

The Grapevine

Ocean Springs, Mississippi

stjohnsoceansprings.dioms.org

Why Do We Celebrate Joseph of Arimathea?

According to all four canonical Gospels, Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy Jewish man and a respected member of the Sanhedrin (the high council). He was also a "secret disciple" who had quietly followed Jesus' public ministry out of fear of social and political repercussions from his peers.

However, immediately after the Crucifixion, Joseph cast aside his anonymity. At great personal and political risk, he boldly went to Pontius Pilate to beg for Jesus' body so he could provide a proper burial. Episcopalians honor him as a powerful example of a Christian who overcame fear to take a public, sacrificial stand for Christ when it mattered most.

The Gospels note that Joseph purchased fine linen, helped take Jesus down from the cross, and laid him in his own newly hewn rock tomb. He acted with profound reverence at a time when Jesus' closest disciples had fled or were hiding in fear. In the Episcopal tradition, this act is celebrated as a model of devotion, care, and love for Christ.

Episcopalians value the connection between the Old and New Testaments. Christians traditionally view Joseph's act of burying Jesus in his own expensive tomb as the direct fulfillment of Isaiah 53:9. The prophecy states that the grave of the "Suffering Servant" would be "with a rich man," anchoring Joseph's historical actions within the broader biblical arc of salvation.

A straightforward man who noticed injustice and, despite potential community resistance and a tense political climate, took a stand and promoted acts of kindness and righteousness. This is what we celebrate.

Key Celebrations During August:

- August 1: The Feast of St. Joseph of Arimathea
- August 6: The Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord
- August 15: The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- August 24: The Feast of St. Bartholomew, Apostle
- August 29: The Beheading of St. John the Baptist

SAINTS & SINNERS MINISTRY

Saints & Sinners is one of the St. John's outreach ministries, serving our unsheltered neighbors by assembling blessing bags filled with toiletries, snacks, and other necessities for distribution through local organizations.

We meet twice each month for service and fellowship, and new members are always welcome! For more information, contact Aaron Dean.

Next Meeting:
Tuesday, Aug. 11, at 6:00 p.m. at Bacchus on the Bayou.

Next Assembly:
Thursday, August 20, at 9:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR VESTRY

On behalf of the Vestry, I want to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us for "Visit with the Vestry" during the recent Wonderful Wednesday. It was an absolute joy to connect, share updates, and listen to your thoughts and ideas. Your presence, engagement, and love for our church are what make St. John's such a vibrant and special community.

I also want to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude to the incredible teams of volunteers who have given so much of their time and energy over these summer months.

Thank you to those who rolled up their sleeves and worked tirelessly to complete the essential flooring repairs in Woods Hall. Your hard work has beautifully restored a vital gathering space for our parish.

- Stacey Butera, Senior Warden

PIES & PROSE · 2026 ·

BRING A PIE TO SHARE

(WITH SWEET OR SAVORY AN INSPIRATION)

HEAR SOME READING

BY LOCAL AUTHORS READ FROM
THEIR PUBLISHED WORK.



AUGUST 14, 2026

6.30 PM

ST. JOHN'S
PARISH HALL

\$25



SCAN TO PAY



St. John's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

We add quarterly
studies to make it fun!
— Rebecca Miller



First Sunday of the Month

Thanks to the generosity of St. John's parishioners, the Samaritan Food Pantry received 538 food items and \$225 in July. We are grateful to everyone who shared so generously. The Daughters of the King also blessed the pantry with an additional \$200 donation. Our next "First Sunday of the Month" collection will be Sunday, August 2.

This month's requested items are:

- Canned vegetables
- Jelly
- Peanut butter
- Macaroni and cheese

The shopping cart will be on the porch from 7:30 to 11:15 a.m. on Sunday, August 2, and is always available for donations in the hallway next to the receptionist's office. Thank you for continuing to support this meaningful ministry and helping care for our neighbors in need.



Daughters of the King: DOK meets on the first Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be Tuesday, Aug. 4, at 10:30 a.m. in the Parish Hall. Daughters of the King are dedicated to service and prayer. Any woman prayerfully considering becoming a daughter, please get in touch with Virginia Montgomery at (228) 238-4230.

MERRY WIDOWS

The MerryWidows is a parish social group centered on good food, warm fellowship, and joyful connection. The group meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 11:00 a.m. at a designated local restaurant.

Originally formed for widows within the parish, the group has happily expanded and now welcomes all women of the parish who enjoy fellowship and sharing a meal—widow or not.

If you're looking for a relaxed, friendly way to connect with others at St. John's, don't hesitate to get in touch with Lena Melton at (228) 219-9711 for more information.

Treasurer's Half-Time Report

We ended the first half of 2026 on solid financial footing and in line with our projections. The budget projected \$276,071 in total revenue for the first half of the year, and actual revenue was \$276,050. We expected to spend \$256,177, and expenses were \$249,349. These results were achieved by reducing expenses through vendor negotiations and increasing revenue in previously underutilized areas, such as building use, to offset shortfalls in other areas.

In addition to these operating numbers, donors contributed \$71,178 to restricted accounts to fund projects such as renovations to the Ruddiman House, which will become the Art House, as well as accessibility improvements that welcome all. Restricted gifts allow us to grow ministries in ways that cannot be achieved in an annual budget. Restricted or unrestricted, every gift makes a difference.

The second half of the year will likely present challenges. Growth often comes with equal parts of joy and anxiety. Construction tends to take longer and cost more than anticipated. Year-end price increases seem to arrive at the worst possible time. And yet, with God's help and yours, we will accomplish our goals and finish the year strong in faith and full of gratitude.

Grapevine St. John's

St. John's Episcopal Church
705 Rayburn Avenue
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

Electronic Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
PERMIT NUMBER 20
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

