

St. John's Episcopal Church



St. John's Eagle

The First Sunday of Advent

December 2, 2018

*"Have you not known, have you not heard
those who wait for the Lord shall mount
up with wings like eagles."*

Isaiah 40:28,31

St. John's Episcopal Church

113 Madison Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama 36104
334-262-1937
Fax: 334-262-1931

Rector:

Robert C. Wisniewski, Jr.

Associate Rector:

Jamie Osborne

Priest Associate

Deonna D. Neal

Staff:

Libby Poole
Financial Administrator
Fay WorriLOW
Parish Secretary
Anne Tippet
Assistant to the Rector

Christian Formation

Sarah Collier
Director of Children's Christian
Formation
Joleen George
Director of Youth Ministries

Music:

Joel Gregory
Organist and Choirmaster

Maintenance:

Mike Jarrell, Superintendent
Myron Smoke
Faye Mitchell

Vestry of St. John's:

Jim Marshall III, Sr. Warden
Bill Eskridge, Jr. Warden

Class of 2019

Ashley Hamlett
Betty Mathews
Dee Moody
Chuck Moore
Dudley Perry
Geoff Stough

Class of 2020

Dick Arrington
Georgia Holmes
Austin Huffaker
Alice Longshore
Jean Smyth
Bob Young

Class of 2021

Virginia Banister
Richard Bradford
Kathryn Dailey
Mike Jenkins
Jimmy McLemore
Stephanie Norrell
Todd Westhauser

Treasurer

Helen Wells

Clerk of the Vestry

Anne Tippet

WRITER'S BLOCK

I have to write a lot. It's a part of my life that I thoroughly enjoy as it gives me a chance to do theological reflection on a regular basis. Enjoy it as I do, however, I am familiar with writer's block, that feeling of not knowing exactly what to write. Years ago I got some very helpful advice on how to deal with writer's block: when you don't know what to write, just sit down and start writing; write the first sentence, any sentence at all, and then write another and another. What was promised to me was that, in the practice of just sitting down to write, I would discover something to write about. The first sentence is the hardest but it always leads to the second and third and so on. If you don't know what to write, start writing. Remarkably simple advice that has served me well for many years. If I wait for the perfect idea about what to write, I'll never sit down and write. But if I will just sit down to write I will consistently discover something to write about.

This is the time of year I hear a lot of excuses from people. That's a regular part of the life of a priest as people tell us that they are sorry for not being more regular in their church attendance or their giving, explaining how busy they are and how hard it is to get to church, or about how strapped they are financially and cannot support the church like they want to. Even though I'm a crusty veteran I am not unsympathetic. Life is busy. Money is tight. It's easy to be overwhelmed.

Excuses for faithfulness abound for all of us. There are many more reasons not to do something than there ever are for actually doing them. Maybe that's the devil messing with us. Maybe it's just part of our sinful world, that voice which discourages us or tells us what we know we should be doing can't be done.

Giving in to the excuses is very easy. We all do it. Faithfulness in every aspect of our lives is something that involves dealing with the excuses. Everything we know we should do will involve getting past some thoughts about how we shouldn't be expected to do it. We all think about doing things, know we have a responsibility to do those things, and struggle with thoughts which tempt us not to do them. People being what we are, we more often than not give in to those thoughts and just don't carry out what we know we should do.

I got some other good advice many years ago about being successfully married. The best way to insure that my marriage would stay together, I was told, was to keep going home every night. Marriages are hard but if we keep showing up each day and meet what is there to meet, we are likely to stay married. And there are a lot of excuses for not doing that work that have to be dealt with, aren't there?

We all have responsibilities and we all have excuses for not tending to them. Taking a deep breath and taking the first step in those responsibilities is the hardest part. If we take the first step, it will lead to the second and third and so on. If we take the first step faithfulness is possible. If we give in to the excuses faithfulness never is realized.

