

The Parish Paper

OF
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 57 No. 45

Michaelmas Sunday (Trinity 18)

October 4, 2026

REPETITION THAT IS NOT VAIN

Some years ago, I attended Sunday worship with some friends at an Anglican church in the Caribbean. The service was... leisurely. Just when I thought we were almost finished, there was a second collection, or the children in the village school came up to receive individual blessings. They were not in a hurry to finish up. We sent back our driver more than once.

That experience reminded me of something I had only read about in books, how the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century transformed cultural attitudes to time. Long before the factory clock, monasteries organized their days around fixed hours of prayer. But there is a difference between measuring time so that we may regularly give ourselves to God, and measuring it so that we may extract the greatest possible output. In the industrial world, productivity became an overriding concern. Everything and everyone was put on the clock, including God.

The older Anglican pattern of Sunday worship was also leisurely: Morning Prayer, with a lengthy provision of psalms and Scripture readings; the Litany; Holy Communion or Ante-Communion, with a substantial sermon; and Evening Prayer, with catechizing of youth. Worship was woven throughout the Lord's day rather than confined to one appointment within it.

There is something here worth recovering. In our over-scheduled lives, we try to book "quality time" for our relationships. Yet intimacy often grows through the unhurried accumulation of ordinary time together. We learn a language by immersion; we come to know another person by "hanging out". Our relationship with God likewise needs time in which to grow. Presence matters more than productivity.

During the nineteenth century, however, pressure grew to reduce the time devoted to public worship. England's *Shortened Services Act of 1872* marked a stage in this development, explicitly permitting Morning Prayer, the Litany, and Holy Communion to be used as separate services. Increasingly, Sunday morning meant Morning Prayer *or* Holy Communion, rather than the older combination. Fitting worship into an hour became an overriding concern. Within that hour, everything must justify its place. Why say something twice when once will do? Repetition begins to look like wasted time.

Yet repetition is an intentional feature of classical Anglican worship. The lesser doxology—"Glory be to the Father"—follows every psalm and Gospel canticle. The Lord's Prayer occurs twice in Morning and Evening Prayer, and twice in Holy Communion. Are these the "vain repetitions" condemned by our Lord (Matthew 6:7)? As Christ says, we shall not be heard for our "much speaking." Words become vain when we treat their accumulation as a means of obtaining God's favor. It's true that familiar forms can be recited thoughtlessly. But their familiarity need not make them empty. The purpose of repetition is not to make God more willing to hear us, but to make us more willing to receive what he gives.

Here the analogy with education helps (it is one that I learned from Dr Drew Keane). Good teaching moves forward, but it does so by returning to things already taught, and drawing out of it something new. A rich idea or image cannot simply be consumed and discarded. It needs to be remembered and revisited. Only gradually do we become capable of receiving its fullness. The poem or novel we read at the beginning of our schooling may disclose far more when we return to it years later. The text has not

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)
Verge Mr. B. Ray Summerell
Verge Mr. James E. Morris
Acolyte Dir./Master of CeremoniesMr. 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. Schubert; Chancellor: Dolly Chisholm

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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

SAVE THESE UPCOMING DATES!

- **Wednesday, Oct. 7**, 4–6 p.m. join St. John's volunteers at PACK's facility
- **Wednesday, Oct. 7**, 5:30–7:30 p.m. Faith + Fiction, Green-Meldrim House
- **Saturday, Oct. 10 & 17**, 6:30–8 p.m. Literary Crawl, Green-Meldrim House
- **Sunday, Oct. 18**, 4 p.m. Music on Madison Square – The Charlotte Master Chorale, Tickets available at StJohnsSav.org/mms
- **Wednesday, Oct. 20**, 10:45 a.m. Dementia Caregiver Support Group, Cranmer Hall
- **Sunday, Oct. 25**, 5 p.m. The Anglican Future Forum: Identity, Green-Meldrim House
- **Thursday, Oct. 29**, 10:30 a.m. Dementia Caregiver Education Program, more details at SavannahRespite.com

UPCOMING WORSHIP

Week of Trinity 18

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

Tuesday, October 6

9 a.m. *Morning Prayer*, Chapel
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel

Wednesday, October 7

9 a.m. *Morning Prayer*, Chapel
Noon *Holy Communion*, Church
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*, Chapel
9 p.m. *Compline*, Church

Thursday, October 8

9 a.m. *Morning Prayer*, Chapel
Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel
5 p.m. *Evening Prayer*
with Holy Communion, Chapel

Friday, October 9

Noon *Holy Communion*, Chapel

Saturday, October 10

11 a.m. *Holy Communion*, Chapel

Sunday, October 11: Trinity 19

8 a.m. *Said Holy Communion*, Church
8:45 a.m. *Nursery*, 1st Floor, Cranmer Hall
9 a.m. *Family Holy Communion*, Church
10 a.m. *All Ages Sunday School*, Cranmer & Chapel
11 a.m. *Morning Prayer*, Church/Online
12:15 p.m. *Coffee Hour*, Green-Meldrim House

Monday, October 12: Columbus Day

The church office is closed today.

HOPE HAVEN VOLUNTEER TRAINING



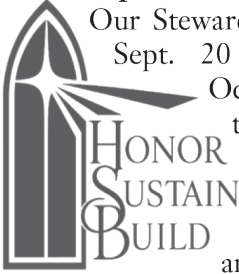
Friday, Oct. 16, 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Cranmer Hall, 3rd Floor

Learn how you can make a difference for people living with dementia. **Sign up by Oct. 11th.**

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

September 20th – October 31st

Our Stewardship Campaign launched Sept. 20 and will run through Oct. 31. This is a time for us to reflect on the use of our own gifts in the service of Christ and his Church. Pledge cards were mailed and will also be available at the Church door.



