



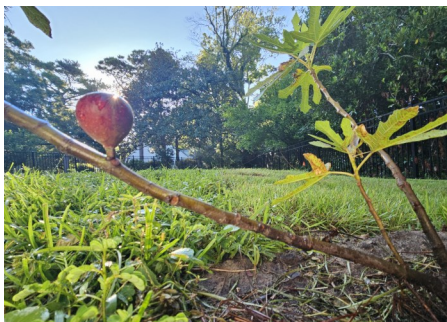
## THE FOURTH EPISTLE SAINT JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH MOBILE, ALABAMA

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

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*“Walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”  
(Colossians 1:10)*



**Our tree has grown fruit!** I am thankful to share this picture of the first fruits of the fig tree St. John's graciously presented to me during the celebration of our new ministry in March of this year. (BTW, the fig was delicious!) Seeing first fruits is an encouraging to me as a sign of our steps forward in this journey together. Yes, I know it's just a tree and even for those of us without green thumbs just giving it a little water and time should produce results...nevertheless we can still celebrate results! The work we have mutually committed to is showing fruit! It is literally “producing” new things. I celebrate this with you and look forward to what we have prepared before us.

Producing fruit is an essential part of our lives as Christians together. Christ taught his disciples in the Gospel of John: “I am the vine, and you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in them, it is they that bear much fruit.” (John 15:5-6). Of the fruit we will bear the Apostle Paul wrote, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” Every Sunday and each moment we gather I continue to see these fruits being born and offered among us increasingly more and I am thankful!

Seeing this growth, and contemplating the significance of this new tree, planted in our commitment to one another, I believe we are witnessing God's restoration of the world in our midst. The stories of the Bible are bookended with amazing stories about trees. In the beginning, the beauty of God's creation is expressed through the creation of Eden and the two trees within it: The Tree of Life (Gen 2:9) and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen 3:3). Without diving too deep down a scriptural rabbit hole, these two trees are the perfect images of the complexity of the human condition. We are hungry for purpose and for meaning and so we reach out and eat from one tree or the other. One fills our hearts and minds with certainty and absolutes...the other an abundance of life.

The other bookend of our story is the Revelation to John and the imagery of creation restored. In St. John's vision he saw a river of life flowing from the throne of God with the lamb in the middle of it's street, with the Tree of Life bearing all kinds of fruit on either side for the healing of the nations. (Rev 22:1-2)

I believe our journey together in this life is finding how we can best live between the trees. That we prayerfully consider our place between the creation of the world and its ultimate fulfillment – the restoration of creation and the reconciliation of all people unto each other and unto God. *(Continued on next page)*

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Many Hebrew scholars refer to mankind as “Shomrei Adamah”, which means Guardians of the Land. Even deeper it calls upon our initial charge as servants of God to be the “tillers of the soil”. We are to cultivate growth, prune when necessary, and work the vineyard of the Lord until the fruit can be harvested. Increasingly I see that work being done here at St. John’s, and I am thankful for it.

Like all living things, Trees also have life cycles. There are times for seeding, then for sprouting. Eventually the seed matures into a sapling and ultimately into full maturity. But over time, mature trees lose their limbs, shed their leaves, and return to the ground where they are the nourishment for the next generation of seeds.

I believe this understanding of death and resurrection is important for all of us to remember. There are times for growth and times for pruning. There are times when our ministries may be sprouting up for the first time, and when they are being carefully laid down. But all is a part of the tree’s life and each part an important step in the journey.

We experience these stages in our own ministries. In the past few years, we have seen limbs laid down to the ground. We have cultivated new soil for seeds to be planted, and we have observed the growing up of sprouts into saplings. When we see ourselves as One body, then we experience all these stages in our life cycle together (Alleluia!) and Christ is present with us in all of it. Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again. This proclamation and renewal of our faith is essential for us in its entirety, not just in part.

This is why I am so grateful that we can see real and present signs of new growth among us. In recent weeks we have finally been able to step back and see the full nature of our church again. We have multiple weddings scheduled ahead of us, a handful of baptisms, there are concerts on the books and outreach projects laid out before us to serve our community – the growth is here and present! I hope you share in my celebration of the new life we have in our midst.

