



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

202 Gordon Drive SE, Decatur, AL (256) 353-9615
For the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, October 12, 2014

The View

Unexpected Blessings

Last week, I flew up to our nation's capital for a short but important meeting. Although the focus of the trip was a much-hyped discussion on potential changes to the structure and governance of the Episcopal Church, I knew that other aspects of the journey would bear fruit as well. I chose a connecting flight that would enable me to sit next to a friend and colleague who was travelling to Washington for the same meeting. I made arrangements to stay at the seminary where I finished my studies because I knew I would get to see a friend who has just begun his time there and because I expected to cross paths with some of the professors who had helped shape me for ordained ministry. Also, the seminary campus abuts a boarding school, where a member of our youth group has recently started high school, and I thought a quick breakfast or at least a cup of coffee together might be possible.

Soon, however, those hopes began to evaporate. Mechanical problems on two different airplanes prevented my friend from making the trip, so I ended up sandwiched between two strangers instead. When I saw the agenda for the church-wide meeting, I discovered that it was scheduled to run later than I expected, and I was not sure whether my friend would be able to stay up long enough for us to visit. When I saw one of my favorite seminary professors and approached him with a big grin on my face, he returned my offer of a handshake, but I could tell that he could not recall who I was. Then, my ride back to the airport fell through, which meant I would need to call a cab, which meant that I might not have enough time to have breakfast with our parishioner at the boarding school.

Faced with mounting disappointment and the reality that I was standing in a familiar place but had no one to share it with, I went for a walk. Although it had been a long time, I retraced my steps from the seminary back to the apartment where Elizabeth and I lived when we were first married. The first few minutes of the walk were very familiar, and I recalled with joy how many times I had made that trip in the past. Then, I found myself walking down a street that I knew had to be the right one even though I could not remember any of the houses on it. Finally, I turned a corner and saw our apartment complex, which prompted me to pull my cell phone out of my pocket and call Elizabeth to share that moment with her.

Without asking whether she was interested, I narrated my walk for her as I proceeded down the street to the last row of apartments. Then, as I turned down the dead-end sidewalk that led to our apartment, a flood of memories came back. "Do you remember making a tiny snowman in the grass during that fall's first snow?" I asked. "Oh!" I exclaimed aloud, "I wonder if the hydrangea are still in front of our patio." Finally, as the place we called home came into view, I said, "Do you remember our neighbor? What was his name—Mr. Burke? I wonder what happened to him." Then, suddenly, through the bushes, I saw something—someone sitting on our neighbor's patio. "May I call you right back?" I asked. "I see someone."

Nine years ago, when we lived in northern Virginia, Mr. Burke (I think that was his name) was already an ancient man. He lived next door to us, and he was the kind of neighbor young couples dream of. Always friendly, always courteous, Mr. Burke loved to smile and wave as he passed by our front door, pushing his shopping cart toward the grocery store. He shared dramatic stories of his military service and reminisced about his wife who had died years before. When I moved away from that apartment, I cried a little bit because I knew that I would never see that lovely man again. But, when I walked down that sidewalk last week, there he was—still sitting on his front patio, even more ancient than before, but just as friendly as ever.

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That day, I sat with him for a while, reminding him who I was and thanking him for being such a wonderful neighbor. I told him that I think about him often and give thanks to God for what he meant to us back then. He asked me to keep him in my prayers, and I assured him that I would. As I walked away, I called Elizabeth to tell her the good news, tears streaming down my cheeks. I never expected to see Mr. Burke again, and this trip all the way to Washington had given me another chance to appreciate him and, through that unexpected encounter, how full of God's blessings those short nine months had been.

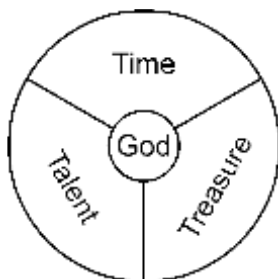
God does not wait for us to look for his blessings before he bestows them upon us. In fact, God showers them upon us even if we are completely oblivious to the fact that he has given them to us in the first place. As Jesus said, "God causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust" (Matthew 5:45). The difference between the two, however, is what they do in response to those heaven-sent gifts. Jesus' words are a reminder that it is up to us to count our blessings and give credit to God for giving them to us.

