



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

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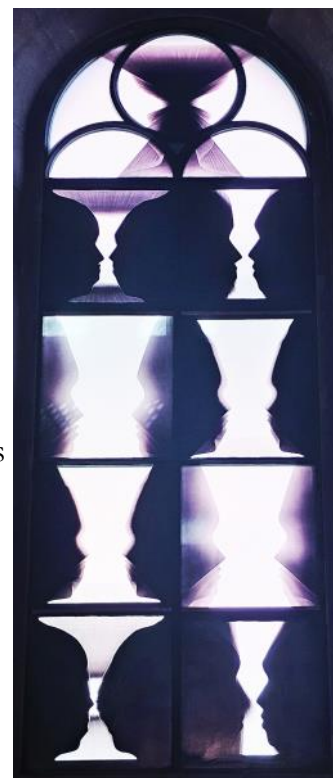
July 2026

At Saint John's it's quite easy to say we have a love for stained glass windows. Our beautiful settings behind the altar and surrounding the nave are a highlight weekly for our members and guests. I have loved the artistry of stained glass for many years as well and make sure to go visit various churches and cathedrals around the world during my travels that feature unique and beautiful displays.

I was grateful to find two churches in a recent stay in Zurich, but the window that fascinated me the most was quite unconventional. Instead of featuring wide arrays of color and depicting biblical and historical scenes... the window was monochromatic - and displayed a variation on the same image over and over and over.

The window (seen here) is on display in Grossmünster, an architectural landmark of the city. While the monastery church building was erected in the 13th century, its windows have changed over the centuries. Most recently, the famous German artist Sigmar Polke was selected by competition to prepare contemporary windows as settings (the last of his great works) and my favorite is titled "Son of Man".

The setting features variations on a classic optical illusion called a "Rubin Vase" in which you can see both two figures facing one another and also a chalice in the negative space between them. I had seen this illusion many times but was struck by its use as an expression of Christ's incarnate work. Without the faces the chalice remains undefined... and without the chalice the faces have no detail. Its ambiguity denotes its mystery.



I am also fascinated by the variations and repetitions of the image. The chalice within the figures bends differently in each frame displaying many variations in the faces we see. I have preached myself and heard many preachers share similar experiences of "seeing themselves in the chalice". This sacramental imagery is what we profess every time we gather to celebrate Holy Eucharist; that we are "living members of the Body of your Son". Through our sacramental feast we celebrate our unity in Christ through his Body and Blood. That our image is defined in the contours of the cup of salvation; and where any two (or three) are gathered together Jesus Christ is in the midst of them.

Truly, the image of God found in all people and the chalice of Christ in our midst is one of the most beautiful settings through which the light of God can shine.

- Rev. John Keith Talbert



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

Adoption of Agenda: A motion was made by Janet Buckley and seconded by Kathe Geisler to accept the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Request for Excuse: Helen Guthrie, Cindy Gass (Treasurer). Additional individual in attendance: Louis Daniel

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

Presentation and Review of Minutes: Minutes from the May 3, 2025 regular meeting and the specially called meeting on May 19, 2026 were presented. A motion was made by Kathe Giesler and seconded by Connie McLean to accept the both sets of minutes. The motion passed.

Reports :

Financial Update: In the absence of Vestry Treasurer Cindy Gass, Kathe Giesler presented the Financial Report for May. Income from plate and pledge was \$7,790 total income from all sources was \$38,041. This reflects a deficit in plate and pledge of \$4,592 of under the budget projected amount. We currently have \$77,475 in the St. Johns checking account. The financial team is still reconciling the change in accounts and the change in accounting software. A more detailed report will be presented when all of the finance changes are completed. A motion was made by Hugh Thomlin and seconded by Eddie Velaski to accept the financial report. The motion passed.

Senior Warden's Report: Senior Warden Connie McLean that Cook's Pest Control will take over the Terminix contract. General insect extermination will continue with in-house spraying. Regarding the wasps: Hugh and Louis went up into the bell tower but could not find any wasps.

Junior Warden's Report: No Report

Ministry Reports

ECW: ECW no report.

Outreach: Janet Buckley gave the report: "Undie Sunday" was a success. The Outreach Committee will be meeting on June 21, 2026 to plan the rest of the year's projects. One Meal Bags are all gone more will be made in July.

Priest's Report: Fr. Talbert reported:

Fr. Talbert spent a week at Beckwith

Bishop Kendrick will be here on July 26th. There will be a confirmation.

Fr. Talbert will not be here on June 21st,

Old Business:

Plaques and Memorials: The plaque Geri Moulton had made to dedicate the church ceiling in memory of Gordon Moulton will be mounted.

Lights for the Parking Lot: still in process

Historical Committee: Janet Buckley and Eddie Velaski indicated interest in being part of the committee; an appeal to the congregation will be made for more members. Main task is to organize and set up display of historical materials and documents in the area at the back of the church that used to house the font.

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

Safeguarding Training: Fr. Talbert reminded Vestry members that this needs to be completed, Nikkie will notify those Vestry members who need to complete this and which modules they need to complete.

