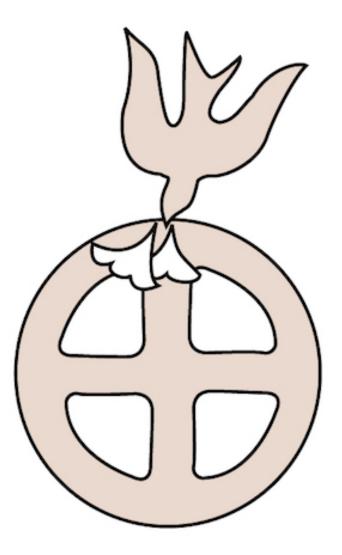
St. Gregory the Great Episcopal Church



April 28, 2024 Live Streamed on <u>YouTube</u>

10:30AM

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION *

What happens when you are spiritually prepared and desire to receive communion, but can't? Such a case is referenced by a paragraph in the 1979 Prayer Book:

If a person desires to receive the Sacrament, but, by reason of extreme sickness or physical disability, is unable to eat and drink the Bread and Wine, the Celebrant is to assure that person that all the benefits of Communion are received, even though the Sacrament is not received with the mouth.

A nation-wide shut down due to a pandemic fits, I'm sure we'll agree, with the words "by any other impediment" listed in the first Prayer Book. Our Lord will not cut us off from his grace. If we truly desire him, he will come to us, even if we cannot receive the Sacraments he has instituted so that we may receive his grace. This is not a new idea. St Thomas Aquinas, writing nearly 800 years ago, said:

before receiving a sacrament, the reality of the sacrament can be had through the very desire of receiving the sacrament. Accordingly, before actual reception of this sacrament, a man can obtain salvation through the desire of receiving it, just as he can before Baptism through the desire of Baptism, as stated above (Summa, III.73.iii)

Desiring to receive the spiritual grace of the Most Holy Eucharist (and being prevented from receiving it sacramentally) is known as Spiritual Communion. It is so very important to note that this gift is given to us when we cannot, for very good reason, be present at mass.

When you are watching a live-stream or recording of our liturgies, any of the following prayers may be said at the moment of communion when you would normally leave your pew and make your journey to the altar:

In Union, dear Lord, with the faithful at every altar of Your Church where Your blessed Body and Blood are being offered to the Father, I desire to offer You praise and thanksgiving. I believe that You are present in the Holy Sacrament. And since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, I ask You to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to You, and embrace You with all the affections of my soul. Let me never be separated from You. Let me live and die in Your love. Amen.

OR

Faithful God, in the wonder of your wisdom and love, you fed your people in the wilderness with the bread of angels, and you sent Jesus to be the bread of life. Though I cannot physically consume these gifts of bread and wine, I thank you that I have received the sacrament of Christ's presence, the forgiveness of sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may I embody your desire, and be renewed for your service, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen. (from Enriching Our Worship 2)

OR

"My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire you with all my heart. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already in my heart and unite myself to you completely. Please do not let me ever by separated from you." (by St. Alphonsus Liguori)

*Except where otherwise indicated, the whole of this article (with only very little amendment) is taken from the website of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where it was posted on April 5, 2020. No author was specified.

THE HOLY VIRTUAL EUCHARIST

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

THE WORD OF GOD

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prelude

Processional Hymn 296

We know that Christ is raised and dies no more

ENBELBERG



OPENING ACCLAMATION

Celebrant:Alleluia! Christ is risen!People:The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

COLLECT FOR PURITY

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BCP 351

BCP 355

Glory to God

Robert Powell



THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE FIRST READING

Acts 8:26-40

An angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth." The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 22:24-30



© 1979, Robert Knox Kennedy.

I will perform my vows in the presence of those who / worship him. 25 The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the Lord shall / praise him: * "May your heart live for / ever!" 26 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the / Lord, * and all the families of the nations shall bow be-/fore him.

27 For kingship belongs to the / Lord; * he rules over the / nations.

- 28 To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in / worship; * all who go down to the dust fall be-/fore him.
- 29 My soul shall live for him; my descendants shall / serve him; * they shall be known as the Lord's for / ever.
- 30 They shall come and make known to a people yet un-/born * the saving deeds that he has / done.

