

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

January 9 — 5:30 p.m. — Celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. There will be a brief service on the Patio. Following the service, we will enjoy a meal of hamburgers, hot dogs and chili. Parishioners are asked to bring sides and desserts.

January 11— Annual Reports due in Parish Office, Friday, January 11, to be printed in the Annual Meeting Program.

January 20 — Annual Parish Meeting – One service 9:30 a.m. Followed by meal in Parish Hall.

January 21 — Parish Office closed Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 23 — Eucharist and Healing service resumes at 12:05 p.m.

## Notes from November Vestry Meeting

By Lynne Taleff

An exciting note from the November Vestry Meeting was the presentation by Marcia Via and Bobbie Rea of a fundraising event to benefit Outreach on Saturday, May 11. They have met with a group of about 25 or 30 parishioners who are interested in helping and did some brainstorming together. The intent is to include everyone in the parish to work on this and to make it an annual event. They shared some wonderful ideas and we look forward to helping make it happen. Bobbie Rea, Lauretta Hamilton and Marcia will comprise the Steering Committee.

Rick Entrekin, our hardworking Jr. Warden, continues to address the ongoing repairs and maintenance of our buildings and grounds. He may be trapping squirrels, seeing to roof leaks or checking the boilers and sticking doors, but he is always up to the job. I appreciate his many hours spent doing repairs himself and often with his "sidekick" Wayne or others who give of their talent to save us expensive repairs.

Preliminary work on the budget began in November and continues into December. We are grateful to all those who have pledged and those who were able to increase their pledges. The vestry acknowledged the time and work put in by Wayne Wuestefeld and Rick Barry who led the Stewardship Campaign. God is good and His people have responded! The vestry will continue to be prudent and thoughtful in our budgeting process.

It is time to be thinking about vestry members for 2019 to replace the three persons who will be rotating off after the annual meeting. Please consider what gifts you may offer by serving on the vestry and know that you will find joy in the work. We would like to have nomination forms filled out and turned in to the office by January 11 in advance of the Annual Meeting on January 20.

As we pray at each meeting, may we be sensitive to God's call to us and may we be guided by the Holy Spirit in our deliberations and decisions.

*Paul asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord answered, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you. I will rescue you from your people and from the Gentiles — to whom I am sending you to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light... so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'" -Acts 26:9-21*

January is one of those months where something is going on every weekend. The first Sunday is Epiphany Sunday, where the magi find their way by the star to the Messiah. The second Sunday is The Baptism of our Lord, where we will renew our own baptism and take on the difficult journey ahead as disciples of Jesus. The Third Sunday we have our annual meeting, where we will appoint new leaders for St. Paul's for our Vestry. Finally, the last weekend in January, we will gather as a diocese for annual council. In the middle of it all, there is an ordination at the cathedral, a chili dinner and the burning of the greens.

Then there is the conversion of St. Paul, our patron saint, who we commemorate on January 25. It is the story of the moment that changed Saul, the persecutor of Christians, into the one who would spread the Gospel to the Gentiles. It's a pivotal event in the Christian faith but it barely gets any recognition. So, for everything else going on, I'm going to talk about Paul and how his encounter with the Spirit transformed him into God's servant.

I have always envied the characters in scripture who had personal experiences with God. Yes, I have felt, as you have, the Holy Spirit being undeniable present often in the most unexpected moments. Never though, does it happen in the way it did for Paul. He was on the road to Damascus alongside companions when he "saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around him. He was struck blind, fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

## We Are Appointed

Most often in the Episcopal Church, we associate conversion with Baptism. It happens when we emerge from that water adopted as children of God. This is eternally true thanks be to God. At the same time, there is something different about Paul's conversion, isn't there? He was anything but one who God would appoint. He was anything but equipped to love and care for the children of God. Those who threw their stones at Stephen, the first martyr, laid their coats at Saul's feet. As far as we know Paul was on his way to Damascus with soldiers to destroy the newest believers of Christ. Yet the Spirit appointed Paul. And because of that, *we* are Christians.

One of the most misinterpreted in all of scripture — *metanoia* — *μετάνοια*— is the Greek word for conversion or repent. Conversion and repent do not mean to be sorry. It is much more about a change of heart, the change in the way of seeing people and our place in creation. Paul was transformed through the power of the Spirit in a way that altered every aspect of his being.

