

JANUARY 13, 2016

The Report of the 122nd Annual Meeting



Saint John's Episcopal Church

DIocese of Mississippi ✠ City of Laurels

The EPISCOPAL ✠ ANGLICAN Church serving JONES COUNTY since 1894 welcomes you!

THE REV. FR. JEFFREY W. REICH, RECTOR
DERRICK MEADOR, ORGANIST-CHOIRMASTER



THE VESTRY

RICHARD FOLLIS, SR. WARDEN

TRENT MULLOY, JR. WARDEN

JUNIORS

JENNIFER MYRICK
KEITH RUSHING
HUGH STANCILL

MIDLERS

WENDY HERRING
RAND McLAUGHLIN
ADAM SAULS

SENIORS

LAURA CERRA
GEOF GALAHER
MADISON LINDSEY

ORDER OF THE MEETING

CREDENTIALS & CALL TO ORDER

The meeting is officially called to order by Fr. Reich (chairman of annual meeting) when it is determined that there are communicants enough plus vestry to hold the annual parish meeting.

- PRESENTATION OF NOMINATED PERSONS FOR VESTRY
 - A brief bio for each pre-nominated person below*
- CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR/CLOSE OF NOMINATIONS
- FIRST BALLOT FOR NEW CLASS OF VESTRYMEN
- REPORT OF THE SENIOR WARDEN
 - FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF 2015 & 2016
- SECOND BALLOT FOR NEW CLASS OF VESTRYMEN (IF NEEDED)
- 2015 IN REVIEW
- THIRD BALLOT FOR NEW CLASS OF VESTRYMEN (IF NEEDED)
- RECTOR'S ADDRESS
- NEW BUSINESS
- MOTION TO ADJOURN

BIOGRAPHIES FOR NOMINEES

- **GEOF GALAHER** - I was born and raised in Laurel. I was baptized at St John's and attended church through my young life. I went to school in Chicago where I met my wife, Chris. We both practice Chiropractic here in Laurel, which was my father's practice. We have three boys Jacob, Logan, and Mic...whom we are very proud of. I serve as Usher Guild chairman. My family and I have been attending St John's since Father Jeff began his ministries at our church.
- **GREG BENNETT** - I have served on the vestry at St. James Episcopal Church, Greenville; St. John's in Laurel; and Nativity, Greenwood. I also served as Stewardship Chair and Finance Committee chair at St. Jame's Episcopal Church and Finance chair at Nativity. I previously served as Treasurer at St. John's in the late 90's. Community involvement includes Rotary club, 100 club, EDA board, United Way board member.
- **GINA GATEWOOD** - My husband, Ronnie and I have been members of St. John's since 1994. We are the parents of 2 children, Shelby and Tyler. During my time as a member of St. John's, I have served as a Sunday School Teacher, participated on the Altar Guild, and served on the Vestry. I am currently an active participant of the Pastoral Care Food Committee.

REPORT OF THE CLERK (VESTRY ATTENDANCE 2015)

| | PRESENT | ABSENT | | PRESENT | ABSENT |
|-----------------|---------|--------|---|---------|--------|
| Laura Cerra | 5 | 5 | Jennifer Myrick | 7 | 3 |
| Geof Galaher | 6 | 4 | Keith Rushing | 9 | 1 |
| Madison Lindsey | 1 | 9 | Hugh Stancill | 5 | 5 |
| Wendy Herring | 10 | 0 | Richard Follis | 10 | 0 |
| Rand McLaughlin | 9 | 1 | Trent Mulloy | 5 | 5 |
| Adam Sauls | 9 | 1 | *** The Vestry did not meet in July and October | | |

PLEDGING REPORT

PAROCHIAL REPORT

| YEAR | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| TOTAL PLEDGED | \$308,555 | \$327,440 | \$306,410 | \$328,120 | \$347,165 | \$342,920 | \$352,235 |
| TOTAL PLEDGES | 71 | 74 | 69 | 70 | 76 | 70 | 70 |
| INCREASING | 28 | 28 | 27 | 24 | 16 | 22 | 20 |
| DECREASING | 8 | 10 | 12 | 6 | 9 | 6 | 6 |
| NOT CHANGING | 20 | 30 | 31 | 36 | 45 | 33 | 36 |
| NEW | 15 | 12 | 6 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 6 |
| DROPPED | 7 | 9 | 11 | 8 | 6 | 13 | 6 |

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| TOTAL ACTIVE BAPTIZED MEMBERS | 162 | 176 | 183 | 201 | 211 | 215 | 221 |

ATTENDANCE DATA

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| AVERAGE SUNDAY ATTENDANCE | 125 | 135 | 153 | 155 | 146 | 165 | 163 |
| TOTAL SUNDAY ATTENDANCE | 6482 | 6971 | 8212 | 8055 | 7512 | 8584 | 8485 |
| TOTAL WEEKDAY ATTENDANCE | 2219 | 1275 | 1260 | 2304 | 2153 | 5182 | 4706 |
| EASTER ATTENDANCE | 324 | 294 | 380 | 329 | 292 | 291 | 287 |
| CHRISTMAS ATTENDANCE | 237 | 286 | 335 | 275 | 291 | 314 | 304 |