Sometimes blessings come when and where we expect them to be—an answered prayer, a scheduled encounter, or a much-anticipated gift. More often, however, blessings sneak into our lives without us even noticing—a cancelled meeting, an interrupted vacation, an unexpected reunion. What does God ask for us in return? Only that we notice how full of blessing our lives really are. What will it take for us to embrace our blessedness? What will it take for us to count those otherwise unnoticed blessings? Find time each day to name before God the many, many ways that you are blessed so that, by giving thanks, your life might be more fully shaped by the blessings you have been given.

Yours faithfully,

Evan D. Garner

Stewardship Education Sessions



Stewardship Education Sessions

In the coming weeks, all of us will be invited to consider how we will give back to God a portion of the time, talent, and treasure that he has given us. Every household will be contacted by a canvasser, whose job it is to invite you to come to one of our stewardship sessions. If you are not able to attend, your canvasser will personally deliver that information and convey that stewardship message to you.

*Please mark your calendars and make plans to join us at one of these educational forums. **Note: Corrected Dates and Times***

- **Sunday, October 19 at 11:45am** (lunch served immediately following church)
- **Wednesday, October 22 at 6:00pm** (following Wednesday night supper)
- **Tuesday, October 28 at 12:10pm** (bring a sack lunch)

PACT's Drive-Thru Diaper Drop



PACT's Drive-Thru Diaper Drop, Friday, October 10, from 8am - 3pm

Please donate diapers to help Morgan County families in need. Just drive through the parking lot at PACT (Decatur) or Corum's (Hartselle) to drop off diapers.

Decatur drop-off location PACT parking lot 245 B Jackson Street, Decatur
Hartselle drop-off location Corum's parking lot 408 US Hwy 31, Hartselle

OR PACT can pick up the diapers from you—contact Chelsey 256 355-7252 or chelsey@pactfamily.org

Wednesday Night Dinner & Programs



DINNER & PROGRAMS

SEPT. 24-OCT. 22

DINNER AT 5:30PM. PROGRAMS AT 6:00PM

FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & ADULTS. NURSERY PROVIDED.

Wednesday Night Dinner & Programs continue each Wednesday through October 22. Make plans to attend a dinner in the parish hall served at 5:30pm, and then stay for programs for children, youth, and adults, which begin at 6:00pm. *Menu: Caddo's corn bread dressing, pinto beans, creamed potatoes, salad, squash casserole, & apple crisp. Bagel Bites for the kids. \$6/adult; \$4/child; \$24 max/family.*

Fall-Series Programs at 6:00pm:

Adults will remain in the Parish Hall as Seth and Evan guide us on an exploration of spiritual gifts. What are your gifts? How are you using them? How is God calling you to serve in his kingdom?

Take the Spiritual Gifts Inventory (takes no more than 20 minutes), print it out and bring with you for reference: <http://www.spiritualgiftstest.com/test/adult>. We are simply using this test as a baseline or a conversation starter for our discussion on our personal spiritual gifts. No spiritual gifts inventory will tell you with 100% accuracy what gifts you have, yet this test is an important step in discovering what abilities God has given to you!

Youth will gather in the EYC room downstairs with Kristin Hanson and will explore the beliefs and traditions of persons of other faiths.

Children will gather in the Parish Hall at 6:00pm with Sally Marsh and together go downstairs to meet up with volunteers where they will explore the topic "I Am" through arts & crafts and games. The children will return to the Parish Hall at 6:45pm.

Parish Picnic



**At the home of Pam and John Howell
2500 Meadowbrook Dr. SE**

Bring a covered dish, your favorite beverages, lawn chairs and BYOP—bring your own pumpkin! We will have lawn games, pumpkin carving, 5pm Eucharist and supper.

HOSTED BY PAM AND JOHN HOWELL AND THE FAMILY LIFE COMMITTEE.

