



The Tentmaker

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Daphne, Alabama

December 10, 2025

Message From Thack

Gaudete Sunday: Rejoice, for the Lord Is Near

The Third Sunday of Advent has long carried a different spirit from the first two Sundays of the season. Its traditional name—Gaudete Sunday—comes from the Latin *Gaudete*, meaning “rejoice.” It is the opening word of the ancient Entrance Antiphon for this day: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4).

In the midst of a season that calls us to watchfulness, penitence, and self-examination, the Church gives us a Sunday deliberately marked by joy. The rose-colored candle—sometimes affectionately called the “pink candle”—is lit on the Advent wreath, visually reminding us that joy breaks into the shadows even before Christmas dawns. This candle symbolizes hope and joy, not as sentimentality, but as a sign that Christ’s coming is drawing near.

The first two Sundays of Advent traditionally call us to prepare the way of the Lord through repentance. We begin by looking honestly at our lives, examining what needs changing, and renewing our desire to follow Christ faithfully. The tone is purposeful and introspective. We hear voices like the prophet Isaiah and John the Baptist urging us to “prepare the way of the Lord” by leveling mountains of pride and straightening crooked paths of sin.

But on the Third Sunday, the mood shifts. The penitential purple gives way to the warm glow of rose. The call to repentance is still present—Advent never abandons preparation—but the Church invites us to take a breath and recognize that repentance is not an end in itself. The goal of preparing our hearts is that we might experience the joy of God’s nearness. Gaudete Sunday whispers what Christmas will soon shout: Christ is coming. Hope is rising. Rejoice!

Christian joy is not the same as temporary happiness or emotional excitement. It is not limited to seasons when everything is going well. Instead, Scripture teaches that joy is a byproduct of faith—a fruit that grows naturally when we trust that God is at work in our lives.

When we cultivate a joyful spirit, we begin to see life through the lens of God’s faithfulness rather than our fears. Joy strengthens us and steadies us. It reminds us that no matter what challenges or uncertainties we face, God’s story ends in redemption—and we are part of that story.

A joyful spirit does not ignore sorrow, however. It anchors us in the deeper truth that God is present within it. In that sense, joy gives us the following gifts: resilience in difficult times; compassion that flows freely when we know God delights in us; a balanced perspective that keeps our hearts from being overwhelmed; and lightness of spirit, because we are grounded in God’s love rather than our anxieties.

This is why the Church offers Gaudete Sunday. It is not a break from Advent—it is the point of Advent. All our preparation, reflection, and repentance lead us toward the transformation that results in joy.

As we light the rose candle this Advent, may we remember that joy is not something we manufacture. It is something we receive. It is the quiet confidence that Christ is coming to us, again and again, in mercy, grace, and love.

Peace, Thack

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish

At our Annual Meeting of the Parish on November 16th, we elected four new parishioners to the vestry: Robert Jernigan, Elizabeth Thomason, Mike Turnipseed and Tom Walker. We are grateful to them for offering their time and talent to help manage the material and business affairs of the parish. We also thanked the outgoing vestry persons: Michael Quinn, Cathy Slagle, Gaye Wilson and Tim Michael. They served St. Paul's faithfully and well for the last three years.

We also elected five parishioners to serve as delegates to our Diocesan Convention scheduled to be held on February 27-28, 2026: Richard Foster, Rhonda Jones, Terri McMillan, Michael Quinn and Matt Thomason. We appreciate their willingness to serve and know they will faithfully represent St. Paul's at the annual gathering of the Diocese.

A Message from Your Senior Warden, Dr. Michael Quinn

As Advent is here and Christmas approaches, we want to take a moment to show our deep appreciation for Thack and the church staff who work tirelessly throughout the year to support our church and all its associated outreach programs. Their commitment and love make our church a welcoming and nurturing place for all.

