

SAINT JOHNS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

November 2nd, 2025



Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with us as we take counsel together for the renewal and mission of your Church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Rector's Report:

I am grateful to be gathering with you again for another Parish Meeting. These past 3 years have been a blessing to me as we have grown deeper in relationship and furthered our ministry here in the heart of Mobile. This year has been quite eventful!



I am thankful to have been called earlier this year as your Rector. Our Celebration of New Ministry highlighted the many ways that the people of St John's are living out their faith and how we will continue to walk together as we discern God's call for us. Thank you for committing yourself to this ministry with me. I believe God's good work is being done through St. John's every day.

A highlight of this past year was our visit by Bishop Russell in June. Most often, a Bishop's visit feels more official, having candidates prepared for confirmation, reception and reaffirmation. But this year, with prayerful consideration, we chose to spend our time together praying for healing. As we gathered that day, I truly felt the warm heart of St. John's – we are a family church. Those that sit in the pews beside you are not just fellow members, they are your brothers and sisters...mothers and fathers... we look with love at the face of all the children. I give thanks daily to be a part of this incredible place. Bishop Russell will be back with us on June 14th this coming year.

As we draw near the end of 2025, I am excited to share that we continue our patterns of growth. Our average Sunday attendance has increased steadily by 3-4 people each of the last 2 years from 29 to 32, and now 32 to 35 (and recently we've had 40+ people regularly on Sunday mornings). These signs of our growth come from your sharing the love you have found here with others.

We are a welcoming church, and I encourage you to offer invitations to those that you would love to come to find their family here as well.

Beyond St. John’s I continue to serve our Diocese and National Church. Here in the Gulf Coast I share our ministry with Beckwith Camp and Conference center as a Summer Camp Dean, provide music at diocesan events as a part of the clergy band, offer pastoral services to the Episcopal community at West Minister Village in Spanish Fort, teach occasional bible studies to the residents of Murray House, and serve on the Board of Directors at Wilmer Hall Children’s Home.

On a national level, I am grateful to serve as a deputy of the Diocese and as a member of General Conventions Task Force on Artificial Intelligence and Intellectual Property.

In the office at St. John’s, I am grateful to have the support of a small but wonderful staff. Each week Nikki Shaw volunteers her time helping us prepare bulletins and prayers. Mary Sheffield heralds our ministries by collecting and producing our monthly newsletter. Kathe Gieseler was brought onboard this Spring and has made incredible progress simplifying our accounts as a financial secretary. All of these women help ease the burden as they share the load. I also cherish my friendship and work with Louis Daniel, who regularly exceeds the requirements of the many hats he wears around here and, in my opinion, exemplifies the spirit of St. John’s to all those who come knocking at our door. I am thankful that our church offers the support we need to organize such a great team!

As your pastor, I would like to reiterate the invitation to call me when you need to talk. Pastoral Care remains the highest priority of my priestly ministry.

Whenever you are sick, in the hospital, or just lonely or need someone to take the time and listen – I am here for you. There are many struggles across our lives and none of us should have to go through them alone.

I look forward with hope toward the coming year as we move back into the Nave and resume worship in our beautiful building. While the time we have spent in worship in the Great Hall has been blessed – I share with many of you a desire to be back across the Garden. We are also preparing for multiple baptisms and a couple weddings already in 2026! It will be great to share these holy celebrations together!

Thank you again for having me as your Priest, it is a blessing to me walking beside you as we discover what God has in store for our lives.

In faithful service,
Rev. John Talbert, Rector

2025 Financial Report:

For the 2025 year, St. John’s regular finances are operating within budget. This has been an exceptional year due to the beginning and ongoing construction of our church building and a couple of large maintenance issues. We are grateful to have begun the year with additional money in the operating account to offset these expenses. By the end of the year, the vestry hopes not only to be very near to our budget but also to be debt free.



In the last 12 months, St. John’s budgeted expenses have totaled **\$244,893.**
Over the same period, St. John’s budgeted income has totaled **\$238,105.**

The finance committee of the vestry expects our normally budgeted expenses to increase slightly and be closer to **\$250,000**.

It is important to note, the income that supports our budget is split roughly **60%/40%** between our pledges and our non-pledged income. Non-pledged income includes the loose plate, givers that have not submitted a pledge, and also one-time special gifts (memorials, bequeaths, special offerings, etc.) For the financial stability and health of the church, the goal for this split should be somewhere between **80%/20%** and **90%/10%**.