OCCASIONAL SACRAMENTS

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| BAPTISMS | 9 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| CONFIRMATIONS/RECEPTIONS | 18 | 13 | 0 | 14 | 10 | 7 | 0 |
| MARRIAGES | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| HOLY UNCTION | 102 | 196 | 203 | 309 | 315 | 323 | 342 |
| RECONCILIATION OF A PENITENT | 9 | 15 | 23 | 34 | 25 | 31 | 26 |
| BURIALS FROM PARISH | 5 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 7 |

EUCCHARIST & DAILY OFFICES

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| TOTAL SUNDAY EUCCHARIST | 68 | 105 | 109 | 112 | 106 | 109 | 103 |
| TOTAL WEEKDAY EUCCHARIST | 28 | 14 | 13 | 60 | 71 | 64 | 78 |
| TOTAL PRIVATE EUCCHARIST | 67 | 103 | 148 | 205 | 217 | 223 | 247 |
| TOTAL WEEKDAY OFFICES | 3 | 10 | 32 | 144 | 176 | 117 | 87 |

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Accrual Basis

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2015

| | <u>Dec 31, 15</u> |
|---|--------------------------|
| ASSETS | |
| Current Assets | |
| Checking/Savings | |
| 110-1 · Rector Discretionary Acct. | 6,121.26 |
| 110-3 · Bancorp Special Projects Acct | 7,034.37 |
| 1110 · Accounts Receivable | 4,677.69 |
| 113 · BANCORPSOUTH-OPR ACCT. | 36,519.30 |
| 114 · BANCORPSOUTH-SPECIAL ACCOUNT | 996.34 |
| 115 · BANCORPSOUTH OPR MM | 5,471.59 |
| 116 · BANCORPSOUTH-SPECIAL MM | <u>142,108.60</u> |
| Total Checking/Savings | 202,929.15 |
| Accounts Receivable | |
| 1200 · *Accounts Receivable | 1,000.00 |
| Total Accounts Receivable | <u>1,000.00</u> |
| Other Current Assets | |
| 12100 · Prepaid Expenses | 4,302.23 |
| 12101 · Pledges Receivable | <u>38,945.00</u> |
| Total Other Current Assets | <u>43,247.23</u> |
| Total Current Assets | 247,176.38 |
| Other Assets | |
| 111 · Regions Morgan & Keegan Trust | 470,582.57 |
| Total Other Assets | <u>470,582.57</u> |
| TOTAL ASSETS | <u>717,758.95</u> |
| LIABILITIES & EQUITY | |
| Liabilities | |
| Current Liabilities | |
| Accounts Payable | |
| 2000 · Accounts Payable | 7,005.40 |
| Total Accounts Payable | <u>7,005.40</u> |
| Other Current Liabilities | |
| 202 · Prepaid Pledges | 4,000.00 |
| 209 · Payroll tax-Medicare | 287.16 |
| 210 · FICA WITHHELD | 1,227.86 |
| 211 · FEDERAL INCOME TAX WITHHELD | 1,040.00 |
| 212 · STATE INCOME TAX WITHHELD | 955.00 |
| 221 · Other Current Liabilities | <u>1,128.64</u> |
| Total Other Current Liabilities | <u>8,638.66</u> |
| Total Current Liabilities | <u>15,644.06</u> |
| Total Liabilities | 15,644.06 |
| Equity | |
| 302 · FUND BALANCE | 83,278.37 |
| 302.1 · Fund Balance Regions Trust acct | 470,582.57 |
| 311 · BUILDING FUND | 5,784.20 |
| 312 · Special Projects | 6,989.38 |
| 313 · CHISHOLM LAY LEADERSHIP FUND | 2,523.71 |
| 315 · CLERGY CONT. ED · SABBATICAL FU | 10,535.16 |
| 318 · Columbarium Fund | 26,000.00 |
| 321 · MEMORIAL FUND | 1,440.00 |
| 324 · Sisterhood of St. John | 109.00 |
| 325 · ECW IN & OUT | 401.96 |
| 325.1 · ECW Wicker Room | 142.00 |
| 327 · EYC ACTIVITES FUND | 9,322.70 |
| 329 · FINE ARTS FUND | 1,997.17 |
| 331 · FLOWER FUND | 945.33 |
| 336 · JEAN LINDSEY CHOIR FUND | 3,600.00 |
| 351 · OUTREACH MINISTRIES TRUST FUND | <u>18,175.85</u> |