If you would like to contribute to this Christmas fund please drop a check (marked staff Christmas gift) in the offering bowl on Sunday, mail a check to the church (28788 North Main St., Daphne, AL 36526) or come by the church office to make a donation (cash, credit cards or check accepted). Any donation, big or small, will be warmly received and greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your generosity.

Respectfully,
Michael Quinn, MD
Senior Warden



Children's Christmas Pageant Practice

Practice for the Christmas Eve Children's Christmas Pageant will be held this Sunday, December 14 from 4-5 pm and Wednesday, December 17th from 5-6 pm in the church.

If your child wants to participate but cannot attend the practices, please call Elizabeth Faust, 251-404-0537.

Acolyte and Chalice Bearer Training - Saturday, December 13

If you are currently an Acolyte and/or Chalice Bearer or if you recently signed up on Rally Day to be an Acolyte or Chalice Bearer, we will have an important training session this Saturday, December 13th at 9:00 a.m. in the Church. Please plan to attend. Call the office if you have any questions.

Thank you!

Hi! We're looking for volunteers to help bring our **Drive Thru Nativity** to life this year. It's a quick and fun way to serve, and every role matters. Come help us share the Christmas story with our community and make this tradition special for everyone who drives through. Let us know if you can join us! Call Hali Everette for more information, 251-300-9289.



A Note from Your Choirmaster...

I want to offer a heartfelt thank-you to our wonderful choir. Your hard work preparing for Lessons and Carols and Christmas means so much. I'm grateful for each of you.

If you've ever thought about singing with us, we'd love to have you. We rehearse on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. Our children's Christmas pageant rehearsals take place on Sunday afternoons in the church for families who'd like to be involved.

Looking ahead, I'm excited that we will be hosting the University of Mobile's piano department on January 25th at 2:30 p.m. It will be a beautiful afternoon of music, and I hope you'll join us.

Christopher Conger

December 2025 FINANCIAL REPORT

Parish Finances at a glance:

DECEMBER TO-DATE INCOME: \$33,542.30

DECEMBER TO-DATE EXPENSES: \$34,711.66

DECEMBER NET: **\$1,169.36**

REMINDER: CONTRIBUTIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MIDNIGHT DECEMBER 31ST TO BE INCLUDED ON YOUR 2025 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT FOR TAX PURPOSES.

PLEASE...DON'T FORGET TO TURN IN YOUR 2026 PLEDGE CARDS

St. Paul's Men's Group

Thank You St. Paul's! Our Porkfest was a sellout. Our last Porkfest ticket was sold on November 2. We had 224 pork butts that were rubbed, smoked, and distributed to the wonderful parishoners and friends of St. Paul's. Thanks to Matt Cassity and Marty Ollinger and the men who worked behind the scenes to make sure Porkfest was enjoyed by many.

We are pleased to welcome three new members to the Men's Group. Will Lomers, Tim McTaggart, and Chuck Bryan. Will and Tim helped with the breakfast service for December.

We will be constructing and taking apart the manger for the Drive thru Nativity which is schedule for December 21 from 5 to 7 PM.

We are planning our DR Mission Trip fund raising lunch in January. Look for announcements coming soon.

Tom Walker
St. Paul's Men's Group

THANK YOU St. Paul's parish family for really "**sockin' it**" as DOK collected over 600 pairs of socks for the needy during our **SOCK**tober outreach!!

Now in January we offer a new opportunity: underwear ... during DOK's **UNDY SUNDAY** month. We will gather NEW underwear for all ages: infants, children, teens, women and men – to include veterans at William F Green facility. Each Sunday in January (4, 11, 18, 25) please bring NEW underwear of all sizes - this can include diapers, disposable briefs or pull ups – all sizes! We will deliver to those in need through our outreach ministry ... thank you from the **BOTTOMS** of our hearts!

Blessings from the Daughters of the King!

17th Annual Howard Wilson Porkfest 2025 draws to a close, reported by Tim Op't Holt

Have you ever wondered what goes into producing that delicious smoked pork butt you had, or are saving for a special occasion? If you have, take a moment to read this short story of the preparation of that succulent treat.

