



St. John's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH ✚ DECATUR, ALABAMA

THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST | SEPTEMBER 27, 2026

8:00 AM | THE HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE I

Please keep a reverent silence before the liturgy and ensure all electronic devices are silenced.

Prayers and liturgy can be found in the red Book of Common Prayer (BCP). Hymns can be found in the blue Hymnal. Hymns listed with an "S" in front of the number can be found in the front of the hymnal in the Service Music section.

Organ Prelude

THE WORD OF GOD

Opening Acclamation	BCP 323
The Collect for Purity	BCP 323
Hymn of Praise	Hymn 421
The Collect of the Day	
The First Lesson	Ezekiel 18:1-4,25-32
The Psalm	Psalm 25:1-8
The Second Lesson	Philippians 2:1-13
The Gospel	Matthew 21:23-32
The Sermon	Father Van Horn
The Nicene Creed	BCP 326
The Prayers of the People	BCP 328
Confession & Absolution	BCP 330
The Peace	BCP 332
Announcements, Birthday & Anniversary Prayers	<i>Inside Back Cover, BCP</i>

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Offertory	
Presentation Hymn	Hymn 408
The Great Thanksgiving, Prayer 1	BCP 333
Sanctus	Hymn S114
The Lord's Prayer	BCP 336
The Breaking of the Bread	BCP 337
Fraction Anthem	Hymn S155
The Post Communion Prayer	BCP 339
The Blessing	BCP 339
Procession Hymn	Hymn 477
Dismissal	BCP 493

10:30 AM | THE HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Please keep a reverent silence before the liturgy and ensure all electronic devices are silenced.

Prayers and liturgy can be found in the red Book of Common Prayer (BCP). Hymns can be found in the blue Hymnal. Hymns listed with an "S" in front of the number can be found in the front of the hymnal in the Service Music section.

Organ Prelude

Processional Hymn

Hymn 522

THE WORD OF GOD

Opening Acclamation

BCP 355

The Collect for Purity

BCP 355

Hymn of Praise

Hymn 421

The Collect of the Day

The First Lesson

Ezekiel 18:1-4,25-32

Psalm

Psalm 25:1-8

The Second Lesson

Philippians 2:1-13

Sequence Hymn & Children's Chapel Procession

Hymn 435

The Gospel

Matthew 21:23-32

The Sermon

Father Van Horn

The Nicene Creed

BCP 358

Prayers of the People Form VI

BCP 392

Confession & Absolution

BCP 360

The Peace

BCP 360

Announcements, Birthday & Anniversary Prayers

Inside Back Cover, BCP

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Offertory

Presentation Hymn

Hymn 408

The Great Thanksgiving, Eucharistic Prayer A

BCP 361

Sanctus

Hymn S125

The Lord's Prayer

BCP 364

The Breaking of the Bread

BCP 364

Fraction Anthem

Hymn S155

Communion Hymn 1

Hymn 339

Communion Hymn 2

Hymn 439

The Post Communion Prayer

BCP 365

The Blessing

BCP 366

Procession Hymn

Hymn 477

Dismissal

BCP 366

All who have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, regardless of denomination, are welcome to receive communion in the Episcopal Church. If you would like information regarding baptism at St. John's, please speak to one of the clergy. For reasons of public health, if you desire to intinct, please allow the Eucharist Minister to dip your host in the wine and place it on your tongue. If you prefer to receive a blessing instead of Communion, simply indicate that by crossing your arms over your chest. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

TODAY'S READINGS

The Collect of the Day

O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity: Grant us the fullness of your grace, that we, running to obtain your promises, may become partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

The word of the LORD came to me: What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die. Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

Psalms 25:1-8

S415

Jerome Webster Meachen
(b. 1930)



¹ To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul;
my God, I put my trust in you; *
let me not be humiliated,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.

² Let none who look to you be put to
shame; *
let the treacherous be disappointed in
their schemes.

³ Show me your ways, O LORD, *
and teach me your paths.

⁴ Lead me in your truth and teach me, *
for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.

⁵ Remember, O LORD, your compassion
and love, *
for they are from everlasting.

continues

⁶ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; *
remember me according to your love
and for the sake of your goodness, O
LORD.

⁷ Gracious and upright is the LORD; *
therefore he teaches sinners in his way.
⁸ He guides the humble in doing right *
and teaches his way to the lowly.

Philippians 2:1-13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death-- even death on a cross. Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Matthew 21:23-32

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."



Plenty Good Room

There's Always Room for One More

Questions for Reflection:

So who's missing from your table? Is there space at your table or do you need to add another in response to God's generosity and abundance?



The Rev. Debra Q. Bennett is rector of the Church of our Saviour, Akron and is past-president of the board of TENS.