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Accrual Basis

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2015

| | <u>Dec 31, 15</u> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 353 - PARISH ACTIVITIES FUND | 2,271.88 |
| 354 - PLEDGES CURRENT YR UNCOLLECTED | 38,945.00 |
| 355 - RECTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND | 5,971.26 |
| 359 - SPECIAL OFFERING FUND | 630.30 |
| 365 - WELCH ACOLYTE FUND | 884.13 |
| 382 - ST. JOHN'S ENDOW TRUST -OTHER | 43,289.72 |
| Net Income | <u>-31,692.62</u> |
| Total Equity | <u>702,114.89</u> |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY | <u>717,758.95</u> |

Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual

January through December 2015

| | Jan - Dec 15 | Budget | over under | PRYTD 2015 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Income | | | | |
| 401 · PLEDGE - CURRENT YEAR | 307,837.98 | 338,000.00 | -30,162.02 | 322393.64 |
| 402 · PLATE OFFERING | 64,672.07 | 50,000.00 | 14,672.07 | 71919.95 |
| 403 · PLEDGE-PRIOR YEAR | | | | 5110.00 |
| 407 · OPERATING MISCELLANEOUS | 15,222.89 | 1,000.00 | 14,222.89 | 1008.85 |
| 408 · SPECIAL ACCOUNTS RECEIPTS | 0.00 | 500.00 | -500.00 | 69.00 |
| 409 · INTEREST EARNED | 4,705.87 | 26,000.00 | -21,294.13 | 115.39 |
| 410 · OPERATING FUND RAISING | 0.00 | 10,000.00 | -10,000.00 | 12770.10 |
| 411 · Income for Capital Improvements | 10,000.00 | | 10,000.00 | |
| 412 · Income for Rector Housing | 8,640.00 | 8,640.00 | 0.00 | 8640.00 |
| Total Income | 411,078.81 | 434,140.00 | -23,061.19 | 422026.93 |
| Expense | | | | |
| 602 · Rector Stipend | 53,124.96 | 54,000.00 | -875.04 | 53124.96 |
| 603 · HOUSING | 37,000.08 | 37,000.00 | 0.08 | 37000.08 |
| 604 · Health Insurance-Rector | 24,905.25 | 25,500.00 | -594.75 | 25646.00 |
| 605 · PENSION-Rector | 17,365.56 | 17,500.00 | -134.44 | 17414.80 |
| 606 · PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE | 1,999.92 | 2,000.00 | -0.08 | 1999.92 |
| 608 · TRAVEL | 4,350.00 | 4,350.00 | 0.00 | 4350.00 |
| 612 · Assistant to Rector | 15,450.00 | 15,450.00 | 0.00 | 15450.00 |
| 622 · SEXTON SALARY | 19,788.00 | 19,000.00 | 788.00 | 19063.00 |
| 623 · ORGANIST SALARY | 43,720.88 | 48,875.00 | -5,154.12 | 30900.00 |
| 623.1 · Supply Organist | 500.00 | 500.00 | 0.00 | 500.00 |
| 623.2 · CHOIRMASTER EXPENSE | 1,126.14 | 2,000.00 | -873.86 | 475.05 |
| 623.3 · Disability | 333.32 | 1,000.00 | -666.68 | 999.96 |
| 626 · Comptroller | 13,390.08 | 13,390.00 | 0.08 | 13390.08 |
| 630 · WORKMAN'S COMP INS | 2,253.92 | 1,600.00 | 653.92 | 1550.05 |
| 631 · Payroll Tax | | | | |
| 631.1 · Social Security Tax | 6,289.68 | 5,500.00 | 789.68 | 5358.18 |
| 631.2 · Medicare Tax | 1,470.98 | 1,300.00 | 170.98 | 1253.14 |
| 644 · HEALTH INSURANCE | 6,568.83 | 10,800.00 | -4,231.17 | 9959.66 |
| 645 · PENSION -ORGANIST | 1,000.00 | 3,000.00 | -2,000.00 | 3500.00 |
| 701 · ALTAR SUPPLIES | 11,545.41 | 6,500.00 | 5,045.41 | 6469.79 |
| 702 · CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS | 555.13 | 1,000.00 | -444.87 | 59.47 |
| 703 · CHOIR | 26,413.75 | 14,000.00 | 12,413.75 | 14000.75 |
| 703.1 · Funeral Expenses | | | | |
| 703.2 · BULLITIN | 150.00 | | 150.00 | 300.00 |
| 703.3 · Choir | 804.21 | | 804.21 | 885.00 |
| 703.5 · Misc | 498.62 | | 498.62 | 375.56 |
| 704 · CHRISTIAN EDUCATION | 4,694.13 | 5,000.00 | -305.87 | 5700.97 |
| 704.1 · EYC | 5,139.56 | 5,000.00 | 139.56 | 3772.21 |
| 707 · FELLOWSHIPS | | | | |
| 707.1 · Dinner Expenses | 1,795.10 | 3,400.00 | -1,604.90 | 3394.57 |
| 707.2 · Hospitality & Member Care | 6,829.58 | 6,500.00 | 329.58 | 7006.56 |
| 708 · INSURANCE | 19,679.07 | 19,000.00 | 679.07 | 19087.09 |
| 709 · KITCHEN/JANITORIAL SUPPLIES | 3,231.79 | 3,700.00 | -468.21 | 3979.07 |

Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual

January through December 2015

| | Jan - Dec 15 | Budget | over under | PRYTD 2015 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 710 · LAWN SERVICE | 5,273.59 | 4,700.00 | 573.59 | 4579.66 |
| 711 · NURSERY | 9,097.50 | 8,000.00 | 1,097.50 | 8182.50 |
| 712 · OFFICE SUPPLIES | | | | |
| Bulletin Paper | 1,878.06 | 1,700.00 | 178.06 | 1672.91 |
| 712.1 · Pay Pal & Bank Charges | 201.09 | 500.00 | -298.91 | 491.24 |
| 712.2 · Copy Machine Rental | 8,960.69 | 9,810.00 | -849.31 | 8801.85 |
| 712.3 · Paper | 397.41 | 800.00 | -402.59 | 708.70 |
| 712.6 · Computer Expenses | 2,993.27 | 2,200.00 | 793.27 | 2142.99 |
| 712.7 · Coffee | 853.66 | 750.00 | 103.66 | 742.31 |
| 712.8 · Stamps | 2,319.05 | 2,050.00 | 269.05 | 2365.11 |
| 712.9 · Misc Office Supplies | 4,253.40 | 4,000.00 | 253.40 | 7861.45 |
| 714 · REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE | 15,519.06 | 4,000.00 | 11,519.06 | 5530.00 |
| 715 · STEWARDSHIP | 497.46 | 400.00 | 97.46 | 347.22 |
| 716 · SUPPLY CLERGY | 304.00 | 600.00 | -296.00 | 1380.00 |
| 717 · ELECTRICITY | 20,541.17 | 20,000.00 | 541.17 | 20298.74 |
| 718 · GAS | 4,993.22 | 5,800.00 | -806.78 | 5939.87 |
| 719 · TELEPHONE | 3,432.86 | 3,400.00 | 32.86 | 2783.10 |
| 720 · WATER | 1,537.48 | 1,800.00 | -262.52 | 1760.04 |
| 721 · Internet | 1,178.20 | 1,000.00 | 178.20 | 1002.42 |
| 730 · MISCELLANEOUS | 1,383.46 | 600.00 | 783.46 | 585.41 |
| 750 · Evangelization | 1,170.29 | 1,000.00 | 170.29 | 1659.78 |
| 751 · DIOCESAN PLEDGE 8.00% | 22,000.00 | 22,000.00 | 0.00 | 22000.00 |
| 753 · LOCAL OUTREACH | 1,759.08 | 750.00 | 1,009.08 | 743.20 |
| 754 · ST. JOHN'S DAY SCHOOL | 253.48 | 1,000.00 | -746.52 | 1041.68 |
| Total Expense | 110,797.48 | 96,860.00 | 13,937.48 | 102620.18 |
| Net Income | -31,692.62 | 10,415.00 | -42,107.62 | 12440.83 |

REPORT OF THE SENIOR WARDEN

It has been an honor to serve you this past year, the first in my tenure as senior warden. In 2015, our church continued in what I hope most agree is a course of growth and of moving forward in the right direction. Our program, event and worship offerings I think are meeting most everyone's expectations and needs. The addition of Derrick Meador in 2015 as our full-time Organist/Choirmaster has been a blessing in that regard. He has brought energy, effort and ideas for improving our musical offerings and ministries. Derrick is off to a great start to what will hopefully be a long tenure here at St. John's.

Our Junior Warden, Trent Mulloy, continues his dedicated work in that role. And, in addition to tending to the usual building and grounds maintenance and upkeep issues (including the occasional emergency related thereto), this past year Trent spearheaded our fountain project, overseeing the recent arrival of an impressive new fountain. And thanks as well to the select group of other parishioners who were also instrumental in making it happen. The new fountain will be an endearing addition to the church grounds to be enjoyed by generations to come.

St. John's has been blessed immensely with so many dedicated members willing to volunteer their time, talents and resources to make our programs and offerings possible. But of course there is always a continuous need for volunteers to help at every level of church operations. Please continue to consider ways in which you might be able to get involved and lend your assistance to support the activities of the church.

Fiscally, as of today, our budgetary "cushion" for 2016 will not be quite as comfortable as it has been in recent years, but we hope to improve that with the resolution of a few remaining 2015 pledge issues. Still, we are in reasonably good shape moving into 2016. Thank you all for your response to this year's stewardship campaign and for your continued support of our parish and her ministries.

As always, if you have questions, concerns or suggestions for improvement, please do not hesitate to share them with me or any other member of the vestry.

Looking forward to working and worshipping alongside each of you this coming year.