Several months before the event, a Porkfest chairman is determined. This year, Matt Cassidy and Marty Ollinger were the co-chairs.

The church office prints the tickets and members of the men's group begin their sales. The tickets do tend to sell themselves, as we have many repeat customers.

A few weeks before Porkfest, the cookers are acquired. This year, we used four cookers due to the increased demand – 224 roasts this year. Three cookers are entirely wood fired. This means that a source of dry arwood is found and delivered. In the past, our beloved Howard Wilson harvested and dried wood from his own timberland. Recently, Marty, Lee Richards and Matt found other sources of oak and pecan to smoke those luscious roasts. In addition, former Daphne mayor and pork cooking aficionado, Fred Small has loaned us his pellet smoker.

The day before cooking, about 1800 pounds of pork and a secret recipe rub are delivered to the Wilson center kitchen. A devoted group opens, rinses, and rubs each roast with this aromatic powder that gives them their distinctive flavor. The meat spends the night in the kitchen in coolers, soaking up that seasoning. At about 5am on cooking day, the fires are lit and the roasts are transferred to the cooking area and placed into the waiting cookers. There, they spend 8-12 hours at about 225°. There's always a group of men standing by to monitor the fires and meat temperature so only safely smoked roasts will be distributed.

Another shift of men begins to arrive about 4pm for packing. When the meat temperature is just right, the packaging begins. This continues until all roasts have been packed away in the coolers for their second night in the kitchen.

Then it's your turn to come by for the roasts you ordered.

Another crew makes the pulled pork sandwiches you can come by for when you get your whole roasts.

The job is not done until the coolers are cleaned and stored, cookers cleaned and returned to their owners, and the paperwork is done.

In all, it takes about 30 men donating anywhere from a few hours to several days to make Porkfest a success.

The men's group thanks you for your purchase. We know you enjoy the fruits of our labor.

The profits from this effort have gone to the preschool, music program, discretionary funds, and Wilson center maintenance, to name but a few.

So now you know what goes into those terrific pork roasts the men's group provides every November – see you in 2026!



December and January Service Schedule:

The Parish Office will be closed
December 25th & 26th for the Christmas Holidays
and January 1st and 2nd for the New Year's Holiday

Sunday Worship

Holy Eucharist—8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
Christian Education—9:15 a.m.

Bible Studies

Tuesday—Men's Bible Study (Zoom Meeting)—7:00 a.m.
Wednesday—Morning Bible Study (Malone Hall)—10:30 a.m.

Special Services and Events:

Drive through Nativity, Sunday, December 21, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Service with Children's Pageant

Wednesday, December 24:
Prelude music begins at 5:30 p.m./Service begins at 6:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Midnight Service

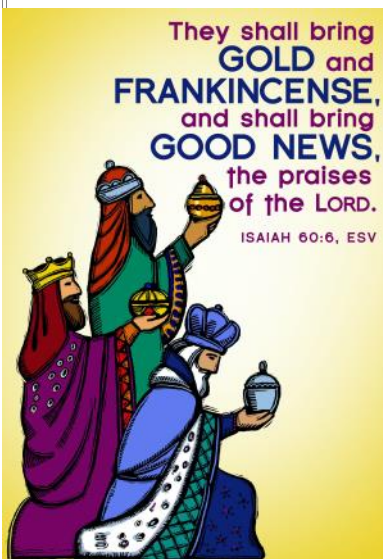
Wednesday, December 24:
Prelude Music begins at 10:30 p.m./Service begins at
11:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Service

Thursday, December 25:
10:00 a.m..

Epiphany Service

Tuesday, January 6 at 6:00 p.m.