Financial Reporting Software: Proposal regarding the Realm contract (new financial records software was discussed. The contract will cost \$188 per month and \$500 for the training and technical assistance.

Renewal of the Gulf Coast Creation Care membership (\$100) is due. It was noted that this is not a line item in the budget. This will be expensed as an External Program expense. Next year's budget will include the line item. Motion was made by Janet Buckley and seconded by Connie McLean to pay the Gulf Coast Creation Care membership amount. Motion passed.

Planning for St. John's Ministries: Discussion was held regarding planning for the future of St. John's both as a congregation and the future of the St. John's outreach/community ministries. Suggestions were made about the possibility of coordinating with other small churches to see if ministry activities can be combined to enhance the impact. A meeting with other church vestries to discuss the possibilities was suggested. This meeting would need to be chaired/facilitated by an "outside" individual, possibly from the Diocesan office. A motion was made to have Fr. John draft a letter to bring together members of the vestries from the small churches in the area to have a discussion about the possibility of combining community outreach ministries with the purpose to increase impact. The letter will be reviewed by the Vestry before it is sent. The motion was made by Janet Buckley and seconded by Kathe Giesler. The motion passed.

Future Vestry Meetings: July 26 (Bishop's visit), Sept 6, Oct 4, Nov 1, 2026

Adjourn and Closing Prayer

Fr. Talbert led the Vestry in the closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 PM. Motion by Hugh Tomlin and seconded by Kathe Gieseler.



Congratulations to our own **Nikki Shaw** on receiving her Lay Preacher License from the Diocesan School for Ministry.



Bishop Kendrick will be with us on **July 26th** for his annual visit. He will be confirming Lilly Talbert as she reaffirms her faith and receives the strengthening presence of the Holy Spirit. Please plan on joining us for this joyous event.





A Healthier View of Fatherhood in Ghana

Samuel is a smallholder cocoa and rice farmer. Together with his wife, Angelina, they are raising nine children, in a rural community in Ghana. Their home once mirrored the traditional structure Samuel grew up in—where roles were strictly defined, fathers were distant and the weight of caregiving fell heavily on mothers.

“I grew up in a large family,” he recalls. “My father had four wives and 30 children. My mother was the second wife and had 13 children. My father did not play any active role in our upbringing. Each woman cared for her own children. I started doing all kinds of menial work as a teenager to meet my needs.”

Without a model of involved fatherhood, Samuel’s early years as a parent followed a similar pattern. “I did not spend much time with my family nor support my wife with household chores. I thought those activities were solely for women and did not care much about it.”

Everything began to shift 18 months ago when his wife Angelina enrolled in Episcopal Relief & Development and Anglican Diocesan Development and Relief Organization’s (ADDRO) Moments That Matter[®] (MTM) program partnership. MTM is an Early Childhood Development (ECD) program that supports the healthy development of children ages 0 to 3 by engaging parents and caregivers with tools for more impactful nurturing through play, nutrition, reading and other activities.

Samuel and his wife Angelina are part of an MTM approach that focuses on creating harmonious relationships within families and fostering economic stability.

Angelina has felt the change deeply. “I feel loved now. My husband is more caring, supportive, and he helps with household work. Before, he didn’t value our daughters’ education. Now, he supports all our children equally.”

Home visits and one-on-one discussions have been particularly meaningful for Samuel. “They give me the privacy to ask questions and learn how to handle family matters better,” he said. “The conversations have changed my perspective on some issues and have really made me a better husband and father.”

The impact is spreading. Samuel says that more men in the community are starting to show affection and participate in household chores. Samuel has even become an advocate among his peers, helping them to build strong families. “I sing, read stories and do interactive activities with my family now,” he said. “We even have a family meeting every Saturday night after supper to talk about our challenges and the responsibilities on our farm.”

Despite the challenges of raising nine children, Samuel is hopeful. “My children trust me now. When I can’t provide something, they understand. There’s love and peace in our home, and they know I’m doing my best.”

Ministries at St. John's



July starts off the hottest part of the year, as those of us who live in the rainforest swamp of Lower Alabama well know. Excessive heat impairs brain function and makes good decisions harder to make. It also causes physical stress which can cause more impulsive behavior. The heat and humidity make everything harder. So stay cool and exercise patience any way you can!

During the month of June, 64% of the 110 sessions at Tree of Life were done at a reduced cost or no copay charged. 13% of sessions were completely free. We are privileged to work with individuals who otherwise would not have been able to get the care they need. Please continue to pray for us as we do this work, and for those that struggle with mental illness.

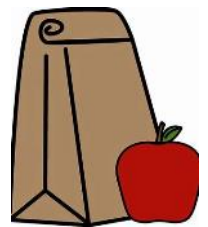
If you know anyone who needs us, we are just a call or text away @ 251- 422- 6592. For more information: www.tree-of-life-counseling.org.



Outreach News

The St. John's Outreach Committee met to discuss and plan projects for the rest of the year.

The **One-Meal Bags** have been meeting a community need: approximately 100 bags we assembled in February and were all distributed within 6 weeks. As a result, the committee decided to have another **One-Meal Bag** assembly day on **July 19th** and as well as one on October 18th. The cost for the contents of the bags will come out of the Outreach Committee budget.



