



THE FOURTH EPISTLE SAINT JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH MOBILE, ALABAMA

The Protestant Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast
The Right Reverend James Russell Kendrick, Bishop
Reverend John Talbert— Rector

Vol. XXXVIII, Issue 4

April 2026

“Which Gospel is your favorite?” I get asked that question more often than you might think. As a priest and scripture enthusiast, once my vocational call is revealed to new friends and acquaintances (particularly with those that share similar scriptural interests) we eventually find our way toward personal preferences. While it is important to see the entirety of Holy Scripture as the Living Word, made new in our hearing and inspired by the Holy Spirit to be for us a true witness that God is at work in nature and the history of humanity... I feel like it's fine (and very human) to have a favorite.

On surface level, my conversationalists often think I am bias, both sharing a name and serving a congregation whose patron is one of the four great evangelists (and maybe they're right), but nevertheless – yes, The Gospel of John has a special place in my heart.

We may not get a whole lectionary year dedicated to John – but you may be surprised to know that we hear more from the Gospel of John than any of the three of the Synoptic texts over the course of our 3-year lectionary cycle. Intermixed among mostly the seasons of Lent and Easter (and always on Good Friday and Christmas) 90% of John's unique verses are heard from the lectern.

Last month, from Lent 2A to 5A, we traversed pericopes of Jesus's encounters with critical figures that representative of groups to be welcomed into the Johannine community: Nicodemus, of the educated elite that come to believe; The Woman at the Well, of the whole people of Samaria; the Man-Born-Blind, of the Judaeans eventually cast out of their synagogues for believing in Jesus; and Lazarus, of those who express their faith as a friendship with the divine. For each of them, the framework of their world changed during unique and intimate encounters with Jesus. Their conversions and revelations are personal.

I believe we similarly have unique and personal experiences with God as we grow into our faith. Over the course of our lives, we may find personal connections with a handful, or even dozens of characters from the Holy text. I encourage you to explore them.

Perhaps today you find yourself petitioning God on behalf of one of your loved ones (John 4:46-54); or feel like you're still waiting to have a personal encounter with the Risen Lord of your own (John 20:24-31). Are you reaching out for hope to be healed? (John 5:1-17) or feeling unfit to put your faith into action (John 21:15-23)? It's ok to have a favorite passage. I encourage it; especially if it changes over time.

I believe it's important to let the scriptures come alive in our own lives. The breadth of the four evangelists witness encompasses all of us. When you allow the scriptures to be a living part of your life, you will find new life, you will be restored, and you will feel welcome and connection with the whole body of believers across this city, this country, and throughout the world that continually seek a deeper relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Dear Saint Johns Family,

For a little over five years, Saint Johns has been my parish home. During this time, you have welcomed me, embraced me, and encouraged me. We have shared in ministry together in very special ways. We have made many memories together and in these years, you have continuously held me prayer and support in my discernment of the religious life and now the priesthood.

I write all this to say that it is with joy I let you know that Bishop Kendrick has approved me as a postulant for holy orders. This means that I will be going to seminary to be educated for ordination. The bishop believes that I will benefit tremendously from going to residential seminary. Of course this means that I will have to leave St. Johns and my home here in Mobile.

This is a very exciting time in my life and one that will carry me into new and profound areas of ministry. I have visited three seminaries in the last two months. Of the three, I have been accepted by the School of Theology at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. It is also a grand opportunity to learn more about our Anglican and Episcopal identity in a very prestigious school. Sewanee's tradition and reputation for formation of clergy is outstanding. Many of us at St. John's know one or more people who have ties to Sewanee.

I will remain in Mobile through July as I say goodbye to you, my family, friends, my Trinity family, and prepare my home for sale. I will move in to my new home in Sewanee in early August where I will live and learn, and be formed over the next three years. During that time I will be home to visit as possible. I ask for your prayers and please know you will remain in mine.