In our household when I was growing up, and it is still true today, there was always room for one more in our home and at our table. It was not uncommon to awaken and find someone asleep on our sofa – whether an old friend of the family who just happened by or a family acquaintance who was experiencing a challenging time in their life. It could even have been the children of one of our upstairs neighbors who were experiencing conflict in the family. My parents opened our home to our schoolmates to keep them from going to a shelter while things were resolved with their parents. We shared our room and a space at our table to accommodate three additional guests. No matter the season there was always room at the Bennett Inn, there were loaves and fishes, and there was always plenty good room at our table.

Praying shapes believing and practice not only gets you to Carnegie Hall, it also makes perfect. 'You give them something to eat.' Jesus' words – an admonition to some an invitation to others – we get to embody in table fellowship where all are treated equally and all are fed. This way of being, this way of discipleship, this spirit of generosity and compassion was modeled for us by our family, in our church, and at our babysitter's home where no child was a stranger and tables were set in the eat-in kitchen and railroad length hallway and Sunday morning we were all given our envelopes with a dollar enclosed for the collection plate (if we didn't already have one). There was always room for one more and enough to share. There was plenty good room. Even now at our family gatherings we prepare for the unknown guest who may be invited to share our table.

A spirit of generosity and abundance finds its root in the beatitudes, in the story of the walk to Emmaus, in the wedding feast at Cana, and in the commandment to "love one another as I have loved you." Jesus made space for the vulnerable, the marginalized, the poor, and the list could go on ending with all of us. There was plenty good room at his table. When we respond to God's generosity in kind, there will always be enough, there will always be loaves and fishes, and there will always be plenty good room.



THE EPISCOPAL
NETWORK FOR
STEWARDSHIP

COMING UP AT ST. JOHN'S

THE CALENDAR

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

- 8:00 am The Holy Eucharist (Rite I)
- 9:15 am Choir Rehearsal, Church
- 9:15 am Nursery Available Until 11:45 am
- 9:30 am Sunday School for All Ages
- 10:30 am The Holy Eucharist (Rite II)
Cookies and Lemonade on the patio following the service

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

- 5:00 pm Cursillo Reunion Group, Library
- 6:30 pm Scout Meeting, Parish Hall

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

- 9:30 am ESL Class, Parish Hall
- 10:00 am Staff Meeting

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

- 10:00 am Rector's Bible Study, Library
- 12:10 pm The Holy Eucharist with Prayers for Healing and Anointing, Chapel

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1

- 9:30 am ESL Class, Parish Hall
- 5:30 pm Theology on Tap, The Brick Deli

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2

- 7:00 am Men's Cursillo Reunion Group, Library
- 8:30 am- Roadrunners Trip to Bama Bucks
3:00 pm

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4

- 8:00 am The Holy Eucharist (Rite I)
- 9:15 am Choir Rehearsal, Church
- 9:15 am Nursery Available Until 11:45 am
- 9:30 am Sunday School for All Ages
- 10:30 am The Holy Eucharist (Rite II)
Cookies and Lemonade on the patio following the service
- 11:45 am Simply Divine Bake Sale Planning Meeting, Library
- 5:00 pm Blessing of the Animals, Back Lawn

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEXT TWO SUNDAYS!



ST. JOHN'S
SIMPLY DIVINE
HOLIDAY BAKE SALE
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21
8:00 AM-11:00 AM

Organizational Meetings

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4 & 11

AFTER THE 10:30 AM SERVICE | IN THE LIBRARY

Simply Divine season will be here soon! We'll get started with organizational meetings on October 4th and 11th in the Library. Stop by either meeting to learn more about the Bake Sale and all of the ways you can support this annual fundraiser for a local outreach organization.

CANDY DRIVE! FOR ST. JOHN'S 3RD ANNUAL TRUNK OR TREAT

OCTOBER 29

Looking forward to St. John's Third Annual Trunk or Treat! First step for a great TorT: Candy Drive! We go through A LOT of candy at Trunk or Treat! Please donate individually wrapped, snack-sized bags of candy to the marked bins in the Narthex and office hallway.

Decorated Trunk sign-up will open soon! More details coming!



bit.ly/infostjohns

If you need help seeing the print in the prayer book and hymnal, large-print, spiral-bound Books of Common Prayer and magnifiers for hymnals are available. Please ask an usher for assistance.

LOVE GOD. LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR. LOVE YOURSELF.

NEXT SUNDAY!

FEAST DAY OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

BLESSING of the ANIMALS

WITH EVENING PRAYER

Sunday, October 4 | 5:00 pm
On St. John's Back Lawn

Celebrate and honor your animal companions and give thanks for them with a blessing that recognizes our deep bond with animals and the important role they play in our lives.

We are supporting Decatur Animal Services with a supply drive. Items needed: dry puppy and kitten food, cat litter, laundry detergent, bleach, towels, leashes, collars, and animal sponsorships. Please bring donations to the event. DCS appreciates every donation!