Paul's conversion was incredible but for most of us it isn't always as dramatic. More often, the change of our heart is a lifelong process. It takes God calling us, often again and again, before we are willing to respond, "Who are you Lord? Who are you to ask me to change my whole being? Who are you Lord who would appoint me?"

My hope for us all this month is to stay open to conversion. When all of the business is carried out, when the greens are burned, the magi follow the star, the Spirit also calls to us. I hope we, too, might learn to see how the spirit moves in our time. How open are we to conversion and a change in heart? How willing are we to carry out God's mission of radical love in Meridian?

Like Paul, God transforms us, molds us and uses us. We are appointed to get up and stand on our feet because we are appointed to "serve and testify to those who appear to us." We are sent to "open the eyes of all people" knowing that all of us have a place at God's table.

*Austin*



*St Pauls outreach committee delivered lots of warm coats, socks and insulated mugs just in time for this freezing night! Ducky McCormick, Beth Wuestefeld and Catherine Little had fun shopping!*



## We Remember in our Prayers

*For our Parish family:* Annie Melton, Dave Russell, Dixie Pigford, DJ Wells, Edgar Morrison, Hardy Graham Sr., Jamie Lancaster Smith, Jean Merrell, Jerry Greene, Jo Van Devender, Joe White, John Carrier, III., Lee Graham, Mary Scott, Norma Veach, Peggy Carrico, Robbie Morrison, Rob Ward, Terry Rush and William Godwin.

*For those in our Senior Living Communities:* Deanie Carmichael, Elise Leach, Joyce Welsh, Linda James, Lora Jones and Nita Neville.

*For extended family and friends:* Agnes Lewis, Alice Miller, Ally Gressett, Alixus Hearn, Amanda Lockey, Anna Meyers, AnnLee, Barbara Johnston, Barbaree Heaster, Baston Geiger, Bill Selman, Barbara Hull, Billy Hull, Bridget Mann, Caroline Rush, Cathy Parker, Cheryl Drennan, Claudia McKibben, Cory Gaylord, Diane Dunn, Edesser "Dess" Reid Ward, Rob & Aislinn Ward, Evelyn, Frank Baker, Frank Barrett, Freddie Bea Watson, Hannah McNichol, Helen Valentine, Hulon Dearman, Jada Dooley, Jennifer Dial, John, Ken Fisher, Kylie Temple, Lane Wilkinson, Leigh Ann Key, Leslie Smith, Lou Dubose, Marilyn Mohr, Marsha Thomas, Mary Hallwell, Mary Irby, Michael Dial, Michelle Nelson, Nell Williams, Norman, Patricia Bonner, Philip Walk, Pud Merrell, Rick, Robert Kirkland, Sallie Gercens, Hannah Thompson, Seth Thompson, Stephanie Turner, Terry Dewayne Ivey, Tom Cook, Tom Schram, Victoria Dunn, and Wilfe Manning.

*For those who have died especially:* Dot Harrington; Jimmy Webb, family of Jean Merrell; and Janet Rossman Sinyard.

*For those serving in the Armed Forces,* for all who serve overseas and their families, especially Shum Benson, Connor Covert, Graham Ford, Andrew Behm, Nick Mullen, Brandon States and The 155th Combat Engineers.