Recently, thanks to the generosity of our friends and in memory of those we have lost, St. John's has been sufficiently funded at our current levels of ministry. However, for us to continue with confidence, **we strongly encourage everyone to submit a pledge for 2026**. We believe that if everyone that normally gives submits a pledge, we can reach that goal.

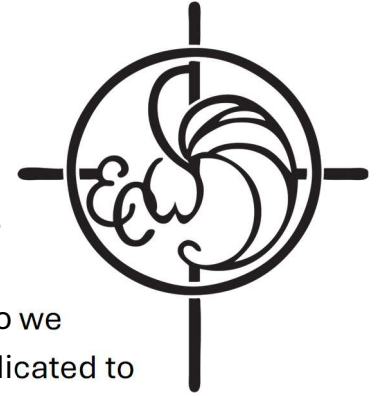
Please support St John's for the coming year by filling out your 2025 pledge card. To help our vestry with the budgeting process, we need all pledges to be returned by Sunday, December 7th.

Additionally, the finance committee will be hosting a "lunch-and-learn" about Estate planning on **Wednesday, January 14th from 12PM to 1:30PM**. Fr. John will be answering questions about Medical Directives, Funeral Planning, Writing a Will and Estate Planning. These are important for all of us to consider regardless of our current health or age. (Fr. John and the finance committee will also be preparing gourmet pasta and meatballs!)

Thank you for your stewardship of God's gifts,
The Finance Committee of St. John's

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) of St. John's counts as its members all the women of St. John's. Our mission and purpose are to provide opportunities for fellowship, so that we may get to know each other better; kindle a spirit of giving among our members, so we may help each other when in need; and to remain dedicated to service as we help Fr. John and the ministers of St. John's in any way we can.



2025 has been a good year! We hosted receptions multiple times; in March as we celebrated Father John becoming our new Rector, in June for Bishop Russell's visit with us, and several other times following funeral services. Hosting our 4th Sunday potlucks is also a great treat and wonderful fellowship time for our parish family!

We continue to remember our Murray House residents with Christmas gifts each year and plan to do so again next month! Bootsie and Tina Cieutat also send out cards on behalf of the ECW to our church members, remembering them when ill and sometimes just to say we are 'thinking of them.'

The ECW remains ready to serve as God's hands and feet whenever we are needed, remaining prayerful so that all we do is for our love for St John's and to the glory of Christ's name. We look forward to continuing our faithful service to St. John's in 2026!

To the Glory of God!

Irene Yeager, President

The Altar Guild of St. John's

The Altar Guild of St. John's has continued its ministry of preparing and maintaining the altar and sanctuary for all worship services and special liturgical events during this year. Our mission is to serve God and the congregation through reverent care of the liturgical items and sacred spaces of our church.



We currently have seven members: Lee Dorsey, Kristen Turner, Irene Yeager, Bootsie Cieutat, Connie Anderson, Jacob Taylor, and Cindy Gass. **We are always open to welcoming new members!**

Throughout the year, the Altar Guild was responsible for: preparing the altar for all weekly Sunday services, and other special services; cleaning and maintaining the linens, chalices, and candles; decorating the sanctuary for liturgical seasons; assisting with flower arrangements; and replacing supplies such as wine, wafers, candles, and linens as needed.

We extend a special heartfelt thanks to our faithful Altar Guild members who give their time each week, especially Lee and Kristen who get it ready for each service!

It is our privilege to serve the church and support its worship life through the work of the Altar Guild. With God's help and the dedication of our members, we look forward to another year of meaningful service.

Faithfully submitted,

Cindy Gass, Altar Guild

Music Ministries

This year has been a good year for the music ministry here at St. John's, and we are thankful for the blessings, fellowship, and opportunities for worship through music. The Choir and I both are excited to "hear" the vast improvements that have been made in the acoustics of the church building. Also visually beautiful, these improvements open a new world of possibilities for the role of music in worship, in the life of the church, and in its outreach into the community.



While we have enjoyed the time worshiping in the Great Hall, like all of you, we eagerly await our return to the nave and look forward to ringing the rafters in song! The repairs to and reinstallation of the organ are on track to be completed soon. The 1898 Kimball Organ is having the tuning stoppers at the ends of three ranks of flutes releathered (replacing 100+ year old leather) and a thorough cleaning of the reed pipe ranks at the workshop.