The committee also discussed the Head Start book distribution (planned for once a year), the Christmas Angel Tree project and the food boxes for spring break. Mary Sheffield is going to contact a social worker at Mobile Public Schools to find out if there are any specific needs the local schools need for their uniform closets.

If you have any suggestions or thoughts about possible Outreach projects, contact Mary Sheffield.



Caroline Chestang	07/08
Catherine Warren	07/08
Tina Cieutat	07/13
Regina Harvey-Molyneux	7/20
Carolyn Pearce	07/26
Mike Bonner	07/31



Celebrating June birthdays with: Neva Bache, Lilly Talbert, Fr. John Talbert and Connie McLean



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

For our Family and Friends: James Moore, Kim Richardson, Madison Pittman, Liz Levy Reichman, Ty Lofton, Todd McGill, Chris Velaski, Colin Guthrie, Sheila Velaski, Larry DeBert,, Emily Brown, Dennis Clardy, Sarah Guthrie, Morris Levy, Judy Lynch, Adam Strong, Angie Leon, , Sheila Granger, Barbara Bonner, David Brunner, Karl Gieseler, Nancy Payne, Bonnie Jernigan, Frances LeBlanc(*priest*)

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

Contact Us

Staff:

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Rector
205-354-3699
Louis Daniel
Organist & Choir Director
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Kathe Gieseler
Financial Secretary
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Dr. Nikki Shaw
Office volunteer
office@stjohnsmobile.org

Vestry:

Janet Buckley (clerk)

Cindy Gass (treasurer)

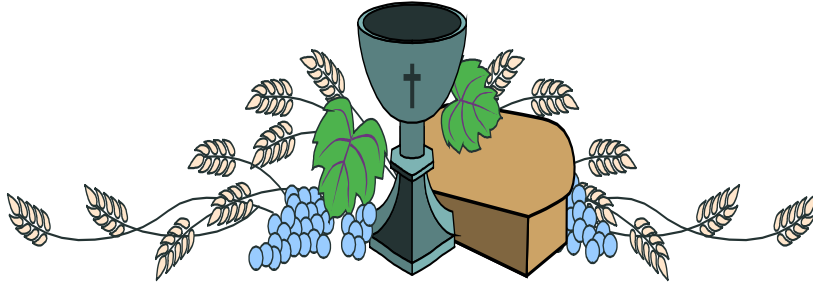
Kathe Gieseler

Helen Guthrie

Connie McLean (Senior Warden)

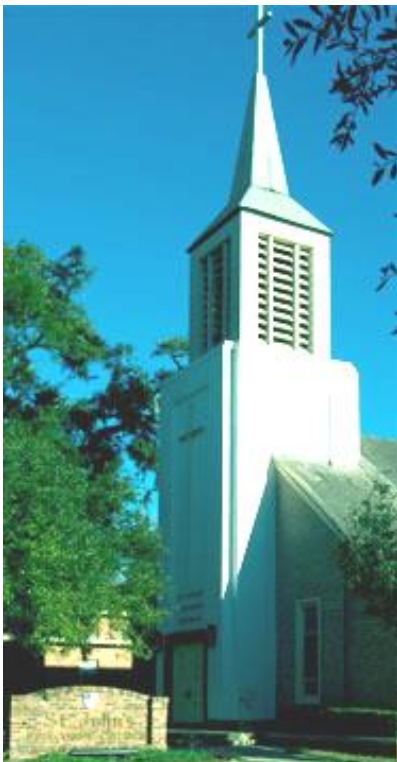
Hugh Tomlin (Junior Warden)

Eddie Velaski



Lectionary and Rota for July 2026				
Date	July 5	July 12	July 19	July 26
	HOLY EUCARIST RITE II	HOLY EUCARIST RITE II	HOLY EUCARIST RITE II	HOLY EUCARIST RITE II
Lectionary Day	Sixth Sunday after Pentecost	Seventh Sunday after Pentecost	Eighth Sunday after Pentecost	Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
Color	Green	Green	Green	Green
Officiant	Fr. John Talbert	Rev. Sara Phillips	Fr. John Talbert	Fr. John Talbert
Lectors/ Intercessor	Nikki Shaw Kathe Gieseler Paula Ross	Helen Guthrie Janet Buckley Jan Joseph	Leslie Talbert Br. Jacob Luke Nikki Shaw	Kathe Gieseler Paula Ross Helen Guthrie
Eucharistic Ministers	Eugene Johnston Kathe Gieseler Connie McLean	Mary Sheffield Lee Dorsey Br. Jacob Luke	Eugene Johnston Kathe Gieseler Connie McLean	Mary Sheffield Lee Dorsey Br. Jacob Luke
Altar Guild	Irene Yeager Br. Jacob Luke	Connie Anderson Bootsie Cieutat	Lee Dorsey Kristen Turner	Cindy Gass
Vestry Tellers	Janet Buckley Kathe Gieseler	Helen Guthrie Connie McLean	Hugh Tomlin Eddy Velaski	Janet Buckley Kathe Gieseler

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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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.