Outreach Partnership: Grants & Quarterly Newsletter



St. John's Grants Committee is currently accepting Outreach Partnership Grant applications for 2015. If you know of an organization that would like to request a grant, please forward this information to them. [2015 Grant Information and Request Form](#)

All grant applications are due to St. John's by October 30, 2014. The Grants Committee will read and evaluate each request, make a site visit with each potential partner where necessary, decide what funds will be awarded, and notify all applying organizations of the results. *If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the*

Rev. J. Seth Olson, at 256-353-9615 or seth@stjohnsdecatur.org

Learn about the outreach partnership opportunities in the current [Outreach Partnership Quarterly Newsletter](#).

Sing-A-Long at The Terrace



St. John's Sing-A-Long at The Terrace (200 Terrace Lane, Priceville)

Tuesday, October 14, meet in St. John's parking lot no later than 10:15am to carpool. We need to arrive at The Terrace by 10:45 a.m. If you love to sing, join us as we sing favorite songs with our parishioners and other residents who live at The Terrace. It's a wonderful way to spend your morning. All are welcome!

Children's Ministries: EpiscoKids (PreK-5th Grade)



The Fall Wednesday-Night Series Continues October 8!

Make plans for you and your family to attend dinner in the parish hall and then programs for children, youth, and adults begin at 6:00pm. *Menu: Caddo's corn bread dressing, pinto beans, creamed potatoes, salad, squash casserole, & apple crisp. Bagel Bites for the kids. \$6/adult; \$4/child; \$24 max/family.*

The children will gather in the Parish Hall at 6:00pm with Sally Marsh and together go downstairs to meet up with volunteers where they will explore the topic "I Am" through arts & crafts and games. The children will return to the Parish Hall at 6:45pm. Join us and bring a friend!

Sunday, October 12: Fall Break

- **No Sunday School and No Children's Church**

Sally Marsh • Director of Children's Ministries • (256) 353-9615 ext.104 • sally@stjohnsdecatur.org

EYC (6th-12th Grades)



Wednesday dinner & program continues this Wednesday, October 8, with dinner at 5:30pm and program from 6:00-6:45pm. We will study some of the beliefs, practices, and traditions of Islam together this week.

EYC Tailgate Party this Friday, October 10, 5:30pm in the St. John's parking lot. All youth and their family and friends are invited to come for a free meal before the night's football games! Bring your own tailgate chair.



Sunday, October 12:

- Holy Eucharist services at 8:00 & 10:30am and 5:00pm
- No Sunday school or EYC – enjoy your Fall Break!



EYC Retreat (to be held November 7-9) registration is open! You won't want to miss our annual retreat to Camp McDowell. Please follow this link for more information and to sign up:

<http://bit.ly/EYCretreat2014>

Ski trip registration is open! Follow this link for instructions to register: <http://bit.ly/EYCski2015>. Deposits are due November 2.

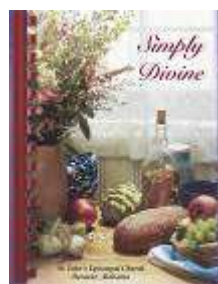


LOOKING AHEAD

- ✦ **Bring Your Parents to EYC**, October 19, 6:00-7:30pm
- ✦ **Halloween Carnival**, October 29, 5:30pm
- ✦ **EYC Soccer Tournament**, November 2

Kristin Hanson • Director of Youth Ministries • (256) 353-9615 ext.104 • kristin@stjohnsdecatur.org

Reserve Your Copy of the New St. John's Simply Divine Cookbook



Reserve your copy of the new St. John's Simply Divine Cookbook! Print the form from the below link (extras for friends and family to order), fill in and return to the church office with your check made payable to St. John's with "Cookbook" on the memo line.

\$20 each! Reserve your copy today!
Print the [Cookbook Reserve Form](#).

ST. JOHN'S SIMPLY DIVINE BAKE SALE IS SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2014

United Thank Offering



Bring Your stuffed "Blue Box" to church Sunday. We will collect these on October 12 during each service in thanksgiving for our many blessings. United Thank Offering (UTO) is a ministry of the Episcopal Church for the mission of the whole church. UTO monies support mission and ministry throughout the Episcopal Church.

