

Deadline to submit articles for "The Epistle" is the 15th of each month.

Jan. 9 • Noon • Women's Bible Study resumes

Jan. 15 • Parish Office Closed in observance of Martin Luther King Day

Jan. 16 • 5:15 p.m. • Vestry Meeting

Jan. 17 • 5:30 p.m. • Wednesday Night Suppers resume

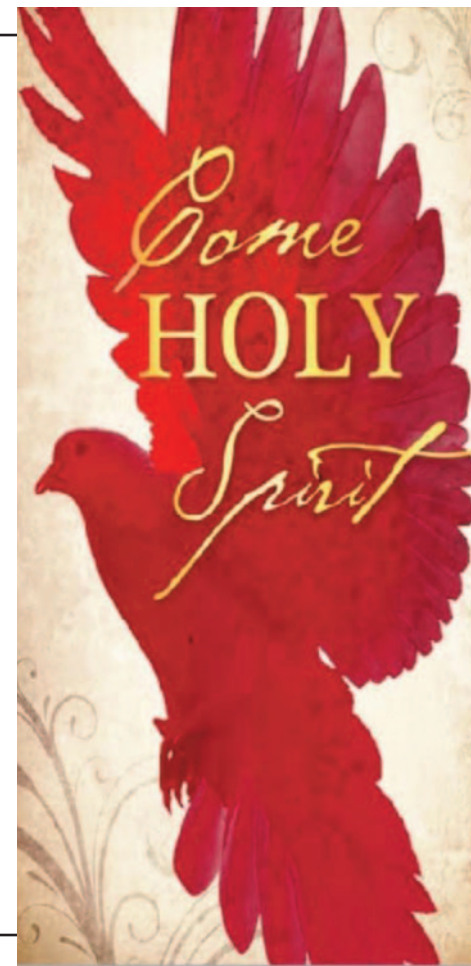
Jan. 21 • 9 a.m. • Annual Meeting in the Parish Hall, brunch served

197th Annual Council Will Elect New Bishop

Three churches will host the 197th Annual Council February 2-4 — St. James' (Jackson), St. Christopher's (Jackson) and Grace (Canton). The event will take place at St. Andrew's Episcopal School on their North Campus, 370 Old Agency Road, Ridgeland, MS 39157.

The 2024 Council will be the final presided over by the Rt. Rev. Brian Seage as we will elect the 11th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi. The election will be set for Saturday, so attendees are encouraged to hit town on Friday. After the activities on Saturday, delegations and visitors are invited to celebrate in the Commons at St. Andrew's to enjoy an indoor/outdoor dinner and dance, with food catered by Mangia Bene and live music by The Red Hots.

To register for the event, go to <https://council.dioms.org/>.



Are We Authentic with Rizz?

Every year I always enjoy looking at the words of the year according to Merriam-Webster and Oxford English Dictionary. The word, according to the Oxford University Press, has "lasting cultural significance," and "provides a snapshot of social history." It is a great way to see the year in review as if it were a bumper sticker.

This year, narrowly beating out "Swiftly," the slang word for Taylor Swift fans, there are two words that are above the rest, and I believe are linked for Christian people.

First, Merriam-Webster's word of the year is "authentic." The word authentic has several meanings including "not false or imitated," a synonym of real and actual. It also means "true to one's own personality, spirit, or character." It's desirable to be authentic but it is one of those words that is hard to describe which is why many people turn to the dictionary.

And then Oxford English Dictionary's word of the year is "rizz." Now if you are unfamiliar with this word you are not alone. I had to look it up too. When I think of this word I think of Rizzo from Grease when John Travolta's character Danny says "You're looking good, Rizz." and the character Rizzo, played by Stockard Channing responds, "Eat your heart out."

Oxford's official definition of "rizz" means "style, charm or attractiveness" or "the ability to attract a romantic partner." We'll save the second definition for another day. But "rizz" is believed to have been taken from the middle of "charisma," much like "fridge" derives from refrigerator. But "rizz" is fun to say and is becoming more popular all the time.

People who have become linked with the term range

from actor Tom Holland who said this summer, "I have no rizz whatsoever." This priest often shares the same sentiment.

I believe these are two very fitting words as we move into the new year. It's especially appropriate as we consider our vision for both our parish and the diocese. I wonder what it means for Christ's Church, for St. Paul's, for us to be people who are "authentic" and to have "rizz."

