

Anchor Lines

St. James Episcopal Church • Fairhope, Alabama



December 2, 2020

Volume 24, Issue 7



Black Rook in Rainy Weather
—Sylvia Plath

*On the stiff twig up there
Hunches a wet black rook
Arranging and rearranging its feathers in
the rain-
I do not expect a miracle
Or an accident*

*To set the sight on fire
In my eye, nor seek
Any more in the desultory weather some
design,
But let spotted leaves fall as they fall
Without ceremony, or portent.*

*Although, I admit, I desire,
Occasionally, some backtalk
From the mute sky, I can't honestly
complain:
A certain minor light may still
Lean incandescent*

*Out of kitchen table or chair
As if a celestial burning took
Possession of the most obtuse objects
now and then —
Thus hallowing an interval
Otherwise inconsequent*

*By bestowing largesse, honor
One might say love. At any rate, I now
walk
Wary (for it could happen
Even in this dull, ruinous landscape);
sceptical
Yet politic, ignorant*

*Of whatever angel any choose to flare
Suddenly at my elbow. I only know that a
rook*

*Ordering its black feathers can so shine
As to seize my senses, haul
My eyelids up, and grant*

*A brief respite from fear
Of total neutrality. With luck,
Trekking stubborn through this season
Of fatigue, I shall
Patch together a content*

*Of sorts. Miracles occur.
If you care to call those spasmodic
Tricks of radiance
Miracles. The wait's begun again,
The long wait for the angel,*

For that rare, random descent.

Dear Friends in Christ,

To borrow words from *Black Rook in Rainy Weather*, “the wait begins again.”

We have entered into the season of Advent, and we have begun a new year in the life of the church; a new year and a fresh start within a world and constraints that do not feel all too fresh. This is a time of year to prepare our hearts to receive Christ again as we wait upon the coming of the Lord. The Lord who has come into this world before and who will come again, break into this dreary world creation. It is a time to call out “Maranatha!”, one of the most ancient Christian prayers and in the very language Jesus and his first followers spoke, “Come our Lord!”

This Advent, I offer to you a poem written by Sylvia Plath as a meditation, maybe even a prayer, that seems especially suited for a year such as this.

Plath’s poem has found its way across my path from time to time during Advent and is one I am quite fond of. It is most often seen as a poem of waiting, watching, and finding the beauty in the most mundane scenes of life.

But this year it seems to have taken on a new life in my soul, and the imagery of foul weather stands out more than most years.

It is interesting how the changing circumstances of life sometimes allow you to see new things, even new light, in a poem or a season you have encountered many times before.

This year we have certainly had our share of rain. There have been many storms whether it be a global pandemic or literal weather, forcing us to rearrange our feathers time and time again.

It can be hard to even look for, much less expect a miracle and we might even question if there is any meaning to this, or if it is all just desultory weather.

But even in the midst of rainy weather and what may seem like mute horizons, we look toward that certain minor light that leans incandescent. A light that grows warmer and brighter the closer it gets until that celestial burning takes possession of the most obtuse objects.

Christ again breaking in to a world of despair and hopelessness, bestowing with largesse, Hope, Peace, Joy and one might even say Love.

We will experience the arc of Advent each Sunday where we begin the service with expectant waiting calling out, “Wait for the Lord, whose day is near, Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart” and then exclaim “Joy to the World! The Lord has come... And heaven and nature sing!” as we enter into the Eucharist. Yes! Heaven and Nature sing, even a black rook in rainy weather.

I look forward to walking through this season with all of you, to Hope along side of you, to find Peace and Joy with you, and to share in Christ’s Love with you, as we wait upon the Lord in our lives and in the world. Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!

Faithfully Yours in Christ,

Forbes+

Advent

Due to the recent increases in the number of Covid-19 cases in Baldwin County, the Wednesday Evening Advent program has been canceled.



THE ADVENT RETREAT 2020 is a 20 to 25 minute podcast from PRAY as you GO in collaboration with Sacred Space, that reminds us that God is with us. The podcast gives us time to reflect on God's plan to be close to us, by becoming one of us. It focuses on the idea that we are never alone.

ADVENT RETREAT 2020



From the website:

"After a year of challenges, changes, suffering, isolation and social distancing, perhaps there's never been a more important time to reflect on the Incarnation; to reflect on God's incredible plan to draw as close as possible to us, by becoming one of us.

Online readers, [click this link](#). Paper readers, go to the website: pray-as-you-go.org.

Advent Materials

Advent reading materials are available for pick-up in the Narthex of the Church and in Green Hall. If you need any candles for making advent wreaths contact Anne McEniry at christianformation@stjamesfairhope.org.

