merely listening – ‘in one ear and out the other’. The Epistle of St. James exhorts Christians to “receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

The Prayer Book echoes that text exactly: “with meek heart and due reverence.” Meekness is not weakness. It is teachability. It is the willingness to acknowledge that God knows better than we do. To hear God’s word is to take it to heart, to believe it, and to act on it in obedience.

Such attitudes are increasingly counter-cultural. Modern society prizes self-expression above receptivity. We are encouraged to construct our own identities, define our own truths, and curate our own realities. Information is consumed quickly, evaluated instantly, and discarded if inconvenient. The Christian disciple begins elsewhere. He receives. This posture of receptivity also protects the Church from a subtle temptation. It is possible to think that Christianity consists primarily in what we do for God. But the gospel begins with what God has done for us in Christ. Faith is fundamentally receptive before it becomes active. As Luther observed, faith is an empty hand stretched out to receive God’s gift.

Yet reception is never passive in the sense of being inert. The Word received bears fruit. What we receive we also give. The Prayer therefore continues: “truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.” Here the language deliberately echoes the Song of Zechariah in Luke’s Gospel, where it is said that God delivers his people from their enemies “that we ... might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.” Notice the sequence. Deliverance comes first; service follows. Grace precedes obedience. We are not accepted because we are holy. We become holy because we have been accepted. The Christian life is therefore neither legalism nor passivity.

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 Priest Rev. David Thurlow
Organist and Choirmaster Mr. William Douglas
Youth/Young Adult Ministry Mr. Tyler D. Lonaker
Children’s Ministry Mrs. Joseph R. Ross, Jr. (Sarah)
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

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

Nursery Update

The church nursery is now located on the first floor of Cranmer Hall on Sundays. Plan to drop of your children (babies to five-year-olds) in the new classroom space. Note that the check-in process remains the same.

UPCOMING WORSHIP

Week of Trinity 6

Online Morning Prayer
8:15 a.m. Monday to Friday

Monday, July 13
No services today

Tuesday, July 14
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

Wednesday, July 15
Noon *Holy Communion*, Church
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel
9 p.m. *Compline*, Church

Thursday, July 16
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*
with Holy Communion, Chapel

Friday, July 17
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

Saturday, July 18
11 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Chapel

Sunday, July 19:
The Seventh 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*, Chapel
10:30 a.m. *Sung Eucharist*, Online/Church
with a children’s activity in the chapel during the sermon

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

Share St. John's History & Holiness

Visitors enjoy learning about our beautiful, historic church, but we can't keep these tours open without volunteer docents. Consider offering a few hours each month to share our sacred history. Tours are Tuesdays & Fridays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please call the church office at 912-232-1251 to learn more.

DEMENTIA CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP AT **HOPE HAVEN** SAVANNAH RESPITE

Just show up!

Cranmer Hall of St. John's Church:
27 West Charlton Street, 3rd Floor
Facilitated by Jill Costello of the
Edel Caregiver Institute



10:45 a.m. Tuesday, July 21



HOPE HAVEN
Dementia Support with Heart



SCAN TO
RSVP

DEMYSTIFYING DEMENTIA

A SPECIALIST'S ROADMAP FOR THE
DEMENTIA CAREGIVER



Jill Costello, MA
DEMENTIA CARE NAVIGATOR
EDEL CAREGIVER INSTITUTE



TUESDAY 28TH
JULY 2026



10:30 - DOORS OPEN
11:00 - PRESENTATION



HOPE HAVEN
CRANMER HALL - 3RD FLOOR
27 WEST CHARLTON ST.
FREE PARKING

Hope Haven, Area Agency on Aging, Bouhan Falligant Attorneys & Counselors at Law, Dr. Chris Rollwitz Counseling, & The Edel Caregiver Institute will be on hand with valuable caregiver resources.