Additionally, every other pipe has received a bit of onsite loving care as they are each cleaned and reinstalled. There was some unfortunate, accidental mechanical damage to the instrument which occurred during construction, and this is also being repaired. When all the work is completed, the instrument will sound in the newly renovated space once again as the builders who created it intended. Upon playing a few notes the other day, I was able to hear in the improved nave, nuances of the original voicing of the pipes I've never heard in all the years I've played the instrument. Soft delicate stops are able to sound throughout the entire church as standalone sounds without getting lost, and the stops for hymn singing are full, sonorous, and

warm. It will literally be heard again by everyone as it has not been heard in at least a generation.

The Choir is about to begin preparations for the holidays, to include a special service of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 14th, and other music for the season.

Do you enjoy singing and fellowship? Perhaps you may have thought about joining choir or even have sung in the choir sometime prior. If so, consider joining us for rehearsals on Tuesday evening at 6:00pm. We generally have a 45-minute evening rehearsal, and then a brief warmup rehearsal on Sunday morning. If you want to “dip your toes in the water first,” please consider a short-term commitment during the Christmas season.

There is much to be thankful for as St. John’s moves into 2026, and I believe that we have some bright days ahead of us.

Blessings to each of you,
Louis Daniel, Organist/Choirmaster

Outreach Ministry

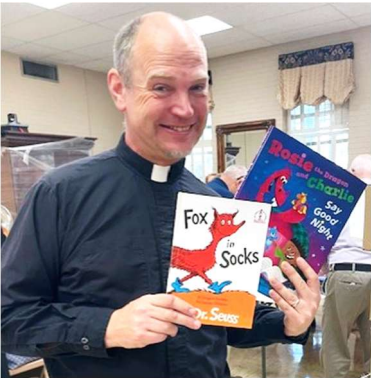
The Outreach Committee seeks to provide regular opportunities for the entire congregation to share in serving those outside the community. Thank you for your participation in these important projects over the past 12 months:

Angel Tree: The committee coordinated with the Activities Director at Ashland Place Health and



Rehabilitation to organize a list of appropriate items we could give to their residents. As a church we gathered 60 gifts and Christmas cards in December of 2024 and delivered them to the residents of Ashland Place!

Book Distribution: Across our outreach project in May and October of 2025; St. John’s provided the funds for 900 books to be ordered from First Book’s National Book Bank. As a church we gathered after services to include our prayerful stickers which read “With hopes you will become a lifelong learner. From St. John’s Episcopal Church “. All 900 books were then given to Mobile Community Action Head Start for the children to take home and keep.



One Bag One Meal: As a parish located on Government Street in Mid-town Mobile, we have many individuals that live not knowing where their next meal will come from. In response to this need, St. John’s prepared 120 Individual bags this year, each containing non-perishable food to those that come to our doors in hunger.

We give away multiple bags every week!

McKemie Place: St. John’s partners in ministry with the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer to provide one dinner a month for the ladies at McKemie Place. The mission of McKemie Place is to provide a safe haven, spiritual encouragement, and access to resources that help meet the needs and promote the well-being of unaccompanied women experiencing

homelessness. St. John’s normally provides a dessert and beverages for the meal, as well as all necessary paper goods (plates, napkins, disposable cutlery).

Murray House: Each week following services, members of the Outreach committee deliver the flowers from the altar to Murrey House so that they may be enjoyed by their residents throughout the week.

In addition to the above projects our Outreach Committee also designated supporting funds to these organizations in 2025: Episcopal Relief and Development, Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy, Episcopal Migration Ministries, Dwell Mobile, and the Diocesan Hurricane Fund.

For all God’s children,
Janet Buckley, Outreach Chair

Senior Warden Report

Dear St John’s Family,

The past year has truly been one to remember in the life of our church. At the beginning of the church year, we were blessed to have Fr. John Talbert serve as our Priest-in-Charge. His leadership and presence provided guidance and stability during a time of transition for our congregation.

In February, Fr. John was officially called to be our Rector. This significant step marked an important milestone for our church community. His acceptance of



this role has brought continuity and renewed hope as we navigated the challenges and opportunities of the past year together.

At the start of the year, our church faced significant challenges, including a severe termite infestation and lingering damage to the roof caused by a hurricane. These issues required us to temporarily relocate our worship services from the church sanctuary to the Great Hall. Despite being out of our usual building, this period has fostered a sense of closeness among our congregation. The closer quarters have encouraged stronger connections and deeper growth within our church family, turning adversity into an opportunity for unity and resilience.