Forward Day by Day books are in the basket by the office door.

Advent



Children—don't miss **Saint Nicholas** **on Sunday, December 6 !!**

He will visit St. James during Chapel at the 9:00 & 11:00 AM services.



Women's Monday Night Bible Study has just begun a new study called *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes* by Cynthia M Campbell on November 30. How might a house look for Christmas based on what each Gospel says about it? Architect Kevin Burns' beautiful illustrations reimagine each of the four Gospels as a "house," which the church visits at Christmas. In each section, Campbell reflects on the distinctive perspective of the birth of Jesus offered by each Gospel. *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes* creatively presents the season and inspires a new and exciting reflection for Advent. With three weeks remaining, this group meets at 6:30 PM on Monday evenings, via



Zoom ONLY. Books may be purchased online from Amazon, Cokesbury, Barnes & Noble, or Christianbook. (Kindle format is also available.) The audiobook is also available but not recommended, because you won't be able to see the beautiful art work. All women are invited; any denomination. For more information call Michelle Orr at 490-6077 or email mollieathome77@yahoo.com.



The holiday season can strike a chord of melancholy, lament, and even grief in many. This time of year more sharply reminds people of lost loved ones, personal setbacks, such as job loss, or other disappointments or regrets in life.

Join us in the Church at 5:30 PM Monday, December 21. All are welcome to share in this evening of prayer and healing.

Upcoming Events

Sung Compline
 Sunday, December 20
 7:00 pm
 in the Church
 Come as you are!

December 27
 at 9 & 11

Join us for Carols
 with
 Celtic Harp

Jillian Gardner
 Organ Concert
 Friday, January 15, 2021
 7:00 PM



Jillian Gardner, a native of Rome, NY, is a two-time first-prize winner of the chapter level competition of the Regional Competition for Young Organists (in Buffalo and Albany). In 2017, she took second prize in the Québec organ competition in Québec, Canada; she has also been a finalist in the Arthur Poister competition in Syracuse. In recognition of her achievements, The Diapason magazine selected Gardner as one of the inaugural “Top 20 under 30” organists in the nation.

Ms. Gardner enjoys an international touring schedule that spans the United Kingdom, Canada, and the U.S. In addition to being the National Convener for the American Guild of Organists Young Organists, she is also the Director of Music at First United Methodist Church in Huntsville, AL, where she serves as primary organist and oversees more than 10 ensembles for adults and children.

Concerts are free and open to the public, however, reservations are required and seating is limited.

For reservations call 251-928-2912 Monday-Thursday 8:30-5:00.

Christmas Eve Services

Thursday, December 24

Holy Eucharist and Carols

3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00, & 11:00 pm

Nursery available at 3:00, 5:00, and 7:00 pm with a reservation. Please read our policies at stjamesfairhope.org.

Reservations are Required by Calling 251-928-2912
during regular business hours (Monday-Thursday from 8:30 - 5:00 pm).

Before calling, please know the number in your party and an alternate service time, in case your first choice is full.

Christmas Day ~ Friday, December 25

Holy Eucharist at 10 am in the Church

Reservations are not required. Nursery is not available.

The Lectionary Schedule

Date	The First Reading	The Psalm	The Second Reading	The Gospel
December 6, 2020	<i>Advent Lessons & Carols</i>			
December 13, 2020 The Third Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	Canticle 15	n/a	John 1:6-8,19-28
December 20, 2020 The Fourth Sunday of Advent	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16	Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26	n/a	Luke 1:26-38
December 24, 2020 Christmas Eve	Isaiah 9:2-7	Psalm 96	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-20
December 25, 2020 Christmas Day	Isaiah 52:7-10	Psalm 98	n/a	John 1:1-14

DIOCGC EYC Tacky Christmas Sweater *Sing-a-Long*

The Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast is hosting a Tacky Christmas Sweater Sing-a-Long on Sunday, December 13 from 7:30 - 8:30 pm via Zoom.

If you would like to participate in this DIOCESAN EYC event, email Anne McEniry at christianformation@stjamesfairhope.org.



HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

- *Closed Christmas Eve & Day
- *Closed Mon., Dec. 28 - Fri., Jan. 1
- *Re-open Monday, January 4, 2021 at 8:30 AM
- *NO Services on Wednesday, Dec. 30
- *NO Wafer Distribution on Thursday, December 31

If you would like to drop off last minute 2020 donations or 2021 pledges, Finance Director, Jim Ketchum will be in the office from 10 am to 2 pm on Dec. 28 & Dec. 30. In order for your donation to be included in your 2020 tax return, contributions need to be postmarked by Dec. 31.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

	Nov 2020 Actual	Nov 2020 Budget	Year-to-date 2020 Actual	Year-to-date 2020 Budget
Income	\$120,750	\$110,677	\$1,095,557	\$1,218,172
Expense	\$81,015	\$109,025	\$1,143,184	\$1,282,685

Note: Very Preliminary Results

PLEDGE STATUS:

*We have received 137 pledges totaling \$606,756 for 2021.
In 2020, we had 258 pledges totaling \$1,054,528.*

ONLINE GIVING

Did you know you can pledge or pay for most things at St. James through our online portal? Go to our website, stjamesfairhope.org, and click the "Give to St. James" tab at the top of the page. If you are logging in for the first time, your name and email address must match the information we have for you in our church database.

If you have trouble logging in, contact our Director of Finance, Jim Ketchum, in the Parish office at 251-928-2912.

How Can You Help?



Christmas Giving Tree

There is still time to participate in the 2020 Giving Tree. If you would like to request a name, please email 2020angeltree@gmail.com or mpilcher@mobilebaylaw.com.

Please return all gifts to the narthex of the Church by **December 7th**.

The Outreach Committee is also looking for volunteers to help deliver gifts. Thank you in advance for you help this Christmas Season.

CONVENTION DELEGATES

Are you interested in serving as a delegate for the Diocesan Convention next year? The meetings will most likely take place at St. James in Green Hall via Zoom. If you are interested in representing St. James in this capacity, please contact

the parish office at 251-928-2912 and let us know. Thank you.

VESTRY NOMINATIONS

Vestry nomination forms are available in the Narthex, the Parish office, and the website. Nominate a parishioner who is an active member in "good standing" and has not served on the vestry in the last 3 years. Forms are due in the parish office by **Tuesday, December 15**. Mark your calendar for the annual meeting scheduled for January 24. More details on the meeting coming soon.

Meal Ministry Needs YOU!!

The meal ministry's mission is to support parishioners who are temporarily suffering from illness, injury, or recent hospitalization by providing meals for them.

The meal ministry is organized into 12 teams with each team serving one month of the year. The more people we have on a team the easier it is, if someone is traveling, or sick, or otherwise unable to serve. Right now all teams have 3, ten teams have

4, and the goal is for all teams to have at least 5 members.

Meals might be a casserole, salad/vegetable and dessert or some variation of that. A hearty soup and cornbread would be great in the winter. There are casseroles in the church freezer to draw from or you may buy something already prepared if you like. The goal is to get a meal to a person/family in need.

Everyone is able to be part of this group - you don't need to be a gourmet cook! The only requirement is a desire to feed someone in need.

Consider joining the meal ministry. If you have any questions call Andy Burton at 251-422-3431 or email her at happytravelerakb@gmail.com.

What is AmazonSmile?



AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support St. James every time you shop at Amazon, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same prices, selection, and shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to your favorite charitable organization. So pick us as your favorite charity! Just search "St. James Episcopal Church Fairhope" when asked to pick your charity of choice.



Rite 13

St. James celebrated our Rite 13 graduating class with a special service on Sunday afternoon, November 8 for the graduates, their families, and close friends. The graduates pictured L-R are: *Mary Frances Collins, Anna Bowler Conyers, Skylar Spinks, Isabelle Martin, and Wyatt Aiken.*

Not pictured: Ryan Charlton and Madison Johnson.

School News

Many of you have asked, “How is the school year going?” I’m pleased to report that, in spite of the uncertainty of day-to-day events, St. James School has had a great year and continues to be a blessing to our community.

Our school has fulfilled a commitment to our students and families to move forward. The safety and health of our staff, students, and families continue to be our top priority while still fulfilling our mission, which is to introduce children to Christ in a nurturing environment by providing exemplary preparation for future learning.

On November 11, we commemorated and honored veterans at our first Veterans Day service, which was held outside at the flag pole. The Kindergarten class presented the American flag in a flag-raising ceremony with two of our parents, one who is active in the military and another who is a veteran. The students recited the pledge of allegiance, and Father Forbes gave a special prayer. This event was a wonderful experience for the whole school.

The children have also been learning about the First Thanksgiving. We celebrated the First Thanksgiving with a picnic in the parking meadow complete with Pilgrims, Native Americans, and turkeys. Our students collected and donated over 300 food items to the Ecumenical Ministries Food Pantry for our November outreach project.