THE SECOND READING

1 John 4:7-21

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. Thanks be to God.



THE GOSPEL

John 15:1-8

BCP 358

Celebrant:The Holy Gospel of our Savior, Jesus Christ, according to John.People:Glory to you, O Christ.

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The people are seated at the invitation of the preacher.

THE SERMON: The Rev. John Ray, Deacon

THE NICENE CREED

(said by all, standing)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, Form VI

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

For all people in their daily life and work;

For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world; We pray for our President, Joseph, our Governor, Brian, and our Mayor, Kelly.

For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;

For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For Michael, our Presiding Bishop, Rob, Paul, and Don, our Bishops; (...) and for all bishops and other ministers, priests, deacons, and clergy associates, especially Lin, Dutton, Carol, Ellen, Christina, & Nikki;

For all who serve God in his Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation. We pray especially for (...) Hear us, Lord;

For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. We give thanks for (...)

We will exalt you, O God our King;

And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom. Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;

Who put their trust in you.

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

THE PEACE

Celebrant:The peace of Christ be always with you.People:And also with you.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Anthem

Christ, the Vine

Christ, the vine, and God, the gardener, we, the branches bearing fruit. We can bring forth shoots of promise when our lives in Christ take root. Christ, the fruit from Jesse springing, you fulfilled the prophet's trust. And you pray that we, your body, will fulfill your trust in us. Christ, may we submit to pruning that we bear more grapes for wine. Help us, when we're overburdened, draw new strength from you, the vine. You made us to be partners growing Spirit's fruit anew. Keep us one in love together: you in us, and we in you!

Presentation Hymn 400

Doxology Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; Alleluia, alleluia! Praise him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, O praise him O praise him, Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Robert J. Powell

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING, EUCHARISTIC PRAYER C The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise. **Glory to you for ever and ever.**

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

By your will they were created and have their being.

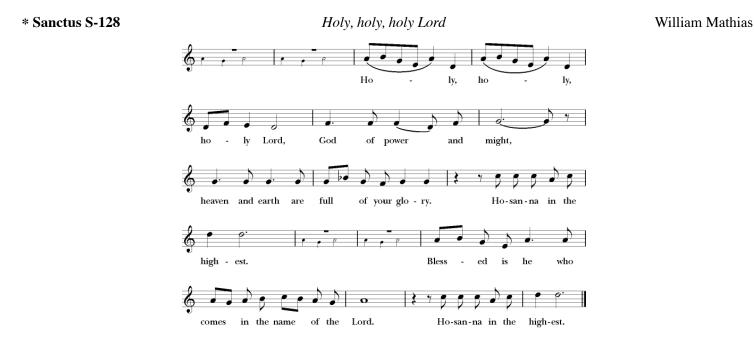
From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

By his blood, he reconciled us. By his wounds, we are healed.

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:



And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving, We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.

Lord God of our Fathers: God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for

strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

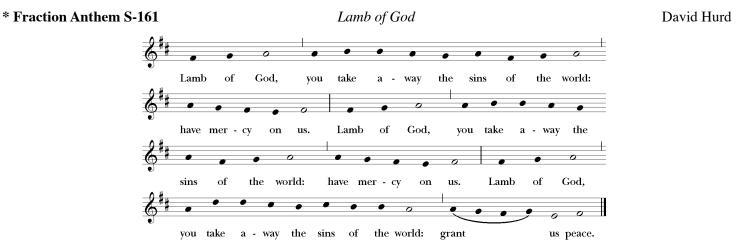
Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. **AMEN**.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