The past year has truly highlighted the dedication and work ethic of both the vestry and the renovation committee. Throughout this period, an exceptional amount of time and effort has been invested in pursuing our goal of renovating the church. This commitment has not only propelled the renovation project forward but has also led to the identification of numerous repair and maintenance needs within the building. As a direct result of these renovations, the church itself has undergone significant improvements. We anticipate that, by the end of 2025, we will be able to return to our sanctuary and resume worshiping in our renewed space.

It has been my privilege to serve as your senior warden this past year. This has been a very busy, yet productive year, and I want to thank each of you for your support and encouragement. I will continue to serve St. John’s as a choir member, and as needed to begin archiving our records.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlynn Will

Junior Warden Report

During the last year, we have had several building maintenance issues that are typical with a 69-year-old building. These do not include the church repairs that are ongoing.



Among the items that have required repair or replacement are: installing a new roof over parlor/office area of the church, installing a new leaking gas valve on heating boiler, installing a new domestic water heater, purchasing exterior lighting to be installed on east side of Sunday School Building (we are still in process of having them installed), and repairing and cleaning out the gutters (most of them) of the Office/Great Hall/Sunday School Building.

Additionally, there are several items that are still pending to be completed this year: There is additional work that needs to be done which includes: finishing the light installation on East side of Sunday School building, replacing the heating hot water boiler, and completing the roof/gutter clean out at the front of the Great Hall.

It has been a pleasure serving as your Junior Warden, and I'd like to give special thanks to Louis Daniels for meeting regularly with our sub-contractors to help get this work accomplished.

Thank you for your support,
Eddy Velaski, Junior Warden

Tree of Life Counseling

Tree of Life Counseling began seeing clients in the former Thee Store space in January 2021, at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. From the beginning, our mission has been to provide mental health services to people in our community who would otherwise be unable to access them. We strive to make it as easy as possible—if a client can only come after work, we offer sessions outside of regular hours. If a client is in crisis during the weekend, we provide support then as well. For those with transportation challenges, we offer telehealth sessions over Zoom so they don't have to travel to the office. Whatever the barrier, we work to break it down!



Over the past 12 months, Tree of Life Counseling provided a total of 1,241 client hours, including 788 hours at a reduced rate or with no copay, and 178 hours provided completely free of charge. 78% of the clients receiving services through Tree of Life may have not otherwise been able to access the mental health care they need.

We consider our work a calling, and could not do so without the generosity of our Saint John's family. Your offering allows us the space we need to do the work we love! Thank you! We would also like to thank everyone who has donated items to our clients; your contributions are greatly appreciated. If you or a loved one needs our services, or if you would simply like to learn more about our work or see our office space, we would love for you to come by! Takoda would love to see you!

With grateful hearts,
Lee Dorsey and Kristen Turner

The Clothesline Ministry

In 2022 the Vestry and Clergy of St. John's Episcopal Church extended an invitation to Deacon Terry Goff to bring the clothing ministry which yearly supplied clothes for Project

Homeless Connect to St. John's. These clothes were formerly housed in the basement of Trinity Episcopal Church and are organized throughout multiple rooms in the 2nd floor of St. John's Sunday School building.



In September 2022 the clothes were moved and organized into departments (rooms) and the Clothesline Ministry was born and opened in October 2022. At that time the ministry was open two Tuesdays a month and was staffed by Deacon Terry and Ellen Pitman, a parishioner from the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer. Since then, the ministry has grown in supply and need to be open every Tuesday from 10 am to 1pm with 9 servant leaders (and growing) who volunteer their time on a rotation. Our faithful volunteers come to us from the congregations of St. John's, St. Luke's, All Saints, Redeemer and occasionally as guests from other faith communities of Mobile.

We serve an average of 20 people every Tuesday. So far in 2025, the Clothesline Ministry has welcomed approximately 765 guests and given away 7659 items of clothing. Our guests/friends come from all walks of life. Many are unhoused, some have experienced loss of homes due to fire or prolonged illnesses, some are re-entering society after incarceration, and some are entering the workforce and need suitable attire for job interviews or employment.

The gifts of clothing come mostly from local Episcopal Churches and friends of our volunteers who routinely solicit clothing as needed, especially men's clothing. Many churches in our Diocese also organize an "Undie Sunday", collecting new undergarments and gifts of treasure to support the continued work of the Clothesline Ministry.