Scan to Donate Online. →

Parish Provisions

*Tuesday, Oct. 6, from 5:30–6:30 p.m.
Cranmer Hall Kitchen*

This small group will meet to prepare goodies to be sold during the Holly Days Bazaar. Parishioners of all ages are invited to prepare a new themed item each month. Everyone will take home a sample while also helping stock the shelves in preparation for the bazaar in November!

Two New Women's Small Group Studies Beginning in October

Starting Monday, Oct. 12th

Skidaway Island Women's Small Group Study

Mondays from 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Gospel of Mark led by Mary Sprague
in her home on Skidaway Island.

Starting Tuesday, Oct. 13th

Ardsley Park Women's Small Group Study

Tuesdays from 5:30–7:00 p.m.

6-Week Study of the *Thankful Living Series* at
Patti Victor's home in Ardsley Park.
Social gathering 5:30–6 p.m. & study 6–7 p.m.

Please contact the Church Office to receive more details and register for either study.



The Choir of Girls and Schola will sing Solemn Choral Evensong, with a remembrance for first responders. Following the liturgy, there will be a reception in the Mall with games, family activities, and an opportunity to meet first responders.

October 4, 2026 | 4PM

325 Bull St. Savannah, Georgia

MICHAELMAS BRASS WAS GIVEN

The beauty of the brass music this Sunday was given to the Glory of God and:

In loving memory of Maida Pearson Smith, Eugene M. Pearson, and Mr. & Mrs. William Worsham
and in thanksgiving of our First Responders,
by Mr. & Mrs. Steven Patrick Worsham.

In loving memory of James E. Wilbanks, Jr.,
by Paul and Jane Pressly

FLOWERS FOR SUNDAY

The flowers this Sunday are given to the glory of God, and in honor of, and in gratitude for Mr. and Mrs. William A. Schaller, Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Schaller and their families for their wonderful support, by Mrs. Marie H. Simmons.

For the glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. & Mrs. John Chatham Howard Sr., Chat Howard Jr. and Haskin Pounds by Linda Howard Pounds.

And in celebration and on the occasion of the baptism of Palmer Leigh Crawford on Saturday October 3, 2026.

And in loving memory of Virginia C. Logan, by her husband Dr. J. Robert Logan, her son Mr. Lawton M. Logan, and her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. & Mrs. Clarkson C. Logan

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

THIS SUNDAY AT ST. JOHN'S

The nursery (infants to three-year-olds) is available on the 1st floor of Cranmer Hall from 8:45 a.m. until after the 11 a.m. service.

8 a.m. Said Holy Communion, Church
breakfast in Cranmer Hall after 8 a.m. service

Introit: Psalm 103, BCP pp. 466–467

The Collects, BCP pp. 251, 214

The Epistle and Gospel, BCP pp. 252–253

9 a.m. Family Morning Prayer, Church
Children will process into the Chancel

10 a.m. All Ages Sunday School,
Cranmer Hall & St. Mary's Chapel

11 a.m. Solemn Choral Eucharist with Brass,
Church/Online

**4 p.m. Solemn Choral Evensong
for Michaelmas**, Church/Online
(Childcare available in Cranmer Hall, 1st Floor)

5 p.m. Reception, Garden Mall
with a firetruck, games & family activities

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Vestry Offering Chair

8 a.m. Mr. Timothy F. Corley

11 a.m. Mr. Wiley Wasden III

Ushers

Mr. Frank Somoskey

Mr. Joseph R. Ross (Rusty)

Choir

11 a.m. Choir of Adults

4 p.m. Choir of Girls & Schola

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)

Mrs. Jeanne H. McMillan

Ms. Linda Pounds

Mrs. Wiley A. Wasden III (Anna)

Ms. Susan P. Hungerpiller

changed, but we have. What first opened the gates of perception now admits us more deeply.

In worship, this growth concerns more than understanding. Repetition also forms memory, affection, and will. We may *understand* “Thy will be done” long before we are willing to *mean* it. Returning to those words gives us fresh occasions to recognize our resistance and surrender it to God. Consider the lesser doxology (“Glory be to the Father”). The psalms take us through desolation and joy, confession and thanksgiving, warnings and promises. After each, we return to the praise of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We learn to receive Israel’s prayers within the revelation of God in Christ, and to offer all that we have heard to his glory. After a joyful psalm, the Gloria is a grateful culmination. After a lament, it becomes an act of faith. The same words acquire a different depth through what precedes them. Doxology is not merely a part of worship: it is the point of worship. And it is the repetition that makes the point.

Likewise, the Lord’s Prayer teaches us what it means to pray in Jesus’ name. It is the mark of his disciples, who approach his Father through him and make his priorities their own: devotion to God’s glory—his name, kingdom, and will—and dependence upon his grace for provision, pardon, and protection. By the Spirit of the Son, we learn to pray as children of the Father. This prayer therefore belongs *both* at the beginning *and* at the culmination of our worship. At the outset, it gives our prayers and praises their authority and direction. After hearing God’s Word or receiving his sacrament, we return to it with new understanding and gratitude. The liturgy has moved forward, even though the words have returned.

T. S. Eliot says: “We shall not cease from exploration / And the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And know the place for the first time.” Something like that happens when we return faithfully to the prayers Christ has given us. Their words remain the same; through them, we are being changed. Not all repetition is vain.

– GGD