Rick Follis, Senior Warden

REPORT OF THE JUNIOR WARDEN

2015 was a year of highs and lows with regard to the state of the buildings and grounds. We had some major HVAC repairs that cost just over \$12,000. The gas lines coming into the Church had to all be re-worked to be able to pass a five pound pressure test due to a line failure when a new meter was installed at a cost of approximately \$6,000. With our regular maintenance schedules in place, the running and maintenance of the buildings and grounds was greatly improved and keeping these schedules in place over the coming years will go a long way to normalizing our maintenance costs.

We were able to make a few improvements, addressing the lighting in the choir and sanctuary in the Nave, repainting a few areas that had lost their luster, and purchasing new technology and supplies for our Sunday School. Due to wonderful benefactors, the office received new computers which were essential to keep the operations of the parish running without incident. And finally, we made a good bit of progress installing the new fountain. The fountain itself is hand carved limestone from the southern region of France. It took a bit of time and effort to ship it from France, and then thanks to the help of Christopher Albritton, we poured a concrete pad, re-wired and plumbed the foundation and brought in a stone mason who pieced together the fountain perfectly. The weather has stopped us from finishing the project- all that is left to do is seal the inside which requires a few dry days above 55 degrees, and re-landscape and sod the lawn surrounding which requires a few drier weeks for the sod farms to be able to cut and harvest sod.

Looking forward to the coming year we hope to finish remodeling the hallway that connects parish house to Nave, re-tile a damaged area of the Sunday School hallway and look at remodeling the bathrooms. We still have a ways to go on our reserve replacement study but made some strides in raising building funds for the long term.

I look forward to serving the parish in the coming year, and I am always looking for people who are willing to help keep up the building and grounds.

Trent A. Mulloy, Junior Warden

Sunday School & Youth Ministry Update

K/3 - K5

As we look to a new year, we hope to see the Sunday school rooms filled with new and familiar faces. Our curriculum is a hands-on learning experience that was created to enrich young minds and plant a seed of love for Jesus, themselves and each other. Please share your children with us on Sunday morning as we read Bible stories, play games, sing songs and create special memories that will last a lifetime.

Maranda McLaughlin

First - Third Grade

September of 2015 marked the start of our Sunday School year. It also marked the return of the One Family of Faith curriculum for our first through third grade Sunday School students. First through third grade age children of the parish, along with their parents, began actively participating in One Family of Faith. This is a Sunday School curriculum aimed at teaching the children about our Anglican traditions and our worship service that will enable them to become active, participating members of the body of Christ. It is an intergenerational effort that

has and continues to require the support and participation of the entire parish. The children were very busy during the Advent semester. They looked at God's Christian Family, Worship Etiquette, Baptism and Christian Giving. One Family of Faith has allowed the children to explore their church and faith in a variety of hands on and exciting activities. The children have created a meaningful poster representing their Christian church family, received an important lesson on church etiquette from Rand McLaughlin, fully participated in the baptism of a

class baby doll, created gifts for those of our parish family that were baptized on All Saints Sunday, collected needed items for the residents of a local nursing home. The study of Advent culminated with a fun afternoon of hot chocolate drinking and Christmas caroling to the homes of members of our parish family. The Easter Semester will be just as active and somewhat more exploratory. One Family of Faith will have the children learning not only about Anglican traditions and worship, but also about the physical objects that enhance our worship. Becky Jackson gave a very informative lesson on the role of the lay readers. The children had the opportunity to read from the lectern and stand in the

pulpit. Next, the children learned about the history and use of the organ from Mr. Derrick Meador. They each had the opportunity to ask questions and play a few notes. In the coming weeks One Family of Faith will be welcoming many more guest speakers from around the parish. They will be providing instruction on such topics as the history and importance of the bell and the stained glass, the books of worship

and how and why they are used, the role of the alter guild and much more. Under the direction of these dedicated members of the parish, along with Father Jeff, the children will have the unique opportunity to learn, see, explore and "touch" their church and all that it holds.

One Family of Faith will conclude their class on May 1, 2016. On this Sunday, the children that have taken this spiritual journey will have the honor of receiving their first communion as active and participating members of the body of Christ.

Elizabeth Mulloy

Fourth - Sixth Grade

The first half of this year's Sunday School period has been fairly successful. Due to Lee Cline's limitations for part of this year, Pat Bailey and Keith and Germania Rushing have been great additions to the teachers in the class for this period. The Class has completed the Devotion, Worship, Stewardship portions of the curriculum for this year. In the balance of the year, the Class will study the various elements of the Sacramental System of the Episcopal Church and the Catechism of the Church's liturgy. This writer feels this study is a major preparation for the sixth grade students as they prepare for their Confirmation and responsibilities as a full member of St. John's and their parish of choice in their adult years. Our principal downside of the Class this year has been a very sporadic nature of attendance thus far. It seems that Sunday School attendance is the last thing to do on a Sunday morning for far too many of our maturing children. The teachers all ask the parents' help in improving this.

Lee Cline

Jr. and Sr. High

Our Jr/Sr High Sunday School class has been using the “Studies on the Go” series. This format includes an overview of each lesson followed by observation, interpretation and application questions of the scripture readings. We then close with an activity that helps us apply the message to our day to day lives. We are almost finished with the book of James, and will then be moving on to 1-2 Peter and 1-3 John.

