



"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

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Montgomery, Alabama 36104
334-262-1937
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Rector:
Robert C. Wisniewski, Jr.

Associate Rector:
Jamie Osborne

Priest Associate
Deonna D. Neal

Staff:
Libby Poole
Financial Administrator
Fay Worrilow
Parish Secretary
Anne Tippett
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 Tippett

HOLY CONVERSATION

Perhaps you know folks who share every thought they have. No matter how unhelpful or critical it might be, some just seem to have to say precisely what they are thinking. They blurt those things out and leave a wake of hurt feelings behind them as they move on, seemingly oblivious to their effect on others. Interestingly, most of those folks aren't quite as quick to share affirmation. But they just can't seem to keep their mouths shut when it comes to offering an opinion on how things could be better. It's a destructive behavior.

There's another destructive behavior which goes in a different direction and is probably more prevalent. Rather than speaking critically to someone, most of us choose to speak critically about someone. Somehow it's more comfortable for us to say to a third party what we think of someone. A messy little triangle is suddenly formed when I come to you and say something about someone we both know. It might even be expressed as concern or a request to keep someone in prayer but it doesn't feel quite right. Such comments actually serve to put distance between us and the person we're talking about. It dishonors the person and causes us ultimately to think less of the person. And it's unfair to the person we're talking to. If I tell you I wish someone else would do something differently, there's not much you can do about it, plus now you have to deal with my comments and whether or not to share them with the other person. Sometimes we share criticism with a third party in the hopes that they will take it to the person, imagining it is somehow their responsibility or they may be better able to bear the message. That never really works out too well.

Or course there's an alternative. Rather than just blurting out every critical thought we have or triangulating another, we can go directly to the person with sensitivity and respect. We can look them in the eye and ask for some time to talk. We can sit and enter a holy time of confronting conflict. We can name our concern, our criticism, with care. We can help the other see the nature of our complaint and we can listen to the response from that person. It's very intimate, this sort of sharing, and perhaps that's why we run from it. But when we take those risks, we and the other person are usually rewarded. A connection is made. The other person learns something. We learn something. And a bond is formed. People who are so sensitively direct are the people we know we can trust. They won't blow us

out of the water with their rampages and they won't go around talking about us. They will come to us and we will know where we stand with them.

The Incarnation of our Lord and Savior, that great celebration we're preparing for, reveals this direct and loving nature of God himself. God seeks to send his messages of encouragement and correction to us through each of our life events. Jesus himself honored all people, speaking to them very honestly but always with great respect. Jesus embodies the intimacy that is God's. Intimacy is two persons being precisely who they are with each other at the same time. In human relationships it's pretty rare. With God it is a constant.

Sometimes we shy away from that sort of bond even with God. We complain to others about how hard things are. We get discouraged and give up on a hopeful outcome. We become cynical, thinking that being in this moment honestly and directly with God won't change anything. Just as we give up on others, thinking that telling them something won't do any good, we give up on God, thinking telling him won't do any good either.

The Incarnation is God's extension of himself and an invitation to extend ourselves to God more directly. God invites us into that intimacy, actually demands that we become familiar with that intimacy. Open yourself to the Lord. Watch that relationship transform your human relationships. *Love one another as I have loved you.*

Yours faithfully,
Robert C. Wisniewski, Jr.

THE LESSONS:

Micah 5:2-5a
Canticle 3
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-55

THE COLLECT:

We beseech thee, Almighty God, to purify our consciences by thy daily visitation, that when thy Son our Lord cometh he may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

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

Charles Gilbert Tullos

MINISTERS SERVING THIS SUNDAY

ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER:

Joel Gregory

LAY EUCHARIST MINISTERS: C. Moore, S. Mitchell, M. Clark, T. Campbell

LAY EUCHARISTIC VISITORS:

P. Selman

VESTRY: 7:30 A. Huffaker

10:30 B. Eskridge, G. Stough, A. Longshore, B. Young

ALTAR GUILD: K. Funk, M. Carter, S. Stone

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

FLOWER DELIVERY: J. Drummond, V. Lee, V. Wilkerson

Flowers by the St. John's Flower Guild

VESTRY ELECTIONS

Vestry Elections will be held at the Annual Meeting on January 27. Nominees are: **Betty Beale, Tracey Campbell, John Carter, Rosa Davis, Will Gunter, Brice Johnston, Katie Keller, Keith Miller, Scott Mitchell, Mary Nelms Parsons, Nick Prillaman, Radney Ramsey, Emily Wise.** Early in January a brochure will be sent to you to further identify these nominees. If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting you may cast your ballot ahead of time.



Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve - Monday, December 24

5:00 pm - Holy Eucharist with Children's Sermon
Children bring an **UNWRAPPED** gift for a child at the Salvation Army.

10:30 pm - The Music of Christmas
11:00 pm - Festal Holy Eucharist

Christmas Day - Tuesday, December 25

10:00 am - Holy Eucharist

First Sunday after Christmas Day - December 30

7:30 am - Holy Eucharist
10:30 am - Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols



FEAST OF LIGHTS

JANUARY 6, 2019

5:45 Supper
6:30 Feast of Lights

JOY AND CONCERN

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

We pray for one who has died: **Chuck Tullos.** Rest eternal grant to him, O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon him.

Prayers are also requested for these friends: Sandra Cauthon, 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, 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.

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.

SPECIAL EVENTS AROUND THE CORNER

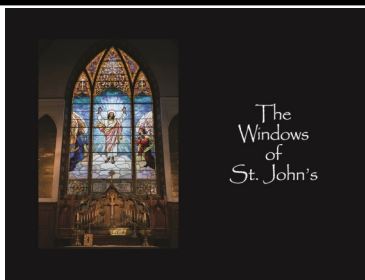
Christmas Pageant – December 23, 9:30 am

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 – January 6, 5:30 pm

Annual Meeting—January 27



Orders for The Windows of St. John's Calendar will be taken now until December 27th.

*Order several!
They make wonderful
Christmas gifts!*

Order forms available at church in the parish hall or contact Catherine Woodson: magwood56@msn.com or 262-4924. Please specify when you will need the calendars. The calendars are \$25.00 each. Payment can be made by check or cash.

Looking for Gift Ideas?

Consider the St. John's Bookstore!

There are a variety of gifts and stocking stuffers as well as books and jewelry. Come by before or after church on Sundays or visit the Bookstore between 9 to 4 on weekdays!



**LOVING SPOONFULS
SOUP DRIVE 2019**



It's time for our annual soup drive to benefit Holy Cross Episcopal School.

Calling all cooks to put on your aprons and come down to St. John's kitchen every Tuesday and Thursday beginning January 8 at 10:00 am to prepare our soups!

All soup orders will be taken at the church and by mail January 20-27; orders will be ready for pickup in February.

We appreciate the enthusiasm our congregations have shown by their participation in this fund raiser for Holy Cross.

Mark your calendars, whet your appetites, be generous, and be nourished!!

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

SUNDAY, Dec 23, 2018

- 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
- 4:20 pm Children's Choir

MONDAY, Dec 24, 2018

- 12 Noon Clergy Led Bible Study in the Small Dining Room
- 5:00 pm Children's Service
- 10:30 pm Festival Music of Christmas
- 11:00 pm Festival Eucharist

TUESDAY, Dec 25, 2018

- 10:00 am Festival Eucharist

WEDNESDAY, Dec 26

Office Closed

THURSDAY, Dec 27

No Eucharist at 12:05 pm

St. John's Faithfulness

Required Weekly

\$36,066.80

Received Sunday

\$50,195.35

Required to Date

1,803,340.00

Received to Date

\$1,673,546.66

Building Fund Debt

\$110,000

Outstanding Building Pledges

\$105,329

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«AD_CITY», «AD_STATE» «AD_ZIP_CODE»

The Eagle is available on the
internet at
www.stjohnsmontgomery.org



DECORATING NEEDS

This year we need red Nandina berries for our Christmas decorations. If you have any red berries I would ask that you cut them and bring them to the church on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday. Often I or another flower guild member would offer to go cut for you, but I'm pleading "convalescing." I'm recovering after my hospital stays but I am not yet 100% and I'm trying to pace myself. I look forward to seeing everyone during the Christmas season.

Sarah Spratling, 334-220-1420

P.S. Thanks for all your prayers and support!

DECORATE THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS

Those who wish to make donations for the decoration of the church at Christmas, please send a check and this form to the church as soon as possible.

NAME _____

IN MEMORY OF _____ and/or IN HONOR OF _____:

