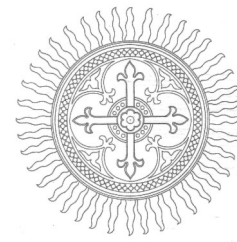


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# St. John's Episcopal Church

## The Eagle

October 2022

### God Is a Shoving Leopard

**If only all Anglican clergy were as memorable as the Rev William Spooner.** Very few people have a linguistic feature named after them, but old Spooner is one of them. He lived in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was a teacher and chaplain at Oxford University. But what made him famous, and what he gave his name to, were 'Spoonerisms' – those humorous slips of the tongue where the speaker mixes up the beginning sounds of two words in the same phrase.

Apparently, he uttered the words in this headline during a sermon, when meaning to say, "God is a loving shepherd." He also famously said:

- "It is kisstomary to cuss the bride" (instead of 'customary to kiss the bride')
  - "I am tired of addressing beery wenches" ('weary benches')
  - "You have hissed all my mystery lectures, and were caught fighting a liar in the quad." ('You have missed all my history lectures and were caught lighting a fire in the quad'.)
- "You have tasted two worms" to a student who had wasted two terms.

**Personally, I look on old Spooner with admiration, even envy. It's now 150 years since he preached on God as a shoving leopard, but people are still talking (and writing) about it.** I am pretty certain no one will be writing about anything I preach in 150 years. "Is it better to be remembered for making mistakes or not being remembered at all?" I ask myself this question and I admit to not knowing the answer.

**It makes me wonder what would happen if we took old Spooner's sermon literally. How would the world be different if God were, indeed, a shoving leopard and not a loving shepherd?** Well, it would certainly make life interesting for the flock. The leopard may lie with the lamb, but the lamb won't get a very good night's sleep.

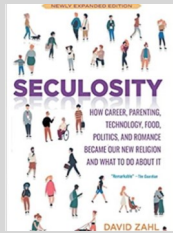
Actually, I think I might like God to be my shoving leopard. No one will mess with you if you have a leopard walking with you everywhere you go. You see, one of my favorite vices, perhaps the one I'm most naturally gifted at, is cowardice. If you have ever done the Enneagram, then when I tell you I'm a Type 6 you will know what I mean. I need security, and my initial response to many situations is to imagine what could go wrong. Sometimes this is so debilitating that I fail to do the good things I know I should do. (By the way, if you haven't done the Enneagram, you really need to.)

**So, having a leopard next to me, shoving me to step out in courage and faith would be very useful.** For example, I'd know God was calling me to have a hard conversation, I'd naturally chicken out, but then the leopard would fix its orange eyes on me, give a menacing little growl, and shove me into doing the right thing. Often, I need more than a prod – I need a leopard to shove me.

**Of course, the voice of the Holy Spirit is quieter than a leopard's growl, and gentler than its shove. God has impeccable manners, and never shoves anyone.** Instead, I need to find my resources by listening and responding to the still small voice that whispers into my heart. God does give courage to us when we need to step out in faith and do something risky. But **it is more of a loving invitation than a growling shove.** Thank God for loving shepherds and shoving leopards.

-Duncan

### You've Read the Book, now Meet the Author!



Sunday, Nov. 6th, we are delighted to welcome David Zahl, author of 'Seculosity' live via Zoom to the Rector's Forum at 9:15. David's book has been the basis of Duncan's class this term about what people believe in when they stop believing in organized religion. If you have questions or thoughts about anything you have read in Seculosity, please come and share them with David and the group!

### 2023 Stewardship

If you have not turned in your 2023 stewardship pledge, please do so as soon as possible. We cannot budget for 2023 until all pledge cards are in.



### November In-Gathering

  
**FRIENDSHIP  
MISSION**

Providing food and shelter for men, women and children.

For the month of November, we will be collecting items for Friendship Mission. November is homeless awareness month, and the homeless are the primary focus of the Mission. Their biggest needs are paper products for their soup kitchen, specifically sturdy disposable plates and "to-go" boxes. They also need sweatshirts and sweatpants for their men's shelter. All donations may be left on the round table in the hall outside of Duncan's office.



## POPPY SUNDAY

### *Something Precious was Given*

On Sunday, November 13, 2022, at 10:15 a.m. in the Labyrinth Garden, St. John's will have a liturgy of remembrance and healing for our fallen service members. Afterwards, all veterans and cadets are invited to process with the clergy, acolytes and Eucharistic Ministers into the 10:30 service. Your Vestry in conjunction with the Hansen Gallery will have installed hundreds of ceramic poppies in the garden. Paper poppy boutonnières from the local Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 96 will be provided to all individuals attending services or receiving Eucharistic Visitors on this Poppy Sunday. After the 10:30 service, photographs will be taken of our veterans and cadets who are open to having their photograph on the St. John's and Diocese of Alabama websites. Bring a veteran or cadet and join us for this liturgy of healing and remembrance.

## WARDENS' REPORT

**Duncan Johnston's Installation** on October 12, 2022, marked the one-month anniversary of his and **Gelind Johnston's** arrival at St. John's. A review of the weekly average Sunday service attendance numbers for this month shows a very significant increase over the same period last year. We believe this is, in part, the result of a post-COVID normalcy (at least for now). However, the main reason for the increased numbers is the excellent preaching and teaching by **Duncan Johnston** and **Deonna Neal**.

Vestry members have been facilitating visits and get-acquainted events between our parishioners and **Gelind and Duncan Johnston**. The Johnstons are off to a very good start. We are so delighted and hopeful about the Johnston rectorship at St. John's.

By the time this report is published, we will have had the unveiling of the **Marguerite Edwards'** portrait of the Right Reverend Dr. **Glenda Curry** to hang in the St. John's "Hall of Bishops." This is a great addition to our collection of Bishops who have a connection to St. John's. So many Bishops have a connection with St. John's that we are running out of wall space for them all.

By the time this Wardens' Report is published, the Vestry designed St. John's golf-style (large) umbrellas will have arrived. They will only be available for purchase at the Bazaar on **November 16, 2022**. After that, you may buy a St. John's umbrella from the church bookstore. Prior to the Bazaar, we will have the two versions of the St. John's umbrellas at the church office reception desk for viewing. Supplies are limited. If you want to be certain that you will have a St. John's umbrella this year (perhaps for a Christmas present), please let **Anne Tippett** or **Betsy Cannon** know so that we can pre-order more.

Stewardship pledges for 2023 are going very well, but we want to encourage all our parishioners to make a pledge. It is a marker of a healthy parish to increase the number of pledges, even if the new pledges start small. Pledging is a way to deepen your connection with St. John's and to participate personally in our parish ministry. All pledges are greatly appreciated.

The Vestry approved the \$130,000 in grants recommended by our Outreach Committee. This committee is led by **Charlie Harris**. This is hard work indeed. There are many worthy local charities, and this committee has consistently done fine work to make our grants benefit appropriate local charities that have a connection to St. John's.

On **November 13, 2022**, we will be having "Poppy Sunday" in remembrance of Veteran's Day. Your Vestry, along with the Hansen Gallery, will be installing hundreds of ceramic poppies in the Labyrinth Garden. There will be a liturgy of remembrance and healing at 10:15 on Poppy Sunday. All St. John's veterans, cadets and prior military service members are encouraged to go to the Labyrinth after the November 13, 2022, 10:30 service for prayers and photographs. A local lifestyle magazine will be publishing a story about this important event.

Your intrepid Treasurer, **Richard Bradford**, is working with the St. John's Finance and Administration Committee (led by **William Haynes**) to come up with a long-range plan for the future needs of our campus. This is a first-ever effort to understand the full scope of our future building and facilities needs so that we can save money for the inevitable repair and replacement of our heating and air conditioning, roofs, parking lot, and many other parts of the campus.

Finally, by the time this report is published, we will have had our Windows Rededication. Recently, Femenella & Associates has added a new work crew from Florida to assist with our remaining absent windows. We are back on track to have nearly all the windows back in place by year-end. The windows that are already back are stunningly beautiful. We urge all our parishioners, visitors and friends to come see them for yourself.

Will Hill Tankersley and William Haynes  
St. John's Wardens



## The Bazaar is THREE Weeks Away! It's Crunch Time!

### Here are all the things you need to know:

The Bazaar will be Nov. 16 with sale hours from 10am-2pm AND 5pm-7pm. We will have our traditional luncheon from 11am-1pm, and will sell Boston butts from 5pm-7pm. Shopping will be available during the midday and afternoon hours.

**Volunteers Needed in all Areas:** We need all the help we can get. Volunteers are needed all day on Bazaar day, in all areas of the sale: luncheon, pantry, treasure attic, porters, etc. We will need volunteers for both the day shift (10am-2pm) and the afternoon shift (5pm-7pm). No

worries if you cannot work a whole shift, we'll take whatever time you can give us. There is a **volunteer sign up genius** on the Bazaar webpage, or you may call the church office to volunteer. In the meantime, other work continues: The cooking crew meets on Tuesdays & Thursdays at 10am, and Arts & Crafts on Wednesdays at 10am. All are welcome.

**Luncheon:** This year's menu is: chicken & wild rice casserole, marinated green beans, vinaigrette spring mix salad with fruit rolls, blueberry crumble. Luncheon tickets are \$12 and may be purchased on Bazaar day or in advance by calling the church office. You may make table reservations by calling the church office; please be specific on the number of seats you are reserving. Take-outs and drive through are also offered. All take-outs will be served at the door in the back of the kitchen; please access that door from the outside & do not walk through the kitchen.

**Lunch Servers Needed for the Bazaar-**Would you like to help with the bazaar, but your schedule won't allow you to be here all morning? Then come help serve lunch! Servers are needed for the bazaar luncheon from 11:00-1:00, but one-hour shifts are also available. To volunteer, call or text Stephanie Norrell at 334-467-6989.

**Silent Auction:** The silent auction would still love a few more items. Please mark your items for the silent auction, and bring them to the educational building lobby. Contact Kathleen Bradford, [kbradbrad@aol.com](mailto:kbradbrad@aol.com) or Katie Keller, [kkeller2009@charter.net](mailto:kkeller2009@charter.net).

**Arts & Crafts & Pantry:** Arts & crafts and the pantry continue to work on their projects. The arts & crafts crew meet every Wednesday morning, and also create things at home. The pantry volunteers cook every Tuesday & Thursday morning. The Pantry will also need volunteers on Bazaar day.

**Treasure Attic:** Keep bringing in those treasures!! The treasure attic would love extra volunteers on Bazaar day. Also, volunteers are going to meet on Sunday, Nov. 13th right after 10:30am service to price and organize the room. Please join us for if you would like to pitch in.

**Boston Butts:** On Bazaar day, Butts will be on sale from 5pm-7pm ONLY. They are \$40. We encourage pre-ordering which can be done either online through the Bazaar page on the St. John's website, or by sending a check into the church office. A limited number will be on sale the day of the Bazaar.

**Spread the Word & Shop!:** The more people you tell about the Bazaar the better it will be, so please encourage friends and neighbors to come dine and shop with us. Remind them that there are now midday & evening hours to the sale. Make sure YOU come too! Posters are available; if you have somewhere you can hang one, please do. Posters are on the front desk of the church office building.

## Vestry Nominations for the Vestry Class of 2025

In accordance with our bylaws, the outgoing Vestry class (**Betsy Cannon, Cissy Johnson, Brice Johnston, J.R. Marshall, Dudley Perry, Scott Mitchell** and **Will Hill Tankersley** ("Class of 2022") will be considering a slate of candidates for the Vestry Class of 2025 to present to the Vestry. By **November 15, 2022**, please tell any member of the Class of 2022 any nominations you have for the new Vestry class. Eligible members of St. John's must be regular contributors to the financial support of the parish, cannot be spouses of any compensated member of the parish and must have been off the Vestry for a year. We will keep track of parishioners who are nominated by more than one St. John's member, but only one nomination is required to be considered. The slate will be presented for a vote of the parishioners prior to the parish annual meeting in January 2023.

Will Hill Tankersley  
Senior Warden

