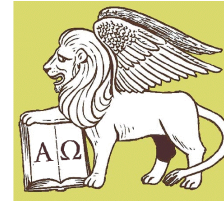




Winged Lion

A publication of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Prattville, Ala.



December 2020

Volume 14, Issue 12

December this year brings a lot of questions. With the alarming rise in Covid 19 cases, one thing is for certain, Christmas Eve will be different than any other year in our lifetime.

Rest assured, however, that we will honor the coming of Christ into the world in whatever ways that are available to us.

The maximum safe capacity is 40, with families sitting together in every other pew.

While, I know many of our people will not be attending this year, we will offer three services that day.

One service will be available online, although at press time I do not know which service that will be.

Individual reservations will have to be made and tickets for the service will be sent to you. A letter explaining how we will be doing this has been mailed to you.

IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE THIS LETTER PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE NOW OR YOU MIGHT NOT GET A TICKET TO ATTEND.

The service times will be different this year. They will be at **10:30 a.m., 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.** Although reservations will be allowed through

From The Rector

Dec. 18, I strongly urge you to make your reservations early. **Once a service reaches 40 reservations, you will need to make a reservation for a different time.**

Please do not overestimate the number of reservations that you will need. This will only prevent others from attending Also, a separate reservation must be made for each person. (A little time consuming on your part, but it was the only way the software allows us to do this properly.)

Please make your reservation online in order to prevent confusion. IF you do not have access to a computer at home or at work, then you may call Michele Burdell at the church office. Remember, all reservations must be in by Dec. 18.

You will receive a ticket in the mail a few days after you make your reservation. **Bring that ticket with you.** Each ticket will be color coded and has the time of the service printed on it. It will only be good for that time.

Now, let me just say that I hate this. You hate this. We all hate this. But, this is our reality right now. I

have spoken with clergy and diocesan officials and health officials and I am convinced that under the present circumstances, this is the best of the options available to us.

Your understanding is greatly appreciated during this time. I said at the very beginning that 'this too shall pass.' I had no idea then that we would still be facing a worldwide pandemic nine months later, but here we are.

I will follow Diocesan and Alabama Health Department guidelines in order to keep you as safe as I possibly can. Your vestry and I have taken multiple measures prior to opening for public worship.

We continue to strive to allow you to worship in as safe a manner as we can provide. And, as I said way back in March, this will pass.

Until then, let us rejoice that Christ is coming; He has not abandoned us and He will be reborn anew in every heart.

Faithfully,

Scott +

This year's Annual Meeting will be available for viewing on You Tube, starting Dec. 13 at 8:30 a.m. Video reports from the treasurer and senior warden will also be available to watch there. Also, please check our website, www.stmarksal.org and your email regularly.

Annual meeting, Voting for new Vestry Members set for Dec.13

Our annual meeting, like most things this year, will be done a bit differently.

On Sunday, Dec.13, I will present the Rector's report during the sermon time.

This will be live at 8:30 a.m. on Youtube and a recording will be on our web page as well. Video reports from the Senior Warden and

Treasurer will be available on that same Youtube page.

The election of new vestry members will also be unique this year. We will present the slate at the meeting and ask for a show of hands that day at both services. For those watching at home, if you are 16 or older and a communicant of St. Mark's, you will have one week to send in a yay or nay vote to the

slate. This must be done through the mail (not email or phone) and must have your printed name and signature.

Those who are on the slate this year for three year terms are: Gordon Faulk, Gail Robertson and Kathy Quinn.

Our profound thanks to Chas Cowart, Bill Branch and Jim Byard for their excellent leadership.

Instructions for Making a Reservation for Christmas Eve

In order to maintain the safest environment possible for Christmas Eve worship and to be in accord with Diocesan and Alabama Health Department guidelines, a limit of 40 people will be allowed at each service. We have increased the number of services so that all who wish may attend. However, you must make a reservation and receive a color-coded ticket to attend. Times of services are 10:30 am, 2:00 pm and 7:30 pm. Remember to wear a mask and maintain social distancing.

You will receive an email by Nov. 30 listing times for services. Within that email, click on the service time link you prefer and enter your information.

Once the seating capacity of 40 is filled, you will not be able to reserve a seat for that particular service. However, you may choose one of the other services. Simply select the next time and make your reservation.

Note: Services will likely fill up rapidly. We strongly advise you to make your reservations now.

For those who do not have access to a computer or email: You may call Michele Burdell at the church office to make a reservation. However, please only do this if you DO NOT have access to a computer at work or at home.

A few days after your reservation has been registered, you will receive in the mail a color-coded ticket for that particular service. Please remember that it is only good for the time you selected. Please remember to bring that ticket with you when you come to church.

Here are the links to the services.

10:30a.m.

<https://onrealm.org/stmarksal/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=MGQwMzU1ZjktYjk3Yy00N2E1LWE4MzgtYWM3MDAxM2U5ZTAw>

2p.m.

<https://onrealm.org/stmarksal/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=YjA1N2I3NTYtOWM1ZC00OTNhLTkyODItYWM3MDAxM2Y2MmM3>

7:30p.m.

<https://onrealm.org/stmarksal/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=NTI0OTM2MTetNDdjYi00YTNjLWJjZTQtYWM3MDAxNDAY>

Give to Angel Tree!!!

This year, the Angel Tree project will be different from previous years. In consultation with Denise Brown and the good folks at AICC, we will be collecting the following items:

Pancake mix and Syrup
1 lb pkg of grits
Boxed Hamburger Helper
Canned Spaghetti Sauce and Noodles
Pillows and/or pillow cases for the 6th Street apartment fire victims

Parishioners are encouraged to bring these items throughout the month of December to Ray Hall. Pat and Jerry Boling will be collecting the items weekly and taking them to AICC.

At a time when many are underemployed, AICC needs our continued help. Thank you for your prayers and generosity!

A personal note from Father Scott:

We have all been most understanding during this difficult time, so I know you will understand when I add to my column from the first page that I will be asking a priest to help with one of the services on Christmas Eve.

We will also have a guest organist for one service. This isn't just to limit the load, but is to also help prevent risk of overexposure to Carolyn's family and to my own.

It rather goes against the grain to ask another priest to help me, but recent developments within my own family have reminded me of the need for all of us to stay as safe as we can.

While we are uncertain at which time the Rev. Kelley Hudlow (Birmingham) will celebrate, I know you will help her feel most welcome.

Online Bible Study to Continue

Our online Bible Study was enjoyed by several of our parishioners as Father Scott walked us, chapter by chapter, through the magnificent letter from the apostle Paul to the Romans.

In January, there will be another opportunity for anyone who'd like to study the book of the Acts of the Apostles. More details will be included in next month's edition of the Winged Lion.

Newsletter Submission Info

Just a reminder: all articles for the Winged Lion are due no later than the 20th of each month. Please see to it that your news and information are submitted to the editor, Becky Obert, by that date. Becky has a mail box in the office hallway or you can email her at beckyobert@mac.com.

Stations of the Cross

Thanks to the efforts of young James Byard, son of Jim and Beverly Byard, we have a way for people to use their phones to find the liturgy as they walk the Way of the Cross on St. Mark's campus. A social QR code can be downloaded which will show the map of the stations as well as the liturgy for each station.

The Way of the Cross is a special devotion that allows for socially distant, unique, and meaningful worship on the campus of our parish. The temporary stations will soon be replaced by weather resistant stations. Thank you to the Byards and the Faulks for helping promote this special offering at St. Mark's.