When people outside of St. Paul's think of us, I wonder how they would describe us? Would they say we are *authentic*, that we true to the Gospel... that we are real in the way we care for our neighbor? Is our spirit and character, above all things, about sharing Christ's unconditional love with the broader community?

And, if the answer is yes to these questions, I would go as far as to say this is our "rizz."

Jesus certainly had "rizz." Jesus had authentic charm by the way he lived. After all, we are talking about his life and ministry two thousand years later. It was in the way he loved, healed and saw people for who they were that gave him his "rizz."

I invite you to share with me in considering where the church's "rizz" is found? What is it about our faith that genuinely attracts people? How might our "rizz" always increase and better mirror the one who lived, loved and died for all people? At our best, this is the most appealing, attractive and dare I say lasting aspect of Christians.

Austin

The Episcopal Community of Meridian Invites You to

THE BURNING OF THE GREENS

Sunday, January 7
6:00 PM

The Episcopal Church of the Mediator
With Hot Cocoa and S'mores



Thank you!

Thank you! We are most appreciative to the parish for all the remembrances offered at Christmas and year's end. Thank you for your generosity and thoughtfulness. From Christmas bonuses to treats and gifts to goodies, we are moved by your kindness especially during this past holiday season.

—David, Joane, Judy, John, Brenda, Denise, Rita, Fr. Austin and Mtr. Katie.

Annual Meeting
Gather
January 21, 2024
Parish Hall 9 a.m.

Reminding all Committee Chairpersons, Vestry liaisons to get your reports in by Monday, January 15, in order to be included in the Annual Meeting booklet.

Vestry Nominations Open

Nominations are open to elect three new members of the Vestry to serve three-year terms. Forms for nominations are available at the entrances to Nave and on the bulletin board in the hallway and will be accepted until Jan. 15.

A potential vestry member must be a confirmed communicant, at least 21 years of age, must be canonically resident and actually residing in the parish (letter of membership on file); must be entitled to suffrage at annual meeting at which elected; cannot have served on the Vestry in previous three years (though such person is immediately eligible to stand for nomination as Warden); and shall not serve more than six consecutive years in that or a combination of vestry member/warden offices unless said individual has served a portion of a former term (i.e. filled an unexpired term).

Note: Though not stipulated by parish bylaw, members “in good standing” are preferred Vestry nominees, meaning: those persons of record noted through their regular attendance at worship and parish community opportunities and who have received communion no fewer than four times in the past year, as well as being givers of time, talent and/or treasure to the ministries of the parish.

Prior to the Annual Parish Meeting, potential Vestry members will meet with the Rector; consent to the parish's Vestry Covenant; and commit to attend the Annual Vestry retreat, which is scheduled for Feb. 24.



BISHOP SEARCH
Diocese of MS

Candidate Meet and Greets

January 17th, 2024
St. James, Greenville
Check-in: 5:30 pm; Starts 6:00 pm

January 18th, 2024
All Saints, Tupelo
Check-in: 5:30 pm; Starts 6:00 pm

January 19th, 2024
Coast Episcopal School, Long Beach
Check-in: 5:30 pm; Starts 6:00 pm

January 20th, 2024
Chapel of the Cross, Madison
Check-in: 10:00 am; Starts 10:30 am

Bishop Meet and Greets

All of the “Meet and Greets” will be live-streamed so those who cannot attend can watch.

Beginning December 1 there will be an RSVP form on the Bishop Search website <http://msbishopsearch.com/nominees> for those planning to attend.

We Remember in our Prayers

For our Parish family: Chip Harwell, Don Pringle, DJ Wells, Elliott Street, Eve Morrison, Jerome Kittrell, Jerry Wayton, Jo Van Devender, Kay Dickson, Larry Nowak, Lynn Waddle, Margaret Van Dyke, Mary Dunn, Patrick Leach, Pearce Dickson, Peggy Carrico, Tee, Wanda Blount and Woodie Abraham.

In our senior living Communities: Elinor Quick, Joyce Welsh, Lora Jones Mary Weems and Susan Hamilton.