WWW.SAVANNAHRESPITE.COM
savannahrespite@gmail.com | (912) 231-7310

With Grateful Hearts

Join us this Sunday, July 12th during coffee hour to celebrate two special anniversaries.

Celebrating Fr. Dunbar's 34 Years of Ministry

On Saturday, July 18th, we give thanks for the 34th anniversary of the ordination of the Rev'd Gavin G. Dunbar to the priesthood. Serving St. John's Church since 1997, he continues to ground our church in the classical Anglican tradition, enrich our worship, and deepen our spiritual lives.

Celebrating Bishop Lambert's 18th Anniversary

Saturday, July 18th also marks the 18th anniversary of The Rt. Rev. Paul E. Lambert's consecration. We give thanks for his pastoral leadership as our Designated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight (DEPO) Bishop since 2015. We pray that God continues to bless his spiritual guidance to our parish and his work with our Stephen Ministry.

Help Us Celebrate Both Anniversaries

We, as a parish, plan to celebrate Fr. Dunbar's and Bishop Lambert's anniversaries during coffee hour this Sunday, July 12th in the Green-Meldrim House after Morning Prayer. We hope that you will be able to join us for this special gathering. If you are unable to attend, please take a moment to thank both for their many years of service to St. John's.

FLOWERS FOR SUNDAY

The flowers this Sunday are given to the glory of God, and in loving memory of
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas D. Miller, Sr.
and Mr. and Mrs. William E. Dillard, Jr.,
by Mr. and Mrs. William E. Dillard III.

And in loving memory of
Mr. and Mrs. Howard John Hoffman,
by Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Brian Culver
and Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Bryan Jones, Jr.
And in memory of my beloved Kathie,
by Jeffrey Bell

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 Wyllly 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 28, BCP pp. 373

The Collect, BCP p. 197

The Epistle and Gospel, BCP pp. 197–198

9:30 a.m. Fr. Dunbar's Class, Chapel

10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, Church/Online
with a children's talk and children's chapel

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

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Vestry Offering Chair

8 a.m. Mr. B. Ray Summerell

10:30 a.m. Mr. Patrick Worsham

Ushers

Mr. Robert A. Vinyard

Mr. Mark D. Stevens

Choir

Choir of Adults

Coffee Hour

Mrs. Edwin C. Shepherd, Jr. (Melanie)

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)

Mrs. Ronald C. Berry (Caroline)

Mrs. Joseph R. Ross (Coren)

Mrs. Robert A. Vinyard (Frankie)

Ms. Linda H. Pounds

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas McCay (Mick & Connie)

The Word that first called us into Christ continues to shape us day by day into his likeness.

There is another implication worth noticing. The Prayer asks not merely for “all thy People” but “especially for this congregation here present.” The movement is from the universal to the particular. We pray first for the whole Church throughout the world and then for the local community gathered before God. That pattern reflects the nature of Christian belonging. Every local congregation is part of something immeasurably larger than itself. At the same time, the universal Church is encountered only through concrete communities in particular places. It is here—in this parish, among these people, under this preaching and at this altar—that we learn to hear and receive the Word together.

The Prayer says nothing about numbers, wealth, influence, or cultural prestige. Its concern is simpler and deeper: that God's people should receive his Word with humility and reverence, and having received it, should live lives of holiness and righteousness. The Church is built from the inside out. The same Word that first called Abraham, summoned the prophets, gathered the apostles, and raised the dead now calls us. It creates the people who hear it. It nourishes the congregation that receives it. And as it is welcomed with meek hearts, it fashions men and women into the likeness of Christ, who himself was the perfect hearer and doer of the Father's will.

The Prayer for the Church therefore reminds us that discipleship begins not with activity but with attention. Before we can speak for Christ, we must listen to him. Before we can serve him faithfully, we must receive what he alone can give. The Church is, above all, a people who live by hearing the voice of their Shepherd and following wherever he leads.

— GGD

• *(Continued next week)*