

The Parish Paper

OF
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

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The Ninth Sunday after Trinity

August 2, 2026

RAPHAEL'S TRANSFIGURATION

The Feast of the Transfiguration on August 6 has not always occupied the place it does now. Though long celebrated in the Christian East as one of the Twelve Great Feasts, in the West, it was not observed universally until 1457, when Pope Callixtus III ordered its celebration throughout the Western Church in thanksgiving for the relief of the siege of Belgrade by the Turks the previous year.

That historical circumstance hints at something much deeper, in the spiritual development of the medieval West. The early centuries of Christian theology were chiefly occupied with a great question: *Who is Jesus Christ?* The Church defended the confession that the man Jesus is none other than the eternal Son of God, "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God." The Transfiguration naturally held an honoured place in that theological struggle. Upon the mountain, the veil is drawn back. The Father declares, "This is my beloved Son." The glory that always belonged to the eternal Word shines through the humanity he assumed for our salvation. The Eastern Church never ceased to contemplate this mystery. Its icons of the Transfiguration are among the most profound expressions of Orthodox theology. Christ stands at the centre in dazzling light, surrounded by the uncreated glory of God. The disciples fall overwhelmed before the splendor of this revelation. The feast became closely associated with the doctrine of deification: that those united to Christ are gradually transformed into his likeness, sharing by grace in the divine life.

Western Christianity, however, followed a somewhat different path. Without abandoning the truth of Christ's deity, it increasingly turned its attention to his humanity, and especially in his compassion and suffering. Within that devotional world, the Transfiguration acquired fresh significance. It became the moment when the hidden origin and destiny of the Son of Man was briefly disclosed. The teacher of Nazareth, soon to suffer rejection and death, is seen for an instant as he truly is. The feast therefore became a bridge between Christ's humiliation and his exaltation. It assured believers that the cross leads to glory.

This emphasis also helps explain why the Gospel itself places the Transfiguration immediately after Peter's confession and Christ's first prediction of his Passion (Matthew 16:13-28). Peter has confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Then Jesus tells the disciples that the Son of Man must suffer, be rejected, be killed, and rise again. Peter cannot reconcile these two truths. He gladly accepts the Messiah's glory but rejects the necessity of the Cross. The Transfiguration answers Peter's confusion (17:1-9). The Father's voice confirms both truths at once. "This is my beloved Son; hear him." *Hear him* when he reveals his divine glory. *Hear him* also when he speaks of the cross. The beloved Son possesses the glory of God from all eternity. Yet the beloved Son freely chooses the path of suffering in order to redeem the world. Glory and sacrifice belong together.

This same movement lies at the heart of Raphael's magnificent final painting. (It's now in the Vatican, but there is a fine large copy of it in the Parish House parlour). Unlike earlier artists, Raphael combines the Transfiguration with the

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

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 9
Online Morning Prayer
8:15 a.m. Monday to Friday

Monday, August 3
No services today

Tuesday, August 4
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

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

Thursday, August 6:
Transfiguration of our Lord
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*
with Holy Communion, Chapel

Friday, August 7
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

Sunday, August 9
The Tenth Sunday after Trinity
8 a.m. *Said Holy Communion*, Church
9:15 a.m. *Nursery*, 1st Floor, Cranmer Hall
9:30 a.m. *Fr. Dunbar’s Class*, Chapel
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

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

PLEASE USE CAUTION:
Sewer Improvement Work
in Front of Cranmer Hall

Beginning July 29 and continuing through approximately August 6, the City will be performing sewer work in front of Cranmer Hall. Access to the building may be limited, and pavement near the entrance may be rough or uneven. Please use caution when walking in the area. Thank you for your patience and understanding as these important system upgrades are completed.

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.

