

# The Parish Paper

OF  
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH  
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 57 No. 35

The Eighth Sunday after Trinity

July 26, 2026

## BURYING THE DEAD

Earlier this summer I had occasion to read the Burial Office with a congregation that was unfamiliar with the Book of Common Prayer, and I realized how perplexing this service may be to those encountering it for the first time. To be clear, the perplexity is “not a bug but a feature”: it doesn’t need fixing, it is inherent to its proper purpose. It is natural for us to honor the dead, by rehearsing our memories of them with love, respect, gratitude, tears and laughter. This is natural, it’s fitting and right—but, from the perspective of the Christian faith, it’s not enough. What it lacks is *expectation*. And that is the purpose of the Burial Office: in the presence of death, at the time of earthly farewell, to teach us not just to look back at what has been, but to look forward to what is yet to come—the resurrection of the dead. Yet that is not a “natural” way of thinking, and deserves explanation.

Consider the image St. Paul uses when he speaks about what is yet to come: a seed planted in the earth. To all appearances it is insignificant, inert, and lifeless, and when it is buried in the ground there is no obvious reason to expect more from it. If we didn’t know anything about seeds, we might well be skeptical that a majestic oak from emerge from an acorn, or an apple tree from an apple pip. But we do know better. From buried seed emerges root and stem, leaf and flower and fruit—a life more abundant than was apparent seemed possible when that seed was first placed in the ground. So when Paul compares the burial of our dead body to the planting of seed, he is inviting us to think of death in a different way. “That which thou sowest is not quickened, except

it die”. Death is not the end of God’s purpose for his creatures, but the means by which that purpose attains a glorious fulfilment, beyond all natural expectation.

To be clear, the Christian faith does not deny the reality of death. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus his friend, and Christian also weep for those who have departed this life. The Prayer Book service teaches us to face the fact of death honestly, when the minister recites the sobering words of Job (14:1): “Man that is born of a woman hath but a short to live, and is full of misery. He cometh up and is cut down like a flower; he fleeth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one stay. In the midst of life we are in death...”. The question is not whether we die, but what role death plays in God’s purpose for his creatures. The Apostle says we are sowing a seed. We are entrusting a life to the keeping of God, in the expectation that he will raise it up in glory we have not seen.

Such expectation may seem extravagant. It may appear out of proportion to what experience has taught us to expect. The skeptical voice of sense objects. Yet mighty oaks really do grow from tiny acorns; and apple trees from apple pips. The natural world is full of things whose hidden possibilities far exceed what appears to the eye. The gospel simply asks us to consider the possibility that the world is larger than we imagine, and that the God who made all things from nothing, who continually sustains the beauty and complexity of his creation, may also bring life from death, and transform the lowly body of our natural humanity into the glorious body of resurrection.

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 But-  
ler, Jr., Esq.; Vestry Emeriti: Mr. George Fawcett, Mr. Ed-  
win 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

**Thursday, August 6**

*Transfiguration of our Lord*  
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

**Saturday, August 15**

*Dormition of the Virgin Mary*  
11 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Chapel

**Monday, August 24**

*St. Bartholomew, The Apostle*  
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

**Saturday, August 29**

*The Beheading of St. John' The Baptist*  
11 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Chapel

UPCOMING WORSHIP

**Week of Trinity 8**

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

**Monday, July 27**  
*No services today*

**Tuesday, July 28**  
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel  
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

**Wednesday, July 29**  
Noon *Holy Communion*, Church  
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel  
*No Compline this week*

**Thursday, July 30**  
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel  
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*  
*with Holy Communion*, Chapel

**Friday, July 31**  
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

**Sunday, August 2**  
**The Ninth Sunday after Trinity**  
8 a.m. *Said Holy Communion*, Church  
9:15 a.m. *Nursery*, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Cranmer Hall  
9:30 a.m. *Fr. Dunbar's Class*, Chapel  
10:30 a.m. *Holy Communion*, 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.**

**Pardon Our Appearance!**  
*Painters at work in the nave  
for the next two weeks*

As we repaint the interior of the church, services will continue as usual throughout the project. Church tours will not be offered during the week while this working is being conducted. Thank you for your patience as we undertake this important work to preserve and beautify our historic church building. We look forward to seeing the nave freshly restored.