ALL ANIMAL FRIENDS, ON A LEASH
OR IN A CARRIER, ARE WELCOME!



Caregiver Support Gathering

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15 | 1:00PM
Please note that the date change
for our next meeting

COMING IN OCTOBER!

Plenty Good Room

WEDNESDAY EVENING STEWARDSHIP SERIES

OCTOBER 7, 14, 21 & 28

5:30 PM DINNER, 6:00 PM PROGRAM

Our stewardship theme this year, Plenty Good Room, invites us to look at our lives—and at the life of St. John's—through the lens of God's abundance. Join us Wednesday evenings as we explore the theme through different perspectives. Please take note, **October 28 will be St. John's Got Talent! night.** Sign up is open on the bulletin board by the parish hall.



GOOD FOOD, FINE FRIENDS
& THE GREAT OUTDOORS

PARISH PICNIC

HOLY SMOKERS' FISH FRY!
PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE
AND A LAWN CHAIR!

Sunday, October 18 | 3:00-5:30 pm

The picnic will be at **Edgehill**,
Larkin Martin & John Thornton's river house,
4181 County Road 400, Courtland

OUR PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS

We pray for family and friends who are ill or distressed, especially Russell Barr, Jenny Berry, Billy Biles, John Bolton, Walt Chenault, Andy Dye, Susan Easter, Jessica Kelly, Bobbie Patton, Earl Pettey, David Rahm, Richard Ray, Heidi Ross, Nick Roth, Robert Schafer, Melissa Schafer, Rebecca Self, Richard Shelburne, Steve Smith, Dot Straub, Glynn Tubb, Carolyn Tweedy, Julie Warren, and Gretchen Willis.

We pray for those who serve in and with the Armed Forces, especially Michael Blair, Steven Blair, Jonathan Easter, Garrett McElroy, Eston Rogers, and Austin Wallace.

We pray for the departed, especially Robert "Robby" Straub, Jr.

We pray for persecuted Christians and refugees around the world; for an end to poverty, addiction, and violence of all kinds; for the students, families, teachers, and administrators of Banks-Caddell Elementary School; for our Companion Diocese of Honduras and their bishop, Lloyd; for Alabama Faith Council and its work; for St. Michael and All Angels, Anniston; St. Michael and All Angels, Millbrook; St. Michael's, Faunsdale; and St. Michael's, Fayette.

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God

and in memory of Billy & Mary Jane Howard by Mike and Bynum Kirby

Ushers	8:00 AM: Rip Nance	10:30 AM: Bobbi Wilson, David Rice
Lectors	8:00 AM: Rob Getman	10:30 AM: Alex Adams
Lay Eucharistic Ministers	8:00 AM: Grant Thompson	10:30 AM: Bynum Kirby
Acolytes	8:00 AM: Rebecca Self	10:30 AM: Jake Wilder, Claire McCalpin, Leo Salerno
Media Ministry	Kevin Wilson	
Flower Rearranger	Nina Mae Blackburn	
Flower Deliverer	Nina Mae Blackburn	
Vestry Person of the Day	Suzanne Thompson	

CLERGY AND STAFF

The Rev. Chase Ackerman, <i>Rector</i>	chase@stjohnsdecatur.org
The Rev. Rufus Van Horn, <i>Associate Rector</i>	rufus@stjohnsdecatur.org
Vickie Reed, <i>Financial Administrator</i>	vickie@stjohnsdecatur.org
Mary Coe, <i>Director of Communications</i>	mary@stjohnsdecatur.org
Lauren Riddell	<i>Choirmaster</i>
William Polzin	<i>Organist</i>
Callie Melick	<i>Nursery Attendant</i>
Rebecca Bailey	<i>Nursery Attendant</i>
Paul Montgomery	<i>Sexton</i>

VESTRY

Class of 2026: Nora Hall, Sue Hennessy, Julie Leavitt (Senior Warden), Lyla Peebles, Kevin Wilson
 Class of 2027: Bynum Kirby, Jackie Joiner, Ann Stewart (Junior Warden), Suzanne Thompson, Victoria Tumbleson
 Class of 2028: Alex Adams, Rob Getman, Luke Slaton, Erika Huber, Emily White
 Stuart Tubb *Treasurer*
 Stan Evans *Assistant Treasurer*
 Carol Sartain *Clerk*
 Ken Schuppert *Chancellor*

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

202 Gordon Drive SE | Decatur, Alabama 35601
 Church Office 256-353-9615 | churchoffice@stjohnsdecatur.org
 After-hours Pastoral Emergency: 256-280-3792
 Monday - Thursday | 8:30 am - 4:30 pm | closed Friday
 stjohnsdecatur.org