We average around six young adults each Sunday. The discussions are definitely more lively and fun when we have more people there so come join us on Sunday morning!!

Melanie Follis & Lisa Chancellor

E.Y.C.

This past year the E.Y.C. gained ten new kids, and averaged about 25 kids each Sunday evening. Rick Burson, Melanie Follis and I had our hands full! It was a good year for the E.Y.C. and we had lots going on. We played a lot of games, worked hard on group bonding and developed a common life of prayer. Some of the themes of the past year were teamwork (even taking a trip to the Bar-T ranch to test our group), service to the community through projects like writing Valentines Cards to folks that were shut-in or living at Nursing Homes, and working with the Soup Kitchen and shopping for Christmas families. This past summer we made a Mission Trip to Copper Hill, TN with the highlight being re-roofing a house for an elderly couple. The kids were pushed physically and spirituality as they got involved with other who were less fortunate and met and interacted with youth from around the country.

This coming year is going to be a big one as we are making the same pilgrimage we did four years ago to the Cathedral of Saint James in Compostela, Spain. Our hopes and goals for the E.Y.C are to continue to work on teamwork, take a closer look at our community and increase our service to our community, work on being evangelists in the modern world, and explore more closely what we believe and why. Thanks to everyone who helps support the group by feeding us and making sure we have everything we need

Catharine Reich

Lay Reader Report

A Lay Reader is a person licensed by the Bishop of the Diocese. Lay Readers must be a confirmed adult communicant in good standing and recommended by the clergy in charge of the congregation and is required to go through a period of study (two years) before becoming licensed by the Bishop. In the absence of a priest, a Lay Reader may read Morning and Evening Prayer although not permitted to give the absolution or blessing, read the Litany and the Penitential Office, read the Epistle in the Order for Holy Communion, read the Burial Office, omitting any priestly blessing and preach approved sermons.

St. John's is blessed to have five very active Lay Readers including:

Pat Bailey

Gene Harlow

Pat Myers

Keith Rushing

Byron Myrick

Pat Myers

Pastoral Care Food Ministry

The purpose of the Pastoral Care Ministry is to provide additional comfort and support to members of our church community. This is done in many ways: providing food, sending flowers and writing letters of support and encouragement. As chairman of the Food Ministry, in the past few months our committee has provided meals to over a dozen parishioners. At Christmas, we distributed boxes filled with home baked treats to 15 parishioners. Our goal in the coming year is to continue providing food when needed, as well as baked goods as an expression of our love and concern for our homebound church family. If you would like to be a part of the food committee, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Gina Gatewood

Card Ministry

The Pastoral Care Committee writes notes of encouragement, sympathy and congratulation to let communicants know we are thinking and praying for them. We write each month to the shut-ins, military and the college students to let them know we remember them, give them encouragement and are praying for them. Please let us know if you have anyone who needs a card for any reason. We want everyone in our congregation to know they are loved by God and important to St. John's.

Pam Oglesby

Acolyte Report

We are always sad to see our Sr. Acolytes graduate and move on in the duties of their post high school careers. However, our remaining acolytes are continuing to learn and grow and are proving themselves dutifully. Their efforts in learning and serving is heartwarming. Please take time to show your appreciation to these young parishioners for their time and dedication in serving the Sacraments each week. Looking forward, we are busy preparing a training schedule and also preparing for Lent. Lent and Easter always demand many duties in and around the Altar. Our Sr. and Jr. Crucifers continue to be great leaders and are leaving a legacy of servitude. Furthermore, their service during each Mass has excelled their spiritual growth and is inspiring to our younger acolytes. Learning when to genuflect or the proper way around the Altar is not the goal. Those duties are simply the gateway to the ultimate goal - understanding the celebration of the Mass. I am proud of their service, but I am more proud of their knowledge. Great job acolytes! Keep up the good work!

Pat Bailey

Daughters of the King

The Daughters of the King of St. John's is a prayer order. It is something of a recognition that admits that you know that life is something of a war, and therefore, you have become keenly aware of what prayer is for." But it is more than that. In the words of Lawrence, "There is not in the world a kind of life more sweet and delightful than that of conversation with God." The DOK group is comprised of ladies who care enough about their parish and the community at large to offer up prayers, not only for their needs, but for the need of others~ requested by those in this congregation and prayers for the precious leadership in our parish. We have several members who are no longer able to do this because of health concerns. That wheel turning of life's cycle goes round, and the need for more involvement in this order has never been greater. I truly believe that God moves through our prayers to aid and to comfort those whose names go out to Him.