Learn more>><http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/united-thank-offering>.

Sunday Schedule

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, October 12

[Daily Office](#) and [Sunday Readings \(Track 2\)](#)

7:45 a.m. Childcare provided through the 10:30am service

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Rite I)

8:45 a.m. Continental Breakfast, Parish Hall

No Sunday School Classes for children & youth

9:30 a.m. Newspaper Article Discussion Class, Parish Hall

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Rite II) – No Children's Church

5:00 p.m. Evening Eucharist

No EYC

Vestry Representative Joe Propst	8:00 a.m.	10:30 a.m.
LEM	Sally Bibb, M.M. Tweedy	June Hall, Kristin Hanson
Bread	Carolyn Price	
Lectors Sunday Readings (Track 2)	Melissa Christopher	Caroline Hughes
Acolytes	Sam Clay S Jack Singley C	Blaine Irwin ES, Mary V Holman GS, McCauley Smith C, Hilton Wiley & Ethan Thomas TB
Ushers	Mike Adams	Jack Thomas, John Thornton, Hagler Wiley, Bob Bell
Childcare	Mary Newman, Joanne Peterson	
Flower ReArranger	Sandra Pippen	
Flower Delivery	Janet & Danny Morgan	

Save the Dates

- **St. John's Halloween Carnival is Wednesday, October 29, at 5:30pm** Start planning your costume; the church office staff has theirs planned! You don't want to miss this year's carnival in the Parish Hall & back lawn area. Food, games, fun, and prizes!
- **Newcomer's Social November 1** St. John's will host a newcomer social November 1 from 5:00-6:30pm at the home of Cassandra and Harry Moore (633 Jackson Street SE, Decatur; 256-306-9817). It will be an opportunity for newcomers to meet the clergy and other parishioners in a relaxed, informal setting. You don't need to be a member of the church to attend. If you are (relatively) new to St. John's and have not attended a newcomer gathering, we would be very pleased to have you join us!
- **St. John's Next Work Day is Saturday, November 1** "Many hands make light work" Our next work day will be Saturday, November 1, from 8 to Noon.

Upcoming Vestry Nominations

Beginning on November 1, we will receive nominations for the Vestry election, which will be held at the parish's Annual Meeting on January 25, 2015. Any confirmed adult communicant in good standing (i.e., comes to church and makes a pledge) is eligible for election. Prayerfully consider whether you or someone you know would make a good member of the Vestry. More information about nominations and elections will be published in the coming weeks.

St. John's Faithfulness

For the 40th week ending October 2, 2014

Required weekly	Received this week	Required to date	Received to date
\$15,079	\$8,880	\$603,160	\$532,486

Current Building Fund Debt: \$338,927.57

St. John's holds tithing—the giving of the first 10% of our financial resources to God's work in the world—as the expected practice for Christians. We believe that proportional giving is integral to spiritual growth. The Rector tithes and each member of the Vestry is either tithing or taking specific steps toward achieving that goal. We invite all households in the parish to join us in faithful stewardship by calculating what percentage of their resources they give to God and by developing a plan to become titheers. **A copy of the parish's full financial reports is available in the Church Office. If you have any questions, please contact the Treasurer, D. Hall.*

