



"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:
Candice B. Frazer
Jamie Osborne

Priest Associate
Deonna D. Neal

Staff:
Libby Poole
Financial Administrator
Fay Worriow
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 Jarrall, Superintendent
Myron Smoke

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

MY PEW

The first church where I served as a priest had folding chairs instead of pews. Surprisingly folks still got pretty attached to where they sat. Whenever we had a baptism we would reserve the first few rows and people who usually sat there had to sit somewhere else. One day one of our parishioners complained to me about having to move. I tried teasing her by picking up the chair where she sat and asking her where she would like me to put it so she could have "her chair". The next spring, April Fool's Day fell on a Sunday and I put a reserved sign on her chair as a little prank. She stormed into my office and asked what was going on. I said, "April Fools" and gave her a big hug.

The next church where I served had a conventional layout and one Sunday, at the early service, a parishioner walked in to church to find someone sitting in her pew. She came back to the rear of the church where I was standing, getting ready to start the service, and told me someone was in her pew. "Yes, ma'am, I see that," I replied. She said, "I want you to ask him to move." I tried to be gentle with her but told her I would not do that. She spun around, went back to "her pew", and asked the man to move. He did. And, of course, he never came to church again despite my best efforts to welcome him.

A couple of years after I came to St. John's, my daughter had occasion to attend the early service by herself when she was about 12. Jack and Nell Capell, neither still living, came in and started walking down the aisle. As they got further and further down the aisle, I realized that Meg was in their pew. Jack and Nell didn't know Meg but they couldn't have been kinder. They got to the pew, asked Meg if they could join her, and then sat next to her. At one point in the service I saw Jack sharing a prayer book with my daughter and afterwards they told me how nice it was to get to meet her and sit with her.

"My pew." Everywhere I've been certain people have had what they considered to be "their pew." Some have been more gracious than others about that. In one way it is perfectly understandable to have a place where you are comfortable sitting and to keep going there week after week. And as long as the membership is static and there are never visitors, we might say that having one's own pew never causes any problems. Of course every church wants visitors and new members. Or do they?

While claiming a pew as my own may be natural, it's a practice that has done much harm over the years. First of all it is basically inhospitable. Very few are so rude as to ask others to leave "their" pew but it's one of the major fears newcomers have in visiting churches. They don't want to offend anyone. If I walk into a church and am afraid to sit down, a lot has to happen to offset that. Having "my pew" makes it hard for the church to be holy.

The most harm claiming a pew as my own does though is to me. It encourages me to feel ownership about a place that not only doesn't belong to me, it actually belongs to God. It's mighty hard to sit in "my" pew and open my heart to the sometimes uncomfortable challenges of the Gospel of Christ. If it's "my" pew, it's hard not to see it as "my" church, even "my" God. God probably understands our need for the comfort of a pew but God also expects me to grow in the image of Christ and it's impossible to grow when I have to have everything on my terms.

Right after two year olds say "No", they start saying "Mine." We gently teach them that not everything belongs to them and that they must learn to share even what does belong to them. Sharing is good for the people I am sharing with. Sharing is even better for me. It teaches me an aspect of life that is really important. The world benefits from my generosity. I benefit from it even more.

Every week I watch my wife come into church and sit in a different place. For her it's fun to move around and sit with different people. Maybe she does that because she has a humble spirit. Maybe her humble spirit has come from never having her own pew. Maybe it's a little bit of both. Jesus said that it was hard for the rich to enter the kingdom. Having a pew I consider my own, like being rich, does not keep me out of the kingdom. But it may make it harder for me to know about it or show it to others.

I honestly don't judge anyone harshly for having what they consider "their" pew. But maybe you'll get the point that having "my" pew is risky for my spiritual growth. It's good for me to know that when I attend church I am on God's turf, not mine. If you have a pew that you consider yours, I'd offer a couple suggestions. First, quit calling it "my pew." That does harm to others and yourself. Second, try moving around. You might see some things differently and it might help you remember that it's

THE LESSONS:

Genesis 3:8-15
 Psalm 130
 2 Corinthians 4:13—5:1
 Mark 3:20-35

THE COLLECT:

O God, from whom all good doth come: Grant that by thy inspiration we may think those things that are right, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

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

Ruth Hill Cook
 Clarence H. Cook, Sr.
 Clarence H. Cook, Jr.

MINISTERS SERVING THIS SUNDAY

ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER:

Joel Gregory

ACOLYTES: B. Westhauser, W. Norrell, E. Strickler, S. C. Hughes, B. Eskridge, A. Fitzpatrick, C. Peeples, L. Bradford

LAY EUCHARIST MINISTERS: C. Moore, M. Hughes, K. Miller, M. Clark

LAY EUCHARISTIC VISITORS:

K. Dailey

VESTRY: 7:30 K. Dailey
10:30 B. Eskridge, C. Moore, A. Longshore, S. Norrell

ALTAR GUILD: N. Benner, A. Hamlett, F. Hughes

PASTORAL CARE: E. Brown, S. Englehardt

FLOWER DELIVERY: S. & S.