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Vestry Offering Chair

8 a.m. Mr. B. Ray Summerell

10:30 a.m. Mrs. C. Carter Hubbard (Barbara)

Ushers

Mr. Mark D. Stevens

Mr. Robert A. Vinyard

Choir

Choir of Adults

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. William L. Belford, Sr. (Cathy)

Mrs. Jeanne H. McMillan

Mrs. Martin Sheehan (Kristine)

P.A.C.K. Volunteers Resume
Wednesday, August 19, 4–6 p.m.,
4 Mall Terrace, Savannah

St. John's volunteers will resume their outreach ministry with People of Action Caring for Kids (P.A.C.K.), a Savannah-based nonprofit dedicated to fighting child hunger. During the school year, our volunteers met at P.A.C.K.'s facility twice a month to pack bags of food for local children in need.

We'll start packing sessions on Wednesday, August 19 and continue on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month from 4–6 p.m.

There are volunteer roles for all ages and abilities, so if you're able, please join us in this meaningful ministry! Note that all children 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult. If you have any questions, please contact Stuart Clifford at stuartclifford@comcast.net.

GEARING UP FOR
NOVEMBER'S HOLLY DAYS

Parish Provisions Returns

Mark your calendars! Parish Provisions will resume on **Tuesday, August 4, at 5:30 p.m. in Cranmer Hall**. The group will meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. Come enjoy fellowship, good conversation, and bring a friend!

Volunteers Needed for Holly Days

Planning for Holly Days will be ramping up in the coming months, and we need your help! If you are interested in becoming involved and serving on a committee, please contact Meta Logan or email the church office at info@stjohnssav.org. Volunteers are essential to making this cherished parish event a success, and the committee would love to have you join this year's Holly Days team.

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 54, BCP p. 406

The Collect, BCP pp. 200–201

The Epistle BCP p. 201

The Gospel (see insert)

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

The Book of Common Prayer and Holy Communion

10:30 a.m. Sung Eucharist, Church/Online

with a short children's talk during Morning Prayer

FLOWERS FOR SUNDAY

The flowers this Sunday are given to the
glory of God, and in loving memory of

Ralph and Betsy Bowden,

by Margaret and Johnny Wyly.

*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 Wyly at 912-656-6235.*

Save These Additional Upcoming Dates!

- **August 11:** Girl's Choir rehearsals resume
- **August 19:** Adult Choir rehearsals resume
- **Sept. 13:** Regular Sunday worship and Faith Formation class schedule resume
- **Sept. 13:** 4 p.m. Choral Evensong with a remembrance for First Responders
Followed by a gathering in the Mall with first responders and a fire truck!
- **Sept. 18:** Hope Haven Volunteer Training
- **Sept. 20:** Stewardship Sunday Kickoff, Sunday Night Session, and Youth Group
- **Sept. 23:** Men of St. John's Cookout
- **Sept. 27:** Outreach Fair Sunday

healing of the possessed boy that follows immediately in St. Matthew's Gospel (17:14-21). Above is heavenly light. Below is human misery. Above is the eternal Son in glory. Below is a world enslaved by evil and disciples powerless to overcome it. Above, a perfectly circular nimbus of radiance; below, a conflict of sharply-contrasting diagonals and dramatic contrasts of light and darkness.

The two scenes interpret one another. Christ is revealed in glory not to remain upon the mountain but to descend into the valley of human need. The glory of God is revealed precisely in the One who comes down to bear the Cross and to conquer the powers of darkness. It is perhaps no accident that Raphael paints the Transfiguration in a form that recalls the Ascension itself. Christ hovers above the mountain, already appearing as the exalted Lord. The painting gathers together the whole arc of redemption: the eternal Son, the revelation on Tabor, the Passion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and finally the glory of his return. It is less a picture of one event than a vision of Christ's entire saving work.

The feast we keep this Thursday invites us to lift our eyes to Christ as he truly is: the eternal Son of the Father, radiant with uncreated glory, yet the same Lord who descends from the mountain to heal the broken, bear the Cross, and lead his people at last into the light of his everlasting Kingdom. For us the painting becomes an image of the Church's own life. In worship we ascend the mountain with Peter, James, and John, hearing once more the Father's testimony concerning his beloved Son. We are given a foretaste of the glory that shall one day be revealed. Yet we are not permitted to remain there. Strengthened by that vision, we descend again into a world still marked by suffering, unbelief, and spiritual conflict, following the Lord who came down from the mountain to carry the Cross.

– GGD