St John’s is a community grafted to the root of Jesse’s tree. Alongside the rest of the faithful we thrive within the whole family of God’s children. We are grateful for the signs of life revealed to us today and live with hope that we may continue to be contributors toward the fulfillment of God’s kingdom on earth. Continue with me the work of raising young believers. Share the truth of God’s love with those that draw near to you and celebrate with me the promise of God’s love and the restoration of all people unto each other and unto him.

The best is yet to come! Let’s go cultivate and harvest more fruit!

In faithful service,  
Rev. John Talbert



### **SAVE THE DATE!**

The Annual Parish Meeting of St John’s Episcopal Church in Mobile, AL will be held on **SUNDAY, November 2nd at 11:15am.** Please plan to join us for services that morning at 10AM and stay afterward for this important gathering of the church.

### **Calling Volunteers for Vestry and Delegates to Diocesan Convention!**

We will need to elect TWO vestry members and TWO delegates during our Parish meeting. Diocesan Convention is in Gulf Breeze Feb 26-28. If you are interested, and to learn more, please contact Fr. John!



## Episcopal Relief & Development is Providing Support after Catastrophic Texas Hill Country Flooding

Episcopal Relief & Development is partnering with the [Episcopal Diocese of Northwest Texas](#) to provide financial support to families in the greater San Angelo, TX area after flooding devastated areas of the Texas Hill Country and the Concho Valley in early July.

Following the initial devastation, San Angelo residents have faced financial stress, especially families without insurance or those who live on limited incomes. The flooding disrupted many lives and destroyed homes and belongings. Many people were displaced and lost their vehicles, causing them to miss work. Others have taken on additional expenses as they deal with storm-related projects.

Within the Episcopal Diocese of Northwest Texas, Episcopal Relief & Development is working with Emmanuel Episcopal Church and other local nonprofits in San Angelo to help families cover the cost of rent for their temporary homes and other unexpected storm-related expenses.

“San Angelo wasn’t heavily covered in the news during the initial phases of this disaster,” said Race Hodges, Program Officer, Episcopal Relief & Development. “But as we spent time with local leaders in the affected areas, it was clear that we should devote more of our resources to this community because the flooding exacerbated the wealth disparities.”

Cash assistance recipients will also receive referrals to mental health services and other support available through the community network.

“We are committed to supporting the San Angelo community with love, mercy, and justice,” said Rt. Rev. J. Scott Mayer, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Northwest Texas. “We appreciate Episcopal Relief & Development’s help in restoring hope after the recent flooding.” Please consider [praying](#) for those affected by the Texas Hill Country flash floods. Donations to the [Flood Response Fund](#) or checks sent to **Episcopal Relief & Development PO Box 5121 Boone, IA 50950 – 0121** will assist local partners with disaster response.



## Update: St. John's Church Building Renovations and Repairs

We are entering into the final weeks of the church renovation.

The new floors are down at the altar and the choir and by the time you read this, the LVT floors should be done in the nave and sacristy. We also have a new inlay floor where the baptismal font will sit.

October will be a busy month!

The organ will be reinstalled in early October and we are waiting for a date for the windows to be reinstalled.

On October 15th, the movers will bring all of the furniture back into the church. Once that is done, we have 2 weeks to set up the church for services.

We are almost there! It has been a long journey, but the results are glorious!



## Ministries at St. Johns



### Outreach



Members of St. John's came together on September 21st after worship to put together 60 "One Meal Bags" for distribution to people in our community. The bags are available to anyone who comes to The Clothes Line Ministry, Tree of Life or just find themselves in need. Thanks to all who helped—many hands make light work!

Our **next Outreach project** will take place on **October 19th** when we will "sticker" books for Headstart. Hope to see you there!