There is only one meeting a month on the second Tuesday at 10:30 AM, and it is brief. At that meeting, a list of names is given to the members. The expectation is that each member will pray for those on that list each day during the coming month. It is simple and precious. It is not full of accolade but full of relationship. I think that Yancy put it best when he said, "Like all good things, prayer requires some discipline. Yet I believe that life with God should seem more like friendship than duty. Prayer includes moments of ecstasy and also dullness, mindless distraction and acute concentration, flashes of joy and bouts of irritation. In other words, prayer has features in common with all relationships that really matter."

I hope that there are those reading this who will feel that urge to join us. Your presence is needed. Your prayers are needed. I am convinced it is essential to us all.

"Why is it important that you are with God and God alone on the mountain top? It's important because it's the place in which you can listen to the voice of the One who calls you the beloved. To pray is to listen to the One who calls you 'my beloved daughter,'.... 'my beloved child.' To pray is to let that voice speak to the center of your being and let that voice resound in your whole being." Henri Nouwen

Please contact us with your interest. You are needed.

Marcy Cerra

St. John's Parish Choir

In the first six months of my tenure as your Organist-Choirmaster, I can bear witness that the Church of St. John is a vibrant and healthy place to share music ministry with all of you good people and our community. I inherited a stable and well-organized program from former Organist-Choirmaster Troy Scott, and with his help and the help of our Rector, church staff and many gifted volunteers, I have settled into my new position without difficulty. In my annual report I will cover the following areas of my work as your parish musician: Choirs, Outside Musicians, Musical Instruments and Goal for 2016. I look forward to future years of sharing a productive, working ministry with all of you.

The Parish Choir continues to experience musical growth, and we have had some new volunteers join our ranks since my arrival in June. I am continually impressed with their level of commitment and musical abilities. We are very fortunate to have strong volunteers and a congregation that expects and supports the quality of music presented each week at mass and special liturgies. In addition to weekly mass, the Parish Choir provided special music for the Feast of All Souls, Advent Lessons and Carols, and two beautiful Christmas Eve masses accompanied by brass quartet. We also introduced a monthly Wednesday night rehearsal to facilitate growth both numerically and musically.

The St. Cecilia Choir, K3 -3rd grade, meets on Sunday morning during the Sunday school hour. These young musicians are continuing their study of music theory and learning the fundamentals of good singing. They will continue to present at mass throughout the year and join the St. Gregory singers on special occasions. Ms. Maddie Lowrey is assisting teacher for this ensemble.

The St. Gregory Choir, which is a new ensemble of children in 4th-7th grade, is off to a wonderful start. We have nine talented young girls who rehearse each Sunday afternoon from 4:30-5:30p.m. The girls are experiencing tremendous growth musical and will be presenting in mass on a monthly basis starting February 2016. We welcome any young men and community children who have an interest in singing to join us on Sunday afternoons at 4:30p.m. Ms. Katina Cox is the assisting teacher for this ensemble. It is our goal to foster a love of music and liturgy among our children. A healthy parish choir begins with vibrant programs for children of all ages.

With regard to outside musicians, I am continuing to build relationships between our local private and public schools and universities. We already provide music scholarships to several students from the University of Southern Mississippi. These scholarships offer financial assistance and an opportunity for them to develop their skills in a liturgical environment. This past fall, the students from Jones County Junior College participated in mass on November 8. The students were so enthusiastic about the opportunity that they have asked to participate in mass again next fall.

Through the generosity of Madison Lindsey and Troy Scott, we have added another piano to our musical instruments collection. The additional piano has made it possible to accommodate our overlapping rehearsal schedule on Sunday mornings between the adult and children's ensembles. I would also like to thank them for continuing to maintain the church pipe organ and providing cleaning services for our choir vestments.

Goals for 2016

- Continue to build the adult choral program
- Continue to expand the St. Cecilia and St Gregory choirs through extensive recruitment
- Continue working with local public and private schools to provide musical opportunities to the students of our community.
 - Choir Room renovations
 - Create a long-term proposal for additions and refurbishment to the church pipe organ
 - Develop a church concert series

Derrick Meador

Family Christmas Project 2015

St. John's parish once again whole-heartedly supported the Family Connections Christmas project. We were blessed to work with Beverly Odom and Terrance Crosby of the Laurel office of The Good Samaritan and Delia Ashford of the Faith Sanctuary of Praise Church who located families who had recently lost a job or a parent or suffered a catastrophic illness in the family. I am amazed every year by your generosity and willingness to help with the logistics of providing Christmas gifts for not only the children of the families, but the adults as well.

This year, twenty-one parish families plus our youth group members provided Christmas gifts and necessities to eighteen families. These families consisted of sixty-five individuals: forty-three children and twenty-two adults. The ages of those receiving gifts ranged from three weeks to seventy-seven years. Just think of the impact on that number of lives! I am grateful to everyone who adopted and shopped and to Fr. Jeff, Elizabeth Higginbotham, Derrick Meador and especially Pam Oglesby for assisting in all kinds of ways. We of St. John's Church have reached into our community to serve others as Jesus asked us to do. I thank each of you for your participation.