On behalf of all our Clothesline Friends and our team of volunteers, we wish to say "Thank you" to the faithful community of St. John's Episcopal Church. Your generous gifts of space and donations continue to provide friendship, dignity, and respect for those in need in our Mobile Community. Thank you for the opportunity to experience meeting Christ each week as we serve his people.

Matthew 23:40: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me".

With gratitude and peace,

Rev. Deacon Terry L. Goff

Gulf Coast Creation Care

St. John's is a faithful supporter of Gulf Coast Creation Care, an ecumenical coalition that seeks to educate and help individuals respond to climate-related threats to our area.

Over the past 12 months, Gulf Coast Creation Care has furthered its mission and ministry in a variety of important ways:



We partnered with USA Health Wellness to offer plant-based cooking class and the “Lower Alabama Native Plant Society” to offer plant walks at two distinctive locations. GCCC remains an ongoing partner in the ACT Initiative for the Gulf Research Program at the National Academy of Science, kindled support for “Drive Electric Alabama” and their showcase of electric vehicles and co-sponsored an Energy Efficiency Workshop for homeowners with the help of the Mobile County Health Department.

We gathered as a faith community to celebrate St. Francis day in the gardens of All Saints Episcopal Church and hosted a Walking Prayer Meditation at Mobile Botanical Gardens. We also installed four Forest Therapy Trails across the Gulf Coast area.

Our leaders offered educational opportunities at the UU Climate Justice Revival at Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship and at the Daughters of the King Assembly at Beckwith Camp and Conference Center. We participated in a yearlong virtual study of Ayana Johnson’s book “What if We Get It Right?”. We hosted a conversation with ecologist and spiritual leader Dr. Marcus Briggs-Cloud of the Myskoke Ecovillage, and engaged with participants at Mobile’s Earth Day event at Chickasabogue Park.

We continue to offer resources and presentations for congregations around the Gulf Coast as we are invited to do so. I am grateful for St. John’s continued support of this important work and look forward to sharing more opportunities with all of you as we move forward together into 2026.

For the beauty of the Earth,
Mary Sheffield, GCCC Member and church liaison from St. John’s

THE CLERGY AND STAFF OF ST. JOHN’S

The Rt. Reverend J. Russell. Kendrick, *Bishop of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast*
The Reverend John Talbert, *Rector* (frjohn@stjohnsmobile.org)
Mr. Louis F. Daniel, *organist & choir director* (music@stjohnsmobile.org)
Ms. Kathe Gieseler, *financial secretary* (finance@stjohnsmobile.org)
Dr. Nikki Shaw, *office volunteer* (office@stjohnsmobile.org)

THE VESTRY AND WARDENS OF ST. JOHN’S

Class of 2025:

Ms. Connie Anderson, Ms. Mary Sheffield
and Ms. Charlynn Will, *senior warden*.

Class of 2026:

Ms. Helen Guthrie and Ms. Kathe Gieseler, *clerk*

Class of 2027:

Ms. Connie McLean and Mr. Eddy Velaski, *junior warden*.

Ms. Cindy Gass, *treasurer*.

2026 NOMINEES (Pre-submitted)

VESTRY

Hugh Tomlin and Janet Buckley

CONVENTION DELEGATES

Eugene Johnston and Jeannie Velaski



This year we are excited to be organizing a Parish Christmas pageant! Ms. Lilly Talbert will be serving as our director, and we will need children of all ages to join in the celebration!

Mary and Joseph
Baby Jesus
Angels
Shepherds and Animals
Three Magi
An Innkeeper and the Star

We will hold one rehearsal following services on December 21st
The pageant will be presented during our Christmas Eve services on December 24th at 4PM.

Sign up to join the fun on the bulletin board!



Winter'25/Spring'26/Summer'26

Sunday, December 14th @10AM – Lessons and Carols
Wed, December 24th @4PM – Christmas Eve Services
Thurs, December 25th @11AM – Christmas Morning
Wed, January 14th @12PM – Estate Planning Luncheon
Wed, February 18th @12PM and 6PM – Ash Wednesday
February 26-28 – Diocesan Convention in Gulf Breeze
Sunday, March 29th @10AM – Palm Sunday
Thursday, April 2nd @6PM – Maundy Thursday
Friday, April 3rd @6PM – Good Friday
Sunday, April 5th @10AM – Easter Sunday
Saturday, April 9th – Deacon Ordinations at Cathedral
Sunday, May 24th @10AM – Pentecost Sunday
Sunday, June 14th – Bishop Russell's Visit