The first step in dealing with writer's block is writing the first sentence. The first step in faithfulness in worship is going to church. The first step in faithfulness in giving is making a pledge. The first step in staying married is to go home. The first step in faithfulness in prayer is sitting down to pray. I'm sure you can come up with your own example. The first step is a hard choice we have to make. The other steps come more easily and we find a faithfulness that may even surprise us.

Excuses abound. Faithfulness awaits. The choice of the first step is yours. Salvation and wholeness are promised if you will but take the step.

Yours faithfully,

Robert C. Wisniewski, Jr.

THE LESSONS:

Jeremiah 33:14-16
 Psalm 25:1-9
 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13
 Luke 21:25-36

THE COLLECT:

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Flowers on the Altar this Sunday are to the glory of God and in memory of:

John Kennedy Danziger
 Emmie Taber Danziger
 Audrey Portugil Danziger
 John Kennedy Danziger, Jr.
 Rufus Middleton King
 Cyril Portugil
 Enid Portugil
 Cameron Brame Freeman
 Hamner Garlan Freeman, Jr.
 Hamner Garlan Freeman III
 John Hawkins Napier III

MINISTERS SERVING THIS SUNDAY

ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER:

Joel Gregory

ACOLYTES: B. Westhauser, C. Speir, L. Bradford, W. Lawlor, A. L. Lee, A. Marks, B. Westhauser, A. Fitzpatrick

LAY EUCHARIST MINISTERS: C. Moore, L. McCall, C. McLemore, K. Miller

LAY EUCHARISTIC VISITORS:

K. Dailey

VESTRY: 7:30 G. Stough

10:30 J. Marshall, A. Hamlett, B. Young, T. Westhauser

ALTAR GUILD: J. McDowell, E. Stroh, A. King

PASTORAL CARE: B. Cannon, K. Marks, M. Shaw, L. White, L. Fitzpatrick

FLOWER DELIVERY: J. Lynn, M. L. Owens, G. Mathews

Flowers by the St. John's Flower Guild

YEAR-END GIVING

The Church Finance office is here to serve you as we approach the end of the year. All gifts must be postmarked by Monday, December 31 in order to go toward your 2018 giving record. If you are gifting stock, please contact Libby Poole at 262-1937 or libby@stjohnsmontgomery.org in the finance office to help her be aware of those gifts and the designation of those gifts. If you would like more information, please contact Libby. Thank you.

Taizé

Sunday, December 2nd at 5:00 pm in the Nave
 An evening of worship with
 silence, prayer, and song

FAMILY PROMISE WEEK

Our Family Promise week will be **December 2 through 8**. The signup sheet is on the bulletin board just outside the Parish House. Overnight hosts and dinner volunteers are needed, *also needed are volunteers to help with set up and making up beds*. We're expecting a large group and could use extra help. Our team is Katharine Harris (katharineharris@knology.net or 334-315-1230), or Libby Fitzpatrick (libfitz1@gmail.com). If you have questions, feel free to contact one of the team. Please consider volunteering for this very rewarding ministry.

RISE AGAINST HUNGER STILL NEEDS YOUR HELP

Sunday night's event was another huge success where about one hundred folks ranging in age from 3 to 80 worked together and very hard to make 20,000 meals to send to third world countries where poor nutrition is life threatening. While successful in that goal, we remain short of our \$6,000 financial goal. You can still help by sending a contribution to St. John's marked for Rise Against Hunger.

JOY AND CONCERN

Your prayers are requested for the following parishioners: Kathleen Bradford, Sarah Stone, Sarah Spratling, Charles Brannon, Florence Jordan, Christopher Marshall, Sunshine Huff, Karen Jarrell, Francis Beaulieu, Jim Thomas, Carol Pierce, George West, Eddie McDowell, Dottis Robinson, Joe McGough, Cynthia Hill.