ToLC September recap: From August 25<sup>th</sup> to September 25<sup>nd</sup>, ToLC had a total of 121 client sessions in 22 working days, with 17 sessions at no cost to the client and 83 at a reduced cost or no copay charged. That adds up to \$3970.82 given back to our community in September as an outreach of Saint John's. Who knows what next good things October will bring to ToLC! Halloween is right around the corner, and we like to decorate...so feel free to come around to our corner of the building and check out the spooky decor! If any of your ghouls and goblins need us, we're here for you...call us at (251)422-6592 or find more information at [www.tree-of-life-counseling.org](http://www.tree-of-life-counseling.org). Hoping your Halloween is more treat than trick!



The Clothesline Ministry is in need of **volunteers for a special goal:** purge current women's clothing, pack it up for donation out and start hanging women's clothes. Please come **at 12:30 on Monday 10/6** if you can help





Charlynn Will	10/04
Meagan Clanton	10/08
Bob Anderson	10/11
Marjorie Duhon	10/13
Shirley Hall	10/14
Pam Sheffield	10/24
Chris Velaski	10/24

## September Birthdays



Celebrating September birthdays with—Lauree Rikken who was visiting on birthday Sunday and is a frequent visitor at St John's.



The Rev. Dr. David Powers

From: Paula Ross

Shirley Williams

From: Patricia & George Chandler



If I have missed a birthday , anniversary, prayer list update or change of address, please email me!

Maryroseshef@yahoo.com



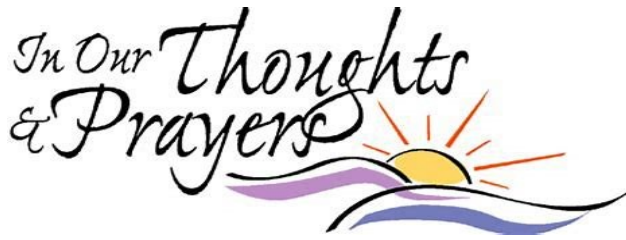
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## Lectionary and Rota for October 2025

Date	October 5	October 12	October 19	October 26
	HOLY EUCCHARIST RITE II	HOLY COMMUNION	HOLY EUCCHARIST RITE II	HOLY EUCCHARIST RITE II
Lectionary Day Color	Seventeenth Sun- day After Pentecost Proper 22 Green	Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost Proper 23 Green	Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost Proper 24 Green	Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost Proper 25 Green
Officiant	Fr. John Talbert	Nikki Shaw	Fr. John Talbert	Fr. John Talbert
Lectors/ Intercessor	Kathe Gieseler Paula Ross Eugene Johnston	Helen Guthrie Janet Buckley Jan Joseph	Leslie Talbert Nikki Shaw	Geri Moulton Kathe Gieseler Paula Ross
Eucharistic Ministers	Lee Dorsey	Lee Dorsey	Connie McLean Mary Sheffield	Lee Dorsey
Altar Guild	Connie Anderson Bootsie Cieutat	Lee Dorsey Kristen Turner	Cindy Gass	Irene Yeager
Vestry Tellers	Charlynn Will Connie Anderson	Helen Guthrie Kathe Gieseler	Connie McLean Mary Sheffield	Eddy Velaski Charlynn Will





For healing grace and continued strength, we pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ:

Bootsie Cieutat, Eddy Velaski, Julie Garner, Pat Fulford, Marie Brown, Emily Johnston, Neva Bache, David Rich, Bob Anderson, Helen Guthrie, Mike and Frances Barbour, Ashley Garris, Carolyn Pearce, Audrey Garris, Jayson Chestang, and Mary Catherine Warren

**For our Family and Friends:** Calvert Johnson, Brenda Goosby, Larry De Bert, Anne Redd, Donnie Chestang, Louis Bell, Lester Taylor, 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, Tiffany Matthews, Betty Williams, Latecia Cushion Knight, Bonnie Jernigan, Britney Butler, Neal Tourné, Sandy Michel, Paul Nelson.

**For victims of war and their families, and members of our Armed Forces and their families:**

Nicholas Boykin, Marcus Rich, Ross Hussmann, Ellis Garner, Bryant Andrews

## Contact Us

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Cindy Gass, *treasurer*

Kathe Gieseler *clerk*

Helen Guthrie

Connie McLean

Mary Sheffield

Eddy Velaski, *junior warden*

Charlynn Will, *senior warden*