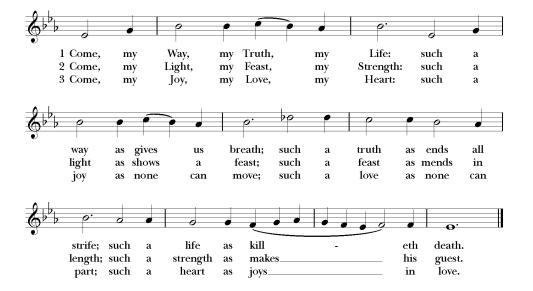


THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

Communion Hymn 487

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life

THE CALL



O thou who camest from above

HEREFORD



SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

Enriching Our Worship 2

Faithful God, in the wonder of your wisdom and love, you fed your people in the wilderness with the bread of angels, and you sent Jesus to be the bread of life. Though I cannot physically consume these gifts of bread and wine, I thank you that I have received the sacrament of Christ's presence, the forgiveness of sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may I embody your desire, and be renewed for your service, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

BCP 366 Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

THE BLESSING

Creator Spirit

SURREY



THE DISMISSAL

Deacon:Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia! Alleluia!People:Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

ዮ

Prayers of the People

In our Parish we pray for Steve Key, Rena Catlin, Anna Bowman, Cheryl Lowry, Jennifer Johnson, Sheldon Clements, Janet Wright, Billy Hale, Kyra Madden, Mary Burkett, Cecil Beagle, Diana Beagle, William Beagle, Jim Klippel, Jackie Dorsey, Denise Glynn, Mike Fowler, Cecil Hudson, Jean Estes, Elmer Clark, Shelby Welch, Nancy Carter, Teri Bouknecht, Kara Russe, Ellen Kappel, Cayden Mitchell, Bill Alworth, Stephen Morris, Barbara Johnson, Sue Bush, Janice Rusk, Jennifer Polzin, Susan Williams, Pat MacKinnon, Don Downie, Angie Defalco, Ken Packer, Donna, Kelly, Michael, Rachel, Christy, Rosina, Eliot, Patricia, Ben, Scott, and Lynn.

In thanksgiving for those celebrating their birthdays this week: Ray Robinson, Ron Balthazor, Linda Morris, Susan Risler, and Julie Dingus; and for those celebrating anniversaries: Ron Balthazor & Jane Hudson, Benjamin & Gaby Compton, and Vince & Nikki Mathis

The people listed here are prayed for by name at each Sunday service. To request prayer for yourself or someone else, please call the office (706-546-7553). If at the beginning of the next month the person needs to remain on the list, please call and give the office an update.

TODAY

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

"We have solar panels, what else do we need?" "For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord." Form I, pg. 384, BCP. We are reforming the Environmental Sustainability committee. Anyone interested should join us on Sunday, April 28, after the 10:30 service, or contact Maggie Reinberger or Mark Tavernier. Where do we go from here? Is there more we can do for the community, the world? Should we be in communion with other groups working on environmental issues, including indigenous people? Come share your thoughts and ideas.

MERIDIAN WOMEN'S CHORUS CONCERT

Animals Everywhere! Meridian Women's Chorus presents a family-friendly, animal themed concert here at St. Gregory the Great on Sunday, April 28 at 4PM. Meridian is teaming up with the Athens Area Humane Society to raise awareness of the organization's work and volunteer opportunities. The concert is free and will be followed by a reception in the Parish Hall. Go to www.meridianwomenschorus.org for more information.

THIS WEEK

ATHENS CHORAL SOCIETY | THURSDAY, MAY 2

Athens Choral Society presents their spring concert, including *the breath of life*, by Dan Forrest, and Fauré's *Requiem* on Thursday, May 2 at 7:30PM in Hodgson Hall. Free, no ticket required!

YOUTH DnD NIGHT | FRIDAY, MAY 3

Our next youth DnD night will be May 3 at 7pm in the youth room. Snacks will be provided but feel free to bring your favorites! Feel free to come dressed as your character or in pajamas!

NEXT WEEK

GROANING IN THE TENT | MAY 5, 12, 19

The Pastoral Care Committee welcomes you to a community opportunity to engage in holy conversation about our mortality, including dying, death, and loss, as well as the fear that keeps those topics on our back burners most of the time.

On three Sunday afternoons May 5, 12, and 19, 2024, from 12:30 to 2:30PM the Rev. Dr. Ellen Richardson will offer a program called Groaning in the Tent for members of St. Gregory's and their friends. Each session will offer a menu of Holy Scripture, holy conversation, prayers, poetry, and excerpts from her book, Holy Dying: Stories and Struggles, inspired by her (pre-retirement) work as a Hospice physician and Episcopal priest. A light lunch will be served.