Our Prayers and Thanksgivings

Our Prayers and Thanksgivings

We pray for family and friends who are ill or distressed: Allison Alexander, John Baggette, Karen Cunningham-Becker, Mary Bingham, Kenny Burnett, Ava Campbell, Aaron Castell, Fionn Crimmins, Mary Daniels, Sara Dement, Anne Eich, Linda Engelman, Jeannette Evans, Wally Evans, Eddie Finn, Curtis Freeman, Mae Garner, Sally Jo Green, Diane Gruman, June Hall, Peggy & Talmadge Hall, Jr., Steve Hammond, Jamie Harold, Tania Harris, Randy Haynes, Marty Heaner, Harold Henneman, Helen Holland, Sherry Holland, Duffie Hughes, Valerie Hunter, Barbara Johnson, Bailey Jones, Denise Jones, Lil Jordan, Katy Kavanagh, Karla Kohl, James Land, Roy Landers, Jane Hollon Lee, Mary Letson, Dena Lewis, Anne & Harry McConnell, Virginia McLeod, Erin Merker, Tommy Meuth, Jerry Moore, Ross Newman, Nancy O'Flinn, Will Parish, Joanne Peterson, Mary Ford Pheny, Bill Poole, Bethany Pridmore, Muse Reed, Scott Richards, Braelyn Richardson, Margaret Sellers, Dwight Smith, Jeannie Smith, Nathan Smith, Scott Snider, Emma Strane, Michael Terry, Paula Thomas, Stacy Singley Townsend, Geraldine Tubb, Brian Waters, Chuck Weaver, Carolyn Webb, and Danny Williams.

We pray for those who serve in and with the Armed Forces, especially: Michael Blair, Steven Blair, Lindsey Cantrell, Trey Colantonio, Chad Harper, Christopher Harwell, Gray Keenum, Mark Nelson, Jonathan Roth, and Jason Skiby.

We pray for: Sarah Miller, our seminarian; for Good Shepherd, Decatur; Saint Luke's, Birmingham; Saint Luke's, Scottsboro; for our companion diocese of Haiti and its bishops, Zache and Oge; for the Trustees of the Diocese Trust Funds; Board and staff of the Church Pension Fund; and for the staff and pilgrims of Cursillo #195 taking place at Camp McDowell October 9-12.

If you are hospitalized or in need of a clergy visit, please notify the Church Office (256-353-9615). Please remember that area hospitals do not notify us about admissions.

Upcoming Birthdays & Anniversaries

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Aaron Lang 10/07
Kelly Hughes 10/09
Lauren Calame 10/11
Ann Gebhart 10/11
Kathy Slaton 10/11
Hagler Wiley 10/11
Cooper Lang 10/12
Henry McCrary 10/13
Mallory Anderson 10/14

Alana Haugaboo 10/14
Susan Horton 10/14
Stephen Greenleaf 10/15
Ed Land 10/15
Jud Pheny 10/15
Lauren Wenzler 10/18
David Metcalf 10/19
Paula Barnes 10/21
Jan Bawzel 10/22
Jodi Irwin 10/22
Jack Charlton 10/23
Nell Clem 10/23
Gus Phillips 10/23

Steve Fletcher 10/24
Kappie Dunn 10/25
Julia Bounds 10/26
Kim Davis 10/26
Sandy Barr 10/27
Hanna Shelley 10/27
Hunter Shelley 10/27
Hayden Shelley 10/27
Julie Hall 10/28
Elizabeth Pheny 10/28
Henry McFarland 10/28
Kevin Crumlish 10/29

Happy Anniversary

Amy & Matt Calame 10/23
Jessica & Shawn Borden 10/25

*If your event is not included, please
forgive us. Contact the church office
to update your information.*