Extended family and friends: Alisha Crowell, Betty Perry, Bill Selman, Bill Slay, Brooke, Charlotte Chaney, Christy Covert, Christopher Alexander, Clancy, Colt Chancellor, Cory Gaylord, Davey Simmons, David, Diane Dunn, Donna Polizzi, Emily Rush, Evie Warden, Francois DuPlessis, Frances Leach, Frank Baker, Frank Barrett, Gail Richardson, George Farr, Hays Monsour, Jacob Neely, Jada Dooley, James, Jan, Jeana Bennett, Jo Nell Brown, Jim McGinnis, Jim Thompson, John, John Via, Josiah Christian, Ken Fisher, Kevin Williams, Kylie Temple, Lamar McKenzie, Lanier McCullough, Leland Tew, Lou Dubose, Martha Mazingo, Marti & Will Sorey, Mason, Matt White, Michelle Nelson, Mike Covert, Mize, Norman, Pat Carver, Paul Parker, Phyllis Campbell, Rachel Neely, Randy Moore, Richard Graham, Rick, Sandra Gray, Sandy Carrier, Shirley Hunter Croft, Steve Waddle, Susan Nichols, Tammy, Thomas Little, Tom Blackledge, Tom Schram, Travis Sadler, Trent Hartzog, Tyler Rainey, Wanda Farr, Wanda Scott, Willie Spencer and Zack Martin.

We pray for those who have died especially. Ross Spencer; Linda Slawson, former wife of The Rev. Tom Slawson; Bill Rainey, uncle of Poo Chancellor; and Cheri Barry.

We pray for those serving in the Armed Forces, for all who serve overseas and their families, especially Andrew Behm, Shum Benson, Cody Blackwell, Connor Covert, Graham Ford, Luke Graham, Zack Hendericks, Brooks Hull, Nick Mullen and DJ Robinson.

We pray for our candidates for Bishop and their families; Dorothy, Jason, Jennifer, Rob and Walton.

We pray for our Bishop Brian, for our Rector Austin and his family and our Curate Katie.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Jan. 8Rick Barry, Juliet McDonald, Tiffany McGehee	Jan. 19Mark Davis, Rick & Joanne Entrekin,
Jan. 9Scott Carmichael, Melissa Hudson, Justin Smith,	Gavin Smith
Jan. 11Clay & Laura Holladay, Merrell White	Jan. 20Jo VanDevender
Jan. 12Bob Rea	Jan. 21Mark & Nancy Davis
Jan. 13Remy Stump	Jan. 22Robert & Candy Ward
Jan. 14Candy Ward	Jan. 23Scott Hudson
Jan. 15Rainey Breaux, Robby Dreyfus	Jan. 27Elizabeth Scott Bond, Anthony Hiatt,
Jan. 16Robert Ward	Liam Morphis
Jan. 17Anna Katherine Carrier, Reid Davis,	Jan. 28Sandy Singleton, Zach & Hallie Swindoll
Chris & Julie Stump	Jan. 30Hunter Howell, Carolyn Jones, Kay Milhorn,
	Mike Reich

Services

	JAN. 7	JAN. 14	JAN. 21	JAN. 28
VESTRY COUNTERS				
8 A.M.				
CHALICE	Bob Covert	Malcom Gee	John Carrier	Bob Covert
READER	Polly Covert	Malcom Gee	John Carrier	Polly Covert
USHER	Bob Covert	Malcom Gee	John Carrier	Bob Covert
10:30 A.M. ANNUAL MEETING/9 A.M.				
READER 1	Katie Simmons	Rick Entrekin	John Compton	Melissa Calcote
READER 2	Gary Jones	Mallory Davis	Jo Benson	Jerome Kittrell
PRAYERS	Stacey Harwell	Candy Ward	Joan Moore	Bobbie Rea
USHERS	Chris Burchfield	Jim Miller	Lisa Howell	Mallory Davis
	Perrin Burchfield	Marsha Miller	John Howell	Rick Davis
ACOLYTES	Rowan Hanschke	Hardin Hiatt	Lucy Simmons	Ann Revere Davis
	Payton Hanschke	Henry Hiatt	Sellers Breaux	William Davis
	Britton Dunn	Remy Stump	Carlyle Breaux	Simmons Davis
ALTAR GUILD	Candy Ward	Candy Ward	Gayle Yochim	Gayle Yochim
	Lee Loeb	Lee Loeb	Stacey Harwell	Stacey Harwell
CHALICE	Barbara Boone	Gloria Chancellor		