With love,

Brother Jacob





St. John's Episcopal Church
1707 Government St, Mobile, AL 36604
Vestry Meeting Minutes
March 15 , 2026

Call to Order: The St. John's Vestry meeting was called to order at 11:36 AM

Adoption of Agenda: A motion was made by Kathe Gieseler and seconded by Helen Guthrie to accept the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Request for Excuse: Absent Vestry member: Eddy Velaski. Additional individuals in attendance: Louis Daniel, Cindy Gass (Treasurer)

Opening Prayer: Fr. Talbert led the Vestry members in the opening prayer.

Presentation and Review of Minutes: Minutes from the February 22, 2025 meeting were presented. A motion was made by Connie McLean and seconded by Janet Buckley to accept the minutes. The motion passed.

Reports

Financial Update: Vestry Treasurer, Cindy Gass presented the combined Financial Report for January and February 2026. Income from plate and pledge was \$25,284.44. We had projected \$25,111.32. This reflects a \$173.12 surplus over the budget projected amount. Our total income for the January and February period was \$42,080.44 which is \$2,519.12 more than what was projected. A motion was made by Kathe Geisler and seconded by Kathe Giesler to accept the financial report. The motion passed.

Senior Warden's Report: Senior Warden Connie McLean reported: The State Street Growth Account (SSGA), St. John's Endowment Account, will be closed and deposited in a Regions checking account separate from the St. John's general operating account. This will give easier access to the funds if needed to supplement the operating account. A motion was made by Connie McLean and seconded by Janet Buckley to withdraw the funds from the SSGA (\$164,742.09), deposit them in the St. John's operating checking account and then write a check for \$118,025.77 to the St. John's Episcopal Church Endowment Fund checking account and (from the operating account) write a check for \$46,716.32 to Willet Stained Glass Studios for the balance owned for the stained-glass window contract. A motion was made by Connie McLean and seconded by Janet Buckley to approve the financial transactions. The motion passed.

Junior Warden's Report: Junior Warden

Hugh Tomlin, reported that the kneelers in some of the pews in the church still need to be re-installed.

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Ministry Reports:

ECW: ECW no report.

Outreach: Outreach Committee Forty Days/Forty Items is the Lenten project (to be completed on Palm Sunday), Books for Head Start children in April.

Priest's Report: Fr. Talbert reported:

Fr. Talbert will not be here on April 12th;

Fr. Talbert has been asked to be dean of Beckwith for the Senior High Camp this summer;

There are two more weeks for Lenten Series at Trinity on Wednesday evenings. Fr. Talbert and Fr. Fitzhugh are leading the five-week program;

Holy Week schedule:

Maundy Thursday services at 5:30 PM

Good Friday service at 5:30 PM

Easter Vigil at 7:30 PM

Easter Sunday 10 AM

Old Business:

Update from the renovation committee: All of the contractors have been paid.

The sound system and possibly some additional lighting has to go in and the kneelers on the pews that were shortened have to be re-installed. The Repairs and Renovations Committee has finished their task!

Plaques and Memorials: Fr. Talbert there will be (going forward) a definition of what size, materials and content any plaques and/or memorials that are displayed in the church should be.

Lights for the Parking Lot: Hugh Tomlin and Louis Daniel are looking into the various possibilities

Historical Committee: Fr. Talbert will put a committee together to work on this.

St. John's "Helper Project/mission: Fr. Talbert will work on this.

Sound System: The upgrading and replacing of the church sound system is still in progress.

Safeguarding Training: Fr. Talbert reminded Vestry members that this needs to be completed.



Episcopal Relief & Development Partners with ADS Kenya to Respond to Drought in Eastern and North Eastern Kenya

Episcopal Relief & Development is partnering with [Anglican Development Services \(ADS\) Kenya](#) to support communities affected by the ongoing drought in Kitui and Marsabit counties, where consecutive seasons of insufficient rainfall have sharply reduced access to food and water and undermined the local economy.

[Kenya](#) is experiencing one of its most severe droughts in recent years. The impacts are particularly acute in arid and semi-arid areas, where households rely heavily on rain-fed agriculture and pasturing animals. In Kitui and Marsabit, thousands of people are facing rising food prices, water scarcity and declining livestock productivity.