256-353-9615 or
churchoffice@stjohnsdecatur.org

OCTOBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 7:45am Childcare 8:00am Holy Eucharist I 8:45am Breakfast 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Holy Eucharist II 5:00pm Evening Eucharist & Blessing of the Animals No EYC	6 10:00am Rector's Bible Study 6:00pm EfM	7 7:00am Men's Brkfst & Bible Study 8-9:30am Yoga Level 2 9:15am Staff Meeting	8 8:30am Yoga Level 1 12:10pm Healing Eucharist 5:30pm Dinner & Programs 6:45pm Choir Rehearsal	9 9:00am Centering Prayer 5:15pm Theology on Tap, The Brick Cursillo Weekend #195 @ Camp McDowell	10 7:00am Men's Reunion Group 8-9:30am Yoga Level 2 8am-3pm PACT Diaper Drop 5:30pm EYC Tailgate Cursillo #195	11 Cursillo #195 @ Camp McDowell
12 UTO In-Gathering 7:45am Childcare 8:00am Holy Eucharist I 8:45am Continental Breakfast No Sunday School children & youth 9:30am Newspaper Article Discussion Class, Parish Hall 10:30am Holy Eucharist II 5:00pm Evening Eucharist Cursillo #195 Concludes No EYC	13 No Rector's Bible Study 6:00pm EfM	14 No Men's Bible Study 8-9:30am Yoga Level 2 9:15am Staff Meeting 10:15am Sing-A-Long	15 8:30am Yoga Level 1 12:10pm Healing Eucharist 5:30pm Dinner & Programs 6:45pm Choir Rehearsal	16 9:00am Centering Prayer 5:15pm Theology on Tap, The Brick	17 7:00am Men's Reunion Group 8-9:30am Yoga Level 2	18
19 7:45am Childcare 8:00am Holy Eucharist I 8:45am Breakfast 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Holy Eucharist II 11:45am Stewardship Lunch 5:00pm Evening Eucharist 6:00pm EYC	20 10:00am Rector's Bible Study 6:00pm EfM	21 7:00am Men's Brkfst & Bible Study 8-9:30am Yoga Level 2 9:15am Staff Meeting	22 8:30am Yoga Level 1 12:10pm Healing Eucharist 5:30pm Dinner & Programs (Stewardship) 6:45pm Choir Rehearsal	23 9:00am Centering Prayer 5:15pm Theology on Tap, The Brick	24 7:00am Men's Reunion Group 8-9:30am Yoga Level 2 Diocese Camp Day Weekend	25 Diocese Camp Day Weekend
26 Diocese Camp Day Concludes 7:45am Childcare 8:00am Holy Eucharist I 8:45am Breakfast 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Holy Eucharist II 3:00pm Parish Picnic & Evening Eucharist No EYC	27 10:00am Rector's Bible Study 6:00pm EfM	28 7:00am Men's Brkfst & Bible Study 8-9:30am Yoga Level 2 12:10pm Stewardship – bring a sack lunch	29 8:30am Yoga Level 1 12:10pm Healing Eucharist 5:30pm Halloween Carnival 6:45pm Choir Rehearsal	30 9:00am Centering Prayer 5:15pm Theology on Tap, The Brick Outreach Grant Applications Due Today	31 7:00am Men's Reunion Group 8-9:30am Yoga Level 2	1 8am-Noon Work Day 5:00pm Newcomer's Social

St. John's Parish Staff & Vestry

THE PARISH STAFF Office Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 9:00 a.m.-Noon; 1:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
p 256-353-9615 | f 256-350-0514

The Rev. Evan D. Garner, *Rector, ext. 102*; evan@stjohnsdecatur.org

The Rev. J. Seth Olson, *Curate, ext. 103*; seth@stjohnsdecatur.org

Vickie Reed, *Financial Administrator, ext. 101*; vickie@stjohnsdecatur.org

Kristin Hanson, *Director of Youth Ministries, ext. 104*; kristin@stjohnsdecatur.org

Sally Marsh, *Director of Children's Ministries, ext. 104*; sally@stjohnsdecatur.org

Ann Stewart, *Director of Communications, ext. 105*; ann@stjohnsdecatur.org

Pamela Payne, *Choirmaster*

Foster Bailey, *Organist*

Joanne Peterson, *Nursery*

Mary Newman, *Nursery*

Ken Schuppert, *Chancellor*

D. Hall, *Treasurer*

Stan Evans, *Assistant Treasurer*

THE VESTRY

Class of 2014 Bobby Greene, *Senior Warden*; Cassandra Moore; Clint Shelton; M.M. Tweedy; Renee Wenzler.

Class of 2015 Dodie Hall, *Junior Warden*; Janet Morgan; Karen Sawyer; Bobby Straub; Jack Thomas, Jr.

Class of 2016 Joe Propst; Julia Roth; Carol Sartain; Julie Sneed; Grant Thompson

Margret Ann Templeton, *Clerk of the Vestry*

St. John's Episcopal Church • 202 Gordon Drive SE • Decatur, AL 35601

