

# The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

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The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

August 23, 2026

## THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT – II Strengthened for the Fight

The classical Prayer Book's Confirmation prayer asks for the baptized to be strengthened by the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit—wisdom and understanding, counsel and strength, knowledge and godliness, and holy fear. But if Baptism has already given regeneration, forgiveness, why is this further strengthening needed? One answer arose from the ancient Church's understanding of the Christian life as spiritual combat – and understanding that goes back to St. Anthony fighting with devils in the deserts of Egypt, and to St. Paul's stirring testimony in the epistle to the Ephesians: “we war not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against spiritual darkness in high places...” The devil does not give up without putting up a stiff fight. In the fifth century, Faustus of Riez expressed the distinction memorably: in Baptism we are reborn to *life*; in Confirmation we are armed for the *strife*. He writes in a milieu that was deeply shaped both by the ascetical tradition of the monastic movement (with its insistence on good works and spiritual warfare), and by the teaching of Augustine (with his insistence on the priority of grace. Faustus combines these two emphases: the priority of divine grace does not make the Christian passive. Grace gives new life; but the person made alive by grace must now believe, obey, persevere, resist temptation, and struggle against sin.

This understanding survived the Reformation and appears with remarkable clarity in the Prayer Book of 1552. Its lengthy rubric before Confirmation is really a theological rationale for the whole service. It begins by saying that Confirmation should be administered “to the more edifying” of those who

receive it, “according unto Saint Paul's doctrine,” that all things in the Church should be done for its edification (1 Corinthians 14:26), that is, to “build up” and strengthen Christians in faith and virtue. Those presented must therefore be able to say in their own language the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and answer questions from the Catechism. The Prayer Book then gives three reasons for this requirement.

First, children who have reached “the years of discretion” and learned what their godparents promised for them in Baptism may now “with their own mouth, and with their own consent,” openly ratify those promises. They promise, significantly, that “*by the grace of God*” they will endeavour faithfully to observe what they have professed. The priority of grace is carefully maintained. Confirmation is not the moment at which the baptized cease relying upon grace and begin relying upon their own moral effort. Their own willing and striving are themselves made possible by grace. But grace calls forth precisely such willing and striving.

The second reason is even more striking: “Confirmation is ministered to them that be baptized, that by imposition of hands and Prayer they may receive strength and defence against all temptations to sin and the assaults of the world and the Devil.” It is therefore especially fitting when children reach the age at which “partly by the frailty of their own flesh, partly by the assaults of the world and the Devil,” they begin to be in danger of falling into different kinds of sin.

Here the old ascetical tradition represented by Faustus reappears almost unmistakably. Baptism gives new life; Confirmation strengthens the baptized for the spiritual battle belonging to that life. The enemy is both within and without: 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  
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

**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

**Tuesday, September 8**

***The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary***

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

**Monday, September 14**

***Holy Cross Day***

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

## UPCOMING WORSHIP

**Week of Trinity 12**

**Online Morning Prayer**

*8:15 a.m. Monday to Friday*

**Monday, August 24**

**St. Bartholomew, The Apostle**

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

**Tuesday, August 25**

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

**Wednesday, August 26**

Noon *Holy Communion*, Church

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

**Thursday, August 27**

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*

*with Holy Communion*, Chapel

**Friday, August 28**

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

**Saturday, August 29**

**The Beheading of St. John' The Baptist**

11 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Chapel

**Sunday, August 30:**

**The Thirteenth 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. *Sung Eucharist*, Church/Online

*with a children's activity in the chapel during the sermon*

## Jane's Canners

Jane's Canners are busy canning and creating their delicious homemade jams and jellies for the St. John's Holly Days Bazaar. They are looking for donations of empty, 8-oz canning jars with lids and pears off the tree. If you'd like to donate, please bring jars to Cranmer Hall, or call Jane Pressly at 912-667-1584.

Starts This  
Week!



**Wednesday, August 26, 4–6 p.m.,  
4 Mall Terrace, Savannah**

St. John's volunteers will begin their packing sessions on Wednesday, August 26, followed by their next packing day of Sept. 16. They will then resume their regular schedule, meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of each month from 4–6 p.m. There are volunteer roles for all ages and abilities! Contact Stuart Clifford: [stuart@comcast.net](mailto:stuart@comcast.net).

## ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

### **Vestry Offering Chair**

8 a.m. Mr. Douglas P. McManamy

10:30 a.m. Mr. R. Scott Howard

### **Ushers**

Mr. R. Scott Howard

Mr. L. Hugh Pope, Jr.

### **Choir**

Choir of Adults

### **Coffee Hour**

Mrs. Jack C. Wray (Karen)

### **Chancel Society**

Mrs. Timothy E. Coy (Dorothea)

Mrs. Jayne G. Holland

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

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

Mrs. John G. Bradshaw (Sally)

Dolly Chisholm

Mrs. Susie H. Fawcett

Ms. Linda H. Pounds

Mrs. I. David Futrell, Jr. (Penny)

Mrs. Lonnie Pope, Jr. (Mary)

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

## Parish Provisions

**Tuesday  
Sept. 1  
5:30 p.m.**

Plan to join us Tuesday, Sept. 1,  
at 5:30 p.m. in Cranmer Hall. The  
group meets on the first Tuesday of  
each month at 5:30 p.m. Come enjoy  
fellowship and good conversation.

**Cranmer  
Hall  
Kitchen**

## KICKOFF SUNDAY | September 13

*Join us as we launch a new program year with a  
full day of worship, faith formation, and music!*

We return to our regular Sunday schedule, including the resumption of Faith Formation classes for all ages, the first meeting of our Youth Group, the return of Choral Evensong, and the opening Sunday Night Session at the historic Green-Meldrim House.

### **Schedule for the Day:**

8 a.m. Holy Communion

9 a.m. Family Holy Communion

10 a.m. Faith Formation for All Ages

11 a.m. Morning Prayer

12:30 p.m. Coffee Hour, Green-Meldrim

4 p.m. Choral Evensong

5 p.m. Sunday Night Sessions, Green-  
Meldrim House

5 p.m. Youth Group, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl, Cranmer Hall

Whether you are returning after the summer or visiting for the first time, Kickoff Sunday is the perfect opportunity to reconnect and grow in faith. Join us to celebrate the beginning of a new season in the life of our parish.

## 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 70, BCP pp. 424–425

The Collect, BCP p. 206

The Epistle and Gospel, BCP pp. 206–207

**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 honor of

Mrs. John C. Wylly, Jr.,  
by the Chancel Society.

And in loving memory of  
Mr. & Mrs. Barrett Shelton,  
by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph O. Mercer  
and family.

And in celebration of the baptism of  
Moselle Walker Bisciotti  
and Louise Demere Blythe  
on Saturday, August 23, 2026.

*To offer flowers for the altar, call the Church office.  
After Sunday, the flowers are delivered to the sick,  
sorrowing, and shut-ins.*

## Men of St. John's Annual Meeting

Save the Date! Wednesday, Sept. 23,  
5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Green-Meldrim House  
Speaker: Chuck Watson, Enki

disordered desires of our own fallen nature, the pressures of the world around us, and the spiritual adversary whom Scripture calls the Devil.

Thirdly, the Prayer Book appeals to “the usage of the Church in times past.” Those of mature age, having been instructed in the Christian religion, publicly professed their faith and promised obedience to the will of God. The Reformation of Confirmation is thus presented not as the abandonment of ancient practice but as its recovery and clarification.

The rubric and the prayer that follows illuminate one another. The rubric tells us *why* strengthening is needed: for the struggle involved in faithful Christian obedience. The prayer tells us *what that strengthening consists in*: the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit promised in Isaiah. Two ancient strands have been woven together. From Isaiah and Ambrose comes the *sevenfold Spirit of the Messiah*, communicated to those who belong to Christ. From the ascetical tradition comes the understanding of Christian life as a combat in which the baptized continually require divine strengthening against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

This gives us a richer account of sanctification than either passivity or moralism. We do not make ourselves holy by our own efforts. The Spirit conforms us to Christ. Yet neither does the Spirit render our effort unnecessary. Grace enables precisely the faith, obedience, resistance, repentance, and perseverance to which God calls us.

But the Prayer Book's opening appeal to St Paul introduces another dimension. Confirmation is to be celebrated for “edifying”; and *edification* is one of St Paul's great words for the purpose of spiritual gifts. The Spirit strengthens Christians not simply as isolated individuals but as members of a Body.

That brings us back to the Epistle for Trinity 10, and to the other gifts of the Holy Spirit, to which we will turn next.

– GGD

*(Second of Three Parts)*