*We pray for our Bishop Brian. We pray for our Rector Austin and his family.*

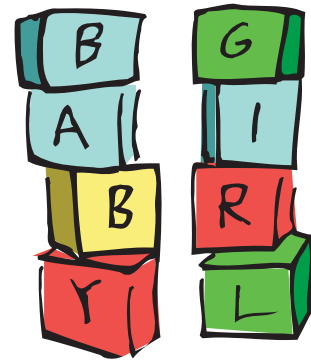
## Birthdays & Anniversaries

Jan. 1 .....Gene & Judy Wood	Jan. 16 .....Linda James, Robert Ward
Jan. 2 .....Jack Martin, Jim Miller	Jan. 17 .....Anna Katherine Carrier
Jan. 3 .....Scott & Rose Hudson, Cindy McGinnis, Jim McGinnis	Jan. 19 .....Mark Davis, Rick & Joanne Entrekin, Gavin Smith
Jan. 7 .....Kelly McQuaig	Jan. 20 .....Jo Van Devender
Jan. 8 .....Rick Barry, Juliet McDonald, Tiffany McGehee	Jan. 21 .....John Carrier III, Mark & Nancy Davis
Jan. 9 .....Scott Carmichael, Melissa Hudson, Jamie Smith, Jan Wayton	Jan. 22 .....Danny & Joane Mackey, Robert & Candy Ward
Jan. 10 .....Bobby & Sherree Maddox	Jan. 23 .....Scott Hudson
Jan. 11 .....Clay & Laura Holladay, Merrell White	Jan. 27 .....Elizabeth Scott Bond, Anthony Hiatt, Scott McQuaig, Liam Morphis
Jan. 12 .....Bob Rea	Jan. 28 .....Sandy Singleton
Jan. 14 .....Candy Ward	Jan. 30 .....Carolyn Jones, Hunter Howell, Kay Milhorn, Mike Reich
Jan.15 .....Rainey Breaux, Robby Dreyfus, Edgar & Robbie Morrison	Jan. 31 .....Cameron Burchfield

*Dear Church Members,*

*Thank you so much for remembering me at Christmas. The gift bag was very much appreciated and the youth groups from St. Paul's and the Mediator caroled just for me last night! I thank the Lord every night for you and the love you shower on me. I pray for you every night also. God bless you all!*

*Sincerely, Mary Scott*



*We rejoice in the birth of Anne Warren Swindoll born Dec. 2 . Little Anne Warren weighed 4 lbs., 4 oz. and was 18 inches long. The proud parents are Zak & Hallie Swindoll.*

## Vestry Nominations Open

We will elect three new members of the Vestry to serve three-year terms at our Annual Meeting, January 20. Forms for nominations are available at the entrances to Nave and on bulletin board in the hallways and must be received by January 14 to be printed in the Annual Meeting booklet. A potential vestry member must be a confirmed communicant; at least 21 years of age; must be canonically resident and actually residing 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). 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.

## Lay Ministry & Committee Chairman Reports

Reminder to submit your articles for 2018 by Friday, January 11 for your report to be printed in the Annual Meeting booklet.

## Plan to Attend the 192nd Annual Council

The 192nd Annual Council will be held at Lake Terrace Convention Center in Hattiesburg January 25-27. Online registration is open by downloading forms from [www.dioms.org](http://www.dioms.org). Opening service starts at 6 p.m. on Friday, January 25. After the opening service and first business session, there will be a blues themed reception at the convention center. Council's closing Eucharist will be on Sunday at 10 a.m. Children's church will be provided. St. Paul's has reserved a block of rooms for our delegates, alternates and other parishioners attending. If you would like to have a room reserved please contact Brandon Dunn at 601.479.4899 or [bdunn@wgates.com](mailto:bdunn@wgates.com).

## Services

	JANUARY 6	JANUARY 13	JANUARY 20	JANUARY 27
VESTRY COUNTERS	Larry Nowak & Page Sikes; Lock: Brandon Dunn			
8 A.M.			9:30 ONLY	ANNUAL CONFERENCE
CHALICE	Gloria Chancellor	John Carrier	Bob Covert & Rick Entrekin	
READER	Lynne Taleff	Ingrid Price	Anne Chalk	
USHER	John Carrier	Bob Covert		
10:30 A.M.	MORNING PRAYER			
READER 1	Everett Callais	Wayne Wuestefeld	Rick Barry	Rob Calcote
READER 2	Kay Reich	Bev Pringle	Mary Dunn	Catherine Little
PRAYERS	Joan Moore	Bobbie Rea	Stacey Harwell	Candy Ward
USHERS	Albree Florey	Laura Holladay	Larry Nowak	Edie Simmons
	Scotty Florey	Clay Holladay	Susan Nowak	Adrian Page
	Chris Burchfield	Rick Barry	Marsha Miller	Lisa Howell
	Gary Jones	Cheri Barry	Jim Miller	Lauretta Hamilton
ACOLYTES	Aryln Grace Sanders	Christopher Collis	Anna Katherine Carrier	AJ Page
	Shep Sanders	Hardin Hiatt	Elizabeth Scott Bond	Sellers Breaux
	Olivia Lewis	Henry Hiatt	Wyatt Bond	Carlyle Breaux
	Britton Dunn	Isabela Martin	Gibson Hasselle	Katie Hasselle
ALTAR GUILD	Lindy & Bob Deen	Lindy & Bob Deen	Bobbie Rea	Bobbie Rea
	BJ Ray	BJ Ray	Marilyn Greene	Marilyn Greene
	Linda Carrier	Linda Carrier	Rainey Breaux	Rainey Breaux
CHALICE	Sonya Carrier	Rob Calcote		



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. **THANKS!**

—Betty, David, Claire, Joane, John, Brenda, Denise, Rita and Fr. Austin

## EYC Schedule

### January

**1/13:** EYC meets at the Mediator from 5 - 7 p.m. Games, talks and fun!

**1/16:** EYC Film School returns! EYC'ers meet up in the movie room right after parish supper. We will begin the movie Raiders of the Lost Ark. The Gospel is everywhere, and we will find it!