Prayers are also requested for these friends: Randy Rushton, Phil Dotts, Paul Hackett, Andrew Warnberg, Doris Thornton, Tommy Oliver, Ruth Jones, Karen & Angelo Pacheco, Acra Hackney Samuels, Margaret (Marty) Hackney, Ed Sellers, Tom Broadhurst, Ricky Hatfield, Willie Fred Gamble, Monica Powell, Chase Pickett, Al Perkins, Debbie Steindorff, Betty Harper, Jennifer Pruitt, Pam Litel, Aaron Hines, Catherine Riddell, Hugh Lee Earnest, Daphne Oliver, Dawn Damato, Ernie Reddick, Dottie Campbell, Scott Bradford, Mary Steindorff, Jack Mitchell, Margaret Carlson, Paula Hamm Roberts, Kim Barnhart, Lavada Spears Person, Ame Duan, Charles Colvin, Cookie Zibilich, Charlie Smith, Clemmon Barlow, Chuck Holley, Sandy Lynn Stevens, Masha Kloberg, Andy Silverman.

Please notify us when you are sick or hospitalized so that we might provide pastoral care.

SHARING EUCHARIST – AN INVITATION AND A REMINDER

One of St. John's valuable ministries is that of the Lay Eucharist Visitor. Each Sunday we as the faith community send out our representative to extend to those who cannot be with us the worship and communion that we have experienced. The visits are a simple sharing of ourselves combined with a form of passages from Scripture, prayers and ultimately Communion. Visits are made on Sundays or if preferred on Weekdays. Those visited as well as the LEV enjoy an enriched faith experience.

If you or a family member would like an LEV to visit you or if you would like to become part of the LEV team, please contact: Robert at robert@stjohnsmontgomery.org, or Katie Keller at kkel-ler2009@charter.net. You may also simply call and leave a message with Fay at St. John's 262-1937

Sts. Mary and Martha Guild Christmas Party

December 13 7:00 p.m.

331 Winthrop Court

Please bring a \$15 gift for Dirty Santa

Look for an email for a Sign-Up Genius link

Questions: Ashley Hamlett, (334) 467-2560

Angel Tree 2018

Angels to be adopted can be picked up in the Parish Hall

Questions To sarah@stjohnsmontgomery.org

**Remember to bring gifts to St. John's
by December 16th!**



AVIS & ALL ANGELS

12 Noon in the Dining Room at St. John's

Join us for lunch at noon on

Tuesday, December 2

Our program is *Reaching Out*

The impact of St. John's Outreach Program on our community.

SPECIAL EVENTS AROUND THE CORNER

Family Promise Week—December 2 through 8

Taizé—Sunday, December 2 @ 5:00 pm

Christmas Pageant – December 23, 9:30 am

Christmas Eve Services— December 24 @ 5:00 pm and 11:00 pm, Music at 10:30 pm

Lessons & Carols—December 30 @ 10:30 am Service

Feast of Lights with Fran McKendree – January 6, 5:30 pm

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

SUNDAY, Dec. 2

- 7:30 am Holy Eucharist
- 8:15 am Breakfast in the Parish House
- 9:15 am Christian Formation for all ages
- 10:30 am Holy Eucharist
- 5:00 pm Children's Choir
- 5:00 pm Junior EYC
- 6:00 pm EYC Dinner together
- 6:30 pm Senior EYC

MONDAY, Dec 3

- 12 Noon Clergy Led Bible Study in the Small Dining Room
- 6:00 pm Men's Group in the Library

TUESDAY, Dec 4

- 7:00 am Holy Eucharist
- 8:30 am Prayer Group

WEDNESDAY, Dec 5

- 11:30 am Centering Prayer
- 3:30 pm Coffice @ Café Louisa
- 5:30 pm Holy Eucharist

THURSDAY, Dec 6

- 12:05 pm Holy Unction and Holy Eucharist
- 6:00 pm Adult Choir Practice

St. John's Faithfulness

Required Weekly

36,066.80

Received Sunday

\$28,958.51

Required to Date

\$1,695,139.60

Received to Date

\$1,555,378.60

Building Fund Debt

\$110,000

Outstanding Building Pledges

\$135,840