Prayer Requests

Immediate Prayer Requests:

Stephanie Barksdale, Townsend Bessonon, Necie Borroni, Stan Brooks, Fletcher & Judith Comer, Deanna Cook, Linda Crissy, Wayne Davis, Lillian Deason, Sara DeWitt, Mary Jordan Dukes, Ed Fernainy, Patrick Foster, Joann Gibson, Laura Ann Gibson, Toni Gray, Mary Green, Catherine Greenslade, Leslie Greer, Linda Hamilton, Stewart Hampton, Marian Harris, Kelsey Henderson, Sharon Hoiles, Scott Hollingsworth, Shari and Linn Hyde, Dave Johnson, Leslie Johnson, Billy Jones, Phil Kelley, Dennis Kiehna, Doug Kinney, Tracie Knight, Beverly Koepp, Kay Loftin, Sam Martin, Donelle McBride, Herb McDonald, Bob McKnight, Marcie Morrow, Dorothy Moore, Josh Plotniak, Bob Powell, Judy Reeves, Jerry Richardson, Kem Rutledge, Phyllis Schneider, Marie Schreiner, Fr. Mike Schwarte, Nick Shoultz, Fran Siemssen, Marc Silliman, Tim Smith, Diana Spillman, Cleighton Strickland, Mark Taylor, Karen Thomason, Mary-Haston Vest, Nancy Walker, Julia Warren, Myralyn Watson, Katherine Weaver, Avery and Rachel Willow, Andy Wilson

Ongoing Prayer Requests:

Marty Adams, Allison Badurak, Jim Blackwell, Betty Borroni, Dakota Burchett, Pat Cannon, Janice Clifford, Jim Clifford, Joe Cook, Sr., Faith Cornett, Diana Costlow, Mark Costlow, Jim Council, Margie Cowart, Suzanne Damour, Nancy Dziubakowski,, Sylvia Forbes, Dee Grantham, Joyce Griffis, Terri Hare, Eddie Hill, Susan Hill, Jossie Hurst, Shannon Kern, Alexander Kielek, Matt & Penny Kratochvil, Neil Magruder, Angela Mason, Lou Morgan, Dorothy Moore, Buddy Morrow, Bo Nichols, Sonny Nichols, Sam Pace, Mary Pace, Sara Patton, Janet Penry, Mary Rudolf, Marilyn Russell, Jesse Rutherford, Larry Rutherford, Stephanie Sanchez, Terry Sandlin, Pat Schlimmer, Cathy Slagle, Ken & Genette Stephens, Kay Taylor, Vicki Thompson, Anna & Bill Waid, Ken Wallis, Bob & Beth Wickwire, Kern & Mary Wilson Diane Young, Joe Young, Mike Young

For the Departed:

For Those Serving in the Military:

Bradley Billingsley, Graham B'Wade, Ryan Bowman, James Cassebaum, Matthew Cheatham, Chase Clark, Jackson Deaton, Josh Dedrickson, Michael Duchesne, Christopher Dukarm, Steven Grey, Matthew Harris, Rusty Henry, Karen Hubley, Walker Jackson, Daniel James, Jake Jerome, Matt Jones, Harrison Key, Daniel Lambert, Chris Lessard, Jackson May, Bryan Quinn, Holden Quinn, Madie Quinn, Justin Ramsey, Neil Sevelius, Michael Strohlein, Dan Strohlein, Aiden Walker, Brad Yonkers

For Those with Birthdays:

December 1-31: (01) Janice Miles, (02) Sharon Hoiles, (03) Adams Jackson, (04) Kathy Mallory, Audrey Lathan, (05) Donelle McBride, (06) Susan Waites, Rebecca Hicks, (07) Fletcher Comer, (08) Boyd Miller, Bill Johnson, (09) Bonnie Bryan, Eley Hatcher, (10) Herbie McDonald, Brad Lathan, (11) Mary Ann Peters, Leigh Ann Overstreet, (12) Annette Herrington, (13) Zack Martin, Ben Stephens, Will Stephens, James Stephens, Corky McMillan, (14) Susan Johnson, (15) Joanne Gibson, (16) David Kielek, Shory Dudley, (19) Poppy Beasley, (20) Blakeley Davenport, (22) Linda McDowell, Audrey Faust, (23) Mike Smith, Henry Gannuch, (25) Doug Kaye, Stewart Hampton, (27) Lisa Phillips, Scott Brown, Jennifer Sanford, Whitney Briones, (28) Phil Kelley, Cliff Stickney, Joseph Alves, Leighton Lapyrouse, (29) Carter Kessler, (30) Amy Taylor, Jack Rigdon