**1/19:** Mississippi Civil Rights Museum Field Trip. We will head out on Saturday at 9 a.m. and return by 6 p.m. This is an offering for 5th – 12th graders. Please contact Claire Hasselle if your EYC'er is interested in going.

**1/23:** EYC Film School! Night two for Raiders of the Lost Ark.

**1/27:** No EYC! Everyone have safe travels to Annual Council in Hattiesburg.

**1/30:** EYC Film School! Third and final night for Raiders of the Lost Ark.

### February:

**2/3:** SUPER BOWL PARTY! Jr. and Sr. EYC meet at the Mediator at 5:30 p.m. to watch the Super Bowl on the big screen. Bring a snack and drink to share. We will be playing games of our own too! Come and have fun with us! Pick up is when the game is over.

**2/6:** EYC Film School! New movie: The Princess Bride. EYC'ers meet in the movie room right after parish supper.

**2/10:** EYC at St. Paul's from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. Worship, games, fun and fellowship! Come join us!

**2/13:** EYC Film School! Night two for The Princess Bride. EYC'ers meet in the movie room right after parish supper.

**2/17:** No EYC! Happy President's Day!

**2/20:** EYC Film School! Night three for The Princess Bride. EYC'ers meet in the movie room right after parish supper.

**2/24:** EYC meets at the Mediator from 5 -7 p.m. Games, talks, and fun!

**2/27:** EYC Film School! Night three for The Princess Bride. EYC'ers meet in the movie room right after parish supper.

## The BEST Christmas Pageant Ever!

This year's Christmas family worship service was wonderful! There were lots of young faces on the chancel steps this year. The story of the birth of the Christ child was shared with beauty, heart and just a little chaos. Neigh! If you missed it, make plans to attend next year. This simple, but beautiful, pageant really sets Christmas off to a special start. St. Paul's tried something new this year and it was so special!



THANK YOU to the parents who encouraged their children to participate. It is a really busy time of year, but it's so worth it to make the effort to be a part of this special offering. Working together provides a great opportunity for new friendships to grow and in our church family. The kids had a blast!

## Epiphany and a Visit from the Magi

On Sunday, January 6, St. Paul's will celebrate Epiphany with a visit from the Magi, commonly known as the "three wise men." Did you know that each of their gifts held symbols for what is to come during Jesus' journey here on Earth? The children will also bring gifts to Jesus this Sunday morning, in addition to the visitation of the Magi at the 10:30 a.m. worship service. They will make their gifts during the Sunday school hour, then place them in the manger during the service. Don't forget, the Christmas season doesn't begin until Christmas Day. Epiphany completes our Christmas feast, and the story is incomplete without it. This is sure to be a special morning, please make plans to attend!

## EYC Supper Hosts Needed

An easy and fun way to support our youth programming is to host, or provide, supper for our EYC gatherings. There are several options doing this. You can come to the church and cook a meal there, you can deliver a meal to the church and you can even give money to pay for pizzas. Past hosts have had more fun, and less stress, if they host EYC meals with a group of friends or family. The meal can be as simple or as elaborate as you want it to be — EYC appreciates anything you can do. Meals are an important part of our gatherings, much like they are at family get-togethers, like Sunday dinner or a holiday meal. Please consider helping out in this way. Most of the time, hosts should be prepared to feed 25-30 people. However, Claire will get in touch with each host the week prior to the meal to provide further details. For Feb. 3 we need pizzas, sandwiches or heavy apps for our Super Bowl party – food could be dropped off ahead of time). Other dates that need hosting are: 2/10, 2/27, 3/3, 3/24 and 4/14.

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*Lots of Diocesan Opportunities for the Youth this Spring!*

*If you need help registering, or need a scholarship,  
please contact Claire Hasselle.*

*Jr .DOY (6th – 8th): March 29 – 30*

*Sr. DOY (9th – 12th): April 26 – 28*

*Happening (10th – 12th grade): Details coming soon!*