Through the partnership with ADS Kenya, Episcopal Relief & Development is supporting a [locally led](#) emergency response that combines immediate humanitarian assistance with measures that strengthen community resilience and recovery. Households will be provided with cash assistance, water in bulk provided from tanks and mental health and spiritual support. The response prioritizes households experiencing the greatest vulnerability, including families with young children, pregnant and lactating women, older people, persons with disabilities and woman-or youth-headed households.

ADS Kenya, the development arm of the Anglican Church of Kenya, brings deep contextual knowledge and long-standing relationships with dioceses, county authorities and community leadership. Working through these trusted networks, the response will avoid duplicated efforts across agencies and increase impact. Episcopal Relief & Development works with ADS regional offices in [Nyanza](#), [Mt. Kenya](#) and [Western Kenya](#) to implement integrated early childhood development, build climate resilience and reduce family and community violence. These partnerships help parents and caregivers to adopt nurturing parenting practices, learn new skills that will generate income, prepare for the future in savings and loans groups, and more

“Effective drought response depends on local leadership and coordination,” said the lead Program Officer for this response on behalf of Episcopal Relief & Development. “By partnering with ADS Kenya, we are supporting an approach that is community-driven, dignified and coordinated with experts, while addressing urgent needs and helping people recover.

”Please [pray](#) for those affected by the drought in Kenya. [Donations to Episcopal Relief & Development](#) or mail a check to Episcopal Relief & Development PO Box 5121 Boone, IA 50950 – 0121.

Ministries at St. John's



Members of St. John's took on the 40 Days/40 Items challenge during Lent this year to thoughtfully go through their possessions each day during Lent and reflect on how much we have and what we can give to those that have less.

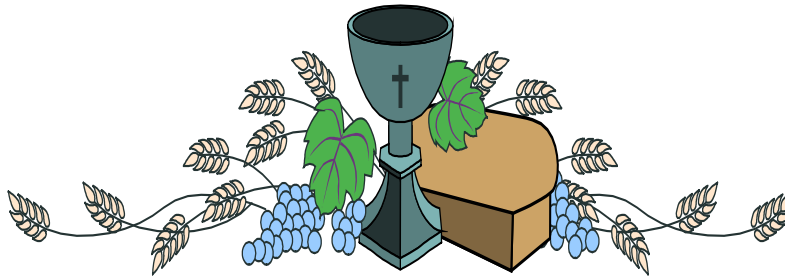
The Outreach Committee would like to thank all who participated.

The next project will be "sticker" books for children in Head Start throughout our community. That will take place on Sunday April 19, as always your support is appreciated!



April is here, hopefully bringing some showers to wash away this pollen! ToLC March recap: From March 2nd to March 27th, Tree of Life Counseling had a total of 112 client sessions (5+ clients a day on average), with 20 sessions at no cost to the client and 67 sessions at a reduced cost or no copay charged. That adds up to 78% of clients for the month of March continued receiving mental health care regardless of cost. Thank you again for allowing us to serve our community on behalf of Saint John's. We appreciate your support of this ministry more than words can say! Because of you, our community is stronger. If you need us, we are just a call or text away @ (251)422-6592. Or, you can find more information about everything we do at www.tree-of-life-counseling.org.

Lectionary and Rota for April 2026				
Date	April 5	April 12	April 19	April 26
	HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II	MORNING PRAYER	HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II	HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II
Lectionary Day	Easter Sunday	Easter 1	Easter 2	Easter 3
Color	White	White	White	White
Officiant	Fr. John Talbert	Eugene Johnston	Fr. John Talbert	Fr. John Talbert
Lectors/ Intercessor	Jan Joseph Leslie Talbert Nikki Shaw	Br. Jacob Luke Geri Moulton Kathe Gieseler	Paula Ross Helen Guthrie Janet Buckley	Jan Joseph Leslie Talbert Br. Jacob Luke
Eucharistic Ministers	Eugene Johnston Kathe Gieseler Connie McLean		Mary Sheffield Lee Dorsey Br. Jacob Luke	Eugene Johnston Kathe Gieseler Connie McLean
Altar Guild	Cindy Gass	Irene Yeager Br. Jacob Luke	Connie Anderson Bootsie Cieutat	Lee Dorsey Kristen Turner
Vestry Tellers	Hugh Tomlin Eddy Velaski	Janet Buckley Kathe Gieseler	Helen Guthrie Connie McLean	Hugh Tomlin Eddy Velaski



Gloria Dei Chorale Presents

Singers Choice Concert



May 1, 2026 7:00 PM
St. John's Episcopal Church
1707 Government Street Mobile AL 36604
Reception to follow in Great Hall
Donations at the door will benefit Gloria Dei Chorale

All of the music for this program was chosen by the members of the Chorale.

These pieces represent the ensemble's personal favorites—works that have inspired us, moved us, and brought us joy in rehearsal and performance. We're delighted to share them with you.





Celebrating March birthdays with
Kristen Turner



For healing grace and continued strength, we pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ: Geri Moulton, Cookie & David Rich, Bootsie Cieutat, Eddy Velaski, Julie Garner, Pat Fulford, Marie Brown, Bob Anderson, Helen Guthrie, Mike and Frances Barbour, Carolyn Pearce, Ashley Garris, Jayson Chestang, Mary Catherine Warren

For our Family and Friends: Lester Taylor, Owen Taylor, Chris Velaski, Steve and Janice Garner, Frank Brown, JoAnn McPhearson, Chris Lion, Colin Guthrie, Alilee Pillman, Andy Williams, Nadine Evans, Calvert Johnson, Brenda Goolsby, Larry DeBert, Anne Redd, Louis Bell, Emily Brown, Dennis Clardy, Sarah Guthrie, Morris Levy, Joey Adams, Judy Lynch, John Knight, Adam Strong, Angie Leon, David Hamilton, Sheila Cassity Granger, Barbara Bonner, David Brunner, Mary Horner, Susan Hansen, Karl Gieseler, Randy Dunn, Sharon Lee Nolan, Peggy Sheffield, Eddie Hun, Katelynn Tillman, Karen Twilley, Nancy Payne, Donna Pigg, Betty Williams, Latecia Cushion Knight, Neal Tourne, Sandy Michel, Paul Nelson, Frances LeBlanc (*priest*)

Our sisters and brothers serving in the Armed Forces:
Nicholas Boykin, , Marcus Rich, Ross Hussmann, Ellis Garner, Bryan Andrews and Austin and Beka Denigan



Jane Sawyer	4/03
Sondra Kahalley	4/03
Frances Barbour	4/22
Hayzlynn Greer	4/28

Contact Us

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Dr. Nikki Shaw
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Vestry:

Janet Buckley (clerk)

Cindy Gass (treasurer)

Kathe Gieseler

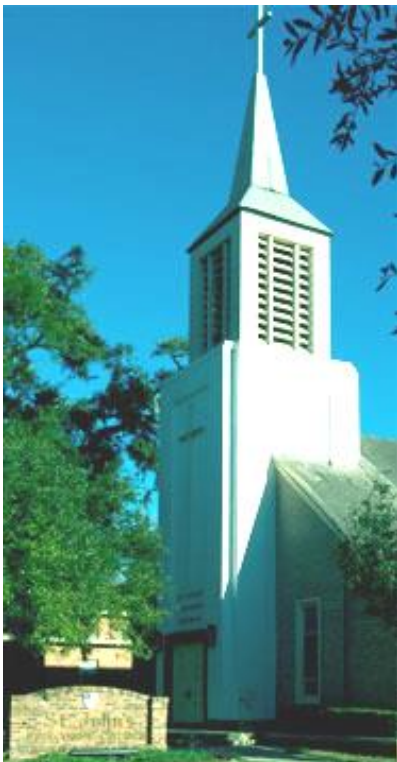
Helen Guthrie

Connie McLean (Senior Warden)

Hugh Tomlin (Junior Warden)

Eddie Velaski

Saint John's Episcopal Church
1707 Government Street
Mobile, Alabama 36604



Come Worship With Us!

Sunday:
10:00AM Holy Eucharist

Other Feasts and Holy Days are observed throughout the year; please see our website for the latest schedule.

Parish Office

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www.stjohnsmobile.org

SAINT JOHN'S: THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN MIDTOWN MOBILE
Grounded in shared sacramental life and moving into the world
to be the hands of Our Lord.