It is not necessary to have read the book before attending and it is not necessary to attend all three sessions in order to participate. Here are websites where you can purchase the book: Barnes & Noble (Holy Dying, by Ellen Richardson); Church Publishing; and Amazon.

COMING UP...

RISING 6th GRADER YOUTH BRUNCH | SUN., MAY 19

All rising 6th graders and their parents/guardians are invited to a brunch and interest meeting for the St Greg's youth program. We will discuss Sunday school, field trips, diocesan opportunities, student leadership, and more! Just head over to the parish hall building after the 10:30 service on May 19th.

ONGOING

HOLY EUCHARIST & HEALING SERVICE | WEDNESDAYS

Please join us on Wednesday evenings at 6PM in the sanctuary for eucharist and prayers for healing.

<u>NOTES</u>

COFFEE HOUR TREATS

We are in need of volunteers to bring treats for coffee hour! Please sign up on the sheet in the CE building!

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FOR FOOD BANK

New sign-up sheet for the rest of 2024! We are currently seeking volunteers to work at the Athens Area Emergency FoodBank, 640 Barber St. on 3rd Mondays from 9AM-1PM. 2-3 volunteers are needed each month. A signup sheet is in the narthex.

FREE BOOKS

The newly formed Library Committee has begun to sort through generations of books with the intention of making the offerings of the St. Gregory Library more accessible and useful to everyone. Those volumes that have seen better days and times will be placed for a week or so on the long white tables in the main area of the Education Building and made available for the taking with one rule—no bringing them back! Though you never know what might speak to you! Those books left there over a week or two will be donated to the public library. Hopefully by making some space the many hidden treasures that remain in St. Gregory's Library will be more easily seen, accessed and appreciated.

THE LITTLE RED WAGON

The Athens Area Emergency Food Bank needs pork & beans and plain white rice! Please help us fill the Little Red Wagon!

Those Who Serve

Vestry: Paul Welch Readers: Jane Hudson (8AM) June Ball (10:30AM) EMs: Roger Schwenke & Karen Hankins Crucifers: Torches: Rainsly Vogt Flowers: Lisa Hunt Altar Guild: Carol Flenniken, Lin Kromhout, Jennifer Caplinger, Mary Ann Caplinger Ushers: Anna Hiers Counters: Daphne Blackburn & Katie Reinberger Livestream: Alec Nelson

Clergy and Staff

The Rev. Nikki Mathis Rector rector@stgregoryathens.org | 706-546-7553 x2

The Rev. Christina Dondero Deacon christinadondero@gmail.com | 404-918-7248

Kendall M. Kookogey Parish Administrator/Bookkeeper office@stgregoryathens.org | 706-546-7553 x1

Jonathan Klein Music Director/Organist jonathanfk@gmail.com | 706-296-8102

Wade McGlamery Youth Minister wwmcglamery@gmail.com | 770-624-4837

Jude Red-Bear Nursery Director *juderedbear@icloud.com* | 706-614-0008

Mark Hein Buildings/Grounds markehein@gmail.com | 706-549-3239

Terri Tillman WebMaster *ttillman@gmail.com*

Danielle Vogt Coffee Host *danielle1784@gmail.com*

Anthony Barkdoll Livestream Coordinator anthonybarkdoll@gmail.com

Peachy Green Clean Co-op Sexton

Nursery Attendants: Missy Hamlin, Jude Red Bear, Willem Swindler, Stephanie Swindler, Berkeley Boone

Vestry Members: Kate Avinger, John Barrett; John Bray; Stacie Court; Gail Eilers; Anna Hiers; LeeAnne Krause, Sr. Warden; Lane Norton; Maggie Reinberger; Mark Richardson, Jr. Warden; Shelby Welch; Anna Thornton, Clerk; Les House, Treasurer

Vestry Person of the Day/Week: Paul Welch pdwelch@gmail.com