The school board is delighted to announce that we will be adding a second grade for the 2021 – 2022 school year. Enrollment for the 2021 - 2022 school year is going on now through December 18 for current school families and St. James parishioners. Open Enrollment for the public will begin on January 4. Tours are available in the evenings after 5:00 PM, Tuesday through Thursday. Call the school or email me to schedule a tour of our facilities.

The students and staff are anticipating a joyous Advent and Christmas season. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Shelley E. Miller

Shelley Miller
 Director, St. James Episcopal School
 schooldirector@stjamesfairhope.org
 251.928.2912



News & Events

CHRISTMAS FLOWER DEDICATION

Remember or honor a loved one with flowers on the altar at Christmas. Please **print** your dedication neatly on the form below. Flower dedications received by Tuesday, **December 15** will be included in the bulletins at all Christmas services. The cost is \$25.00 per dedication. Please use a separate form for each dedication. Additional forms are available in the Parish office and on our website at stjamesfairhope.org.

Completed order form and check payable to **St. James Flower Fund** may be mailed to the church, returned to the parish office, placed in the "Drop Box" or placed in the Sunday offering. *Please turn in your check and your form at the same time.*

***** PLEASE PRINT INFORMATION *****

Given by: _____
 Email: _____ phone: _____
 Circle **ONE**: In memory of In honor of In thanksgiving for
 Name(s): _____

Please use a separate form for each additional dedication. Each Form is \$25.00
 Mailing address: St. James Episcopal Church, 860 North Section Street, Fairhope, AL 36532



2021 Altar Flower Dedications

The 2021 Altar Flower Dedication Calendars will be available this Sunday, December 6. Elizabeth Redditt will be outside Green Hall between services this Sunday to answer questions. Print your name and contact information on an available spot in the calendar and then fill out a form and place it in the envelope in the back of the notebook. Each arrangement is \$50. If you choose to dedicate both arrangements in the Church, the cost is \$100. Send your check to the office or pay online at stjamesfairhope.org prior to the dedication date.



YOGA SCHEDULE

MONDAYS at 9:30 AM
 Gentle Yoga
 led by Jane Tucker
 in Green Hall

THURSDAYS at 5:45 PM
 Yoga for all ages and levels,
 led by Stacy Reckeweg
 in Green hall and via Zoom

THURSDAYS at 1:00 PM
 Chair Yoga
 led by Jane Tucker
 in Green Hall

FRIDAYS at 7:30 AM
 Yoga Flow
 led by Jane Tucker
 in Green Hall



We are a community anchored in Christ, seeking God,
sharing His love and serving others.

860 North Section Street
Fairhope, AL 36532

251- 928-2912 phone 251- 928-3889 fax
Web: www.stjamesfairhope.org

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**Reservations are required for
Christmas Eve Services this year.
Please see insert for details.**

Worship Schedule

SUNDAYS:

8:00 am ~ Morning Prayer, in the Church
with Reserved Sacrament
9:00 am ~ Holy Eucharist, in the Church
11:00 am - Holy Eucharist, in the Church (in-person & online)

WEDNESDAYS:

10 am ~ Morning Prayer (in-person & online)

THIRD SUNDAY of the Month:

Sung Compline at 7:00 pm, (in-person & online)

Parish Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
Currently Closed to Visitors
Friday: CLOSED

The St. James Staff

Parish Administrator: Meghan Fancher
Director of Music Ministries: Helen V. Rodgers
Associates for Music Ministries: Asheton Green, Frank Stabler
Director of Christian Formation: Anne McEniry
Associate for Children's Ministries: Ellen Huckabay
Director of Finance: Jim Ketchum
Director of Communications: Jennifer Glover
Administrative Assistant: Elizabeth Phelps
Director of St. James School: Shelley Miller
Housekeeping: Rose Collins
Sexton: Mike Costigan

For staff email addresses or other contact information
go to the *About Us* tab on our website at stjamesfairhope.org
or [click here for St. James Staff](#).

ANCHOR LINES DEADLINE: THE NEXT ANCHOR LINES WILL BE PUBLISHED **JANUARY 6, 2021**. PLEASE EMAIL INFORMATION TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE NEXT ISSUE TO JENNIFER GLOVER, AT [COMMUNICATIONS@STJAMESFAIRHOPE.ORG](mailto:communications@stjamesfairhope.org), NO LATER THAN 5:00 PM ON THE THURSDAY PRIOR TO THE PUBLISHED DATE.

READ THE ANCHOR LINES ONLINE—Call the church office or email communications@stjamesfairhope.org and request to be added to the distribution list. In addition, the newsletter is available on the website at www.stjamesfairhope.org.