ST. PAUL'S SERVICES:

Sunday

Holy Eucharist, Rite I
8:00 am

Holy Eucharist, Rite II
10:30 am

Monday-Saturday

Morning Prayer
8:05 am

*Live Streamed only on
St. Paul's Facebook page*

Wednesday

Healing Service with
The Holy Eucharist
NOON

*Church Services are live-streamed
on our Facebook Page*

Church Office Hours

Monday-Thursday:
8:00 am -- 4:30 pm

Friday:
8:00 am -- 11:30 am

St. Paul's Thrift Shop

Tuesday - Friday
9:00 am -- 3:00 pm

Saturday
10:00 -- 3:00 pm

Donations Accepted:
Thursday - Friday
9:00 am -- 3:00 pm

Saturday
10:00 am -- 3:00 pm
251-626-6102

St. Paul's Preschool
251-626-2774

BIBLE STUDIES

Tuesday

Men's Bible Study
7:00 am
ZOOM Meeting only

Wednesday

Morning Bible Study
All Adults Welcome
(Malone Hall)
10:30 am

Great Wednesday
6:00 pm
Malone Hall

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Adult

9:15 am
in Conference Room A

Youth

9:15 am
6th - 12th Grades
in the Underground

Sunday Children's

Chapel
8 and 10:30 am

St. Paul's Vestry **2025-2027**

Terms Ending

December 31, 2025

Michael Quinn, Sr. Warden
Cathy Slagle
Gaye Wilson
Tim Michael

December 31, 2026

Joe Cook, Jr. Warden
Judi Gullede
Liston Jones
Boyd Miller

December 31, 2027

Richard Foster
Donna Nolte
Marty Ollinger
John Sharp
~
Martha Lathan
Clerk of the Vestry

Mike Sirmon
Treasurer

Clergy

The Rev. Thack H. Dyson
Rector
The Rev. Judith Comer
Priest Associate
The Rev. S. Albert Kennington
Priest Associate

Church Website

www.stpaulseasternshore.com

Email Address

officestpaulsdaphne@gmail.com

Facebook Page

St. Paul's Eastern Shore

Phone

251-626-2421

Church App

<https://tithely.app.link/st-pauls-eastern-shore>

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St. Paul's Episcopal Church

28788 North Main Street

Daphne, Alabama 36526

The Rev. Thack H. Dyson, *Rector*

The Rev. Judith W. Comer, *Priest Associate*

The Rev. S. Albert Kennington, *Priest Associate*

Elizabeth Faust, *Christian Education & Preschool Administrator*

Hali Everette, *Youth Leader*

David Kielek, *Howard Wilson Life Center Sexton*

Christopher Conger, *Church Musician & Choirmaster*

Joan McKnight and Donna Brown, *Staff Assistants*

Terri McMillan, *Administrative Assistant*

Office Hours 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. (Monday-Thursday)

8:00 a.m. — 11:30a.m. (Friday)

Church Telephone: 251-626-2421 Fax: 251-626-2456

E-mail: officestpaulsdaphne@gmail.com

Facebook Page: St. Paul's Eastern Shore

Preschool Phone: 251-626-2774

Thrift Shop Telephone: 251-626-6102

Church App: <https://tithely.app.link/st-pauls-eastern-shore>

Website: www.stpaulseasternshore.com

We worship together as we seek God, serve God, and share God with love and acceptance for all.