Becky Jackson

Altar Guild

Altar Guild Mission Statement:

To render, with dedication and loving attention to detail, all Holy Housework needed for liturgy and worship at Saint John's Episcopal Church with an intention of creating a sacred environment of Trust, Peace, Hope, Charity and Love, all for the greater glory of God.

The Altar Guild at Saint John's functions at the pleasure of the Priest. Just as one would bring out the fine china and silver for special guests, it is the duty of the Altar Guild to set the table for the feast. We make up the quiet, "behind the scenes" ministry that reverently and

lovingly polishes the silver, shine the brass, wash and irons the linens, tends the clergy vestments, sets out the elements and assures all is in place. And, just like after the feast, the Altar Guild cleans and stores the vessels and linens again. We follow the Church's traditional practices passed down from the late nineteenth century to this time-honored ministry. We need to know the correct colors to use, the names of the vessels and linens, and how they are to be arranged. Our commitment adds to our spiritual growth and a renewed understanding of God's place in our lives. The church cannot function at its best to the Glory of God without a loyal, devoted, loving Altar Guild. These loving servants, in their essential ministry, are truly servants of the servants of God. Thanks be to all of you who carry out this most essential ministry ~ Becky Jackson, Candy Pevey, Caroline Watts, Christy Liverett, Elizabeth Crawford, Germania Rushing, Jane Hayes, Jennifer Rogers and Sandi Creel all serve with grace and dedication.

Report by the numbers ~ 2015 your Altar Guild:

Set the Altar 104+ times

Wash and polished 1,456+ vessels

Washed and ironed 520+ altar linens

The Altar Guild consist of 10 team members. Each team has two members (one having three) and a backup team for support when needed.

This is a wonderfully rewarding way to serve the church and work with a delightful group of people without making a large time commitment. Schedules are set up to accommodate your lifestyle and sharing the duties makes this a rewarding fulfillment of expanding your faith and contributing to the community at Saint John's. If you feel called to join this ministry we would be more than glad for you to join us. Contact the Church office for more information.

Jennifer Myrick

UPCOMING AT ST. JOHN'S

- FEBRUARY 3 CANDLEMASS & BLESSING OF THE THROATS
FOLLOWED BY CREPE RECEPTION
6:00PM
- FEBRUARY 9 SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE DINNER AND WARDEN'S RACE
5:30PM
- FEBRUARY 10 ASH WEDNESDAY MASS WITH IMPOSITION OF ASHES
12:05PM
6:00PM

EMPTY BOWLS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

11:00am - 2:00pm

St. John's Episcopal Church

Empty Bowls is an international grass roots effort to fight hunger created by The Imagine Render Group. The basic premise is simple: Potters and other crafts people, educators and others work with the community to create handcrafted bowls. Guests are invited to a simple meal of soup. In exchange for a cash donation, guests are asked to keep a bowl as a reminder of all the empty bowls in the world. The money raised is donated to an organization working to end hunger and food insecurity. Events have now taken place across the United States and in at least a dozen other countries. Many millions of dollars have been raised and donated to hunger-fighting organizations. The largest hunger-relief organization in the United States, Feeding America, reports that the nation's food banks could soon be overwhelmed by demand. Statistics show that 1 out of 8 Americans struggle with food insecurity every day. Your help is needed now more than ever. Please find the time, make the commitment, get involved. Your single effort can have a profound impact.

Plans are in full swing for our fund raiser to feed the hungry from St. John's Episcopal Church. With the help of Byron Myrick, local artists have donated 600 hand thrown, high fired bowls for the 2016 event. All proceeds go to support the Good Samaritan Soup Kitchen, the Red Cross food pantry and St. John's Episcopal Church. Our project depends on the support of our entire community. Tell your friends and join us February 24th to help us fight hunger in our community. Tickets are

\$15 and will be on sale SOON! Need more information or to volunteer - call Pat Bailey or the parish office.

MEN'S CHURCH LEAGUE BASKETBALL

The Men's Church League Basketball season is fast approaching. 'Coach' David Sullivan is looking forward to a strong showing from our men this season. The season runs from late January through Mid-March and all games are played on weeknights. Interested in playing? Have questions? Call "Coach" David Sullivan at 601-498-3016 or e-mail him at david@sullivanlawpllc.com We would LOVE for you to be on our TEAM!

AN INVITATION TO A HOLY LENT

Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith. I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word.

LENTEN SCHEDULE

MORNING PRAYER

DAILY AT 9:00AM IN THE CHAPEL

WEDNESDAY MORNINGS AT ST. JOHN'S DAY SCHOOL AT 8:00AM

WEEKDAY MASS

TUESDAYS - 12:05PM IN THE CHAPEL

WEDNESDAYS - 5:30PM IN THE CHURCH

THURSDAYS - 12:05PM IN THE CHAPEL

STATIONS OF THE CROSS & BENEDICTION

SUNDAY EVENINGS AT 5:00PM IN THE CHURCH

WEDNESDAY EVENING DINNER & TEACHING

6:15PM IN THE PARISH HALL

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