Marks, A. King, N. Buzard
Flowers by the St. John's Flower Guild

God's church not "mine."

Yours faithfully,
Robert C. Wisnewski, Jr.

THINKING AS A CHRISTIAN ABOUT BIOETHICS

Led by Deonna Neal
 Summer Adult Sunday School
 June 3 to Aug 26

In what ways do Christian theological beliefs, e.g. about God, the human person, creation, and suffering, influence how Christians might think differently from their secular counterparts about issues such as artificial reproductive technologies, euthanasia, genetic screening, organ donation, and scientific experimentation on humans? Come join us for an 11-week exploration of these topics and more. The course will use Gilbert Meilaender's book, *Bioethics: A Primer for Christians* (3rd Edition, 2013), which can be found in the bookstore or ordered online for \$15. Also, please email Deonna at deonna.d.neal@gmail.com to let her know if you are interested in the course so she knows how many people to plan for. (Note: there will be no class July 21 and 29 while Deonna is on the Honduras Trip.)

**YOUNG PEOPLE PAINT BIRMINGHAM
 MONDAY, JULY 9 UNTIL FRIDAY, JULY 13**

Young People Paint Birmingham is a diocesan wide junior high service project. Youth entering 7th-9th grades are invited to join us for a weeklong work experience in Birmingham's West End neighborhoods. Through a partnership with Urban Ministries and The Joe Rush Center for the last 20 years, young people in our diocese have had hands on service experience scraping and painting houses for homeowners who cannot afford to pay for this work to be done. During the evenings, the youth participate in a program that will help them learn more about poverty and how we are called to respond as Christians. St. Stephen's, Birmingham will serve as a home base for meals, program and sleeping.

EVENTS AROUND THE CORNER

Thinking as a Christian about Bioethics — Sundays 9:15 in the Parish House

Heavenly Hosts—June 12—1453 Gilmer Avenue

Spirit Lit — June 13—1330 Primrose Lane

Young Adult Supper Club—June 21 @ 2118 St. Charles Ave.

Honduras Medical Mission Trip – July 21-28

Remember Tuesdays—Morning Prayer at 8:10 am on Facebook Live

JOY AND CONCERN

Your prayers are requested for the following parishioners: 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: Jennifer Pruitt, Katie Brooks, Pam Litel, Aaron Hines, Catherine Riddell, Hugh Lee Earnest, Daphne Oliver, Dawn Damato, Ernie Reddick, Dottie Campbell, Scott Bradford, Mary Steindorf, 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.



A book series for women.

For more information contact Candice@stjohnsmontgomery.org.

Wednesday, June 13

Beulah by Kee Sloan
At the home of Virginia Banister
1330 Primrose Lane

Wednesday, July 18

Born A Crime by Trevor Noah
At the home of Anne Hamner
7518 Wynford Circle

Wednesday, August 15

Priestdaddy by Patricia Lockwood
At the home of Sandra Patrick
2448 Rosemont Place

5 pm Sips and Snacks

(bring something yummy to share; beverages will be provided)

5:30 pm Book discussion



JUNE IN-GATHERING

Paper Products for Children's Harbor

Drop off:

Paper Towels

Febreze

Toilet Paper

Hand Soap

55 gallon size Trash Bags

13 gallon size Kitchen Bags

JUNE HEAVENLY HOSTS

Tuesday, June 12, 6:30 pm

In the home of

Florence & Bob Young

1453 Gilmer Avenue

Beverages will be provided, please bring a dish or dessert to share.

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

SUNDAY, June 10

7:30 am Holy Eucharist
8:15 am Breakfast in the Parish House
9:15 am Adult Sunday School in the Parish House
10:30 am Holy Eucharist
5:00 pm Children's Choir

MONDAY, June 11

12 Noon Clergy Led Bible Study in the Small Dining Room

TUESDAY, June 12

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

WEDNESDAY, June 13

11:30 am Centering Prayer

THURSDAY, June 14

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

\$22,747.43

Required to Date

\$793,469.60

Received to Date

\$735,980.44

Building Fund Debt

\$350,000

Outstanding Building Pledges

\$166,048

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Montgomery, Alabama
36104

«LA_LABEL_NAME»
«AD_ADDRESS_1»
«AD_ADDRESS_2»
«AD_CITY», «AD_STATE» «AD_ZIP_CODE»

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

Mark your Calendars for Children's Art Camp

Children in rising K-6th grades are invited to
participate in "Art Camp."

July 30-August 1

9 am-noon

All crafts will be for sale at
St. John's annual Bazaar.

Please email

sarah@stjohnsmontgomery.org

for more information.

The deadline for registration is July 10.