**ASSISTING IN WORSHIP**

**Vestry Offering Chair**

8 a.m. Mr. B. Ray Summerell  
10:30 a.m. Mrs. L. Allan  
Reynolds, Jr. (Beverley)

**Ushers**

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

**Choir**

Choir of Adults

**Coffee Hour**

Mrs. B. Ray Summerell (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. Patrick Worsham (Jane)  
Mrs. Charles B. Compton, Jr. (Alva)  
Mr. and Mrs. David Schultz  
(Lucinda and David)

**Last Chance to Register!**



**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](http://WWW.SAVANNAHRESPITE.COM)

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

***The Green-Meldrim House Presents***

**1876:  
An American  
Centennial  
Celebration from  
Savannah to  
Philadelphia**



*In celebration the Nation's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday the  
Green-Meldrim House looks back 150 Years.*

Enjoy costumed interpreters, an opportunity  
to view the Gothic Revival home, and  
lively presentations.

**Sunday, August 16, 2 p.m. & 3:30 p.m.**  
**Admission: Free of charge**

Seating is limited so reservations are required: Call  
912-233-3845 or email  
[info@GreenMeldrimHouse.org](mailto:info@GreenMeldrimHouse.org)

## THIS SUNDAY AT ST. JOHN'S

*Summer schedule runs until Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>.*

*The nursery (infants to five-year-olds) is available on the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 48, BCP pp. 399–400

The Collect, BCP p. 199

The Epistle and Gospel, BCP p. 200

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

*The Book of Common Prayer and Holy Communion*

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

*with a short children's talk during Morning Prayer*

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

## FLOWERS FOR SUNDAY

The flowers this Sunday are given to the glory of God, and in loving memory of Suzanne Dillon Fauber Butler, on the occasion of our 56th wedding anniversary, and my mother, Laurie Eugenia Walker Butler, on the occasion of the 106th 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. To volunteer for this ministry, call Margaret Wylly at 912-656-6235.*

## Morning Prayer Online

Join Fr. Dunbar on St. John's Facebook page each weekday around 8:15–8:20 a.m. Pray along live or watch later at your convenience. This brief, online service includes Scripture, prayer, and brief reflections on the daily readings. This is an easy way to make the Daily Office part of routine.

For Christians, this hope is no wishful thinking, but grounded upon a fact of history, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The New Testament does not present it as a myth or metaphor, but as an event in time, witnessed by men and women whose lives were permanently changed by it. (Something must have happened to change their lives, and the other explanations do not fit well!) In that historical event Christians believe the future of mankind has already begun. In Paul's words, Christ is "the first-fruits of them that slept". What God has done for his Son, he will one day do for all who belong to him. God is not finished with his creation, nor with those whom he has claimed for himself. The fullness of our humanity has yet to come—a humanity in which "all that is beautiful in the lives of men" will not be lost but redeemed, restored, perfected, and advanced to the glory God intends it to have.

This hope does not diminish the importance of this present life; it magnifies it. For if God intends to raise the dead, then what we do in these mortal bodies here and now has an eternal future, and the choices we make now have consequences we shall live with forever. Every act we do for his sake—faithfulness, mercy, justice, courage, and love—he will uphold and vindicate in resurrection. That is why St. Paul concludes his great chapter on the resurrection, not with speculation about heaven, but an exhortation about our lives on earth: "be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." The hope in which we commit the bodies of the dead to the earth is not an escape from the world, but the assurance that the God who created it by his word, redeemed it by Christ, and is sanctifying it by his Spirit, will not allow death to have the final word. The last word belongs to God, and his word is life and glory.

– GGD