

The Tentmaker

St. Paul's Episcopal Church Daphne, Alabama

August 20, 2025

Message From Thack

The recent and tragic murders of the Smith family in Daphne have pierced the heart of our community. The son, Kristian, attended St. Paul's Pre-School when he was a toddler. In moments like this, words falter and explanations fail. The shock has rippled outward — neighbors, friends, and strangers alike stand bewildered, asking how such darkness could erupt in a place we call home. As people of faith, we bring our questions to God, trusting that even our cries of lament are a form of prayer.

Some of you have asked me, "Where is God in all this?" This is the oldest question of faith. In the Psalms, David cries: "How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?" (Psalm 13:1). Even Jesus, on the cross, voiced our deepest anguish: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34).

As I've preached many times before, God is not absent in moments of violence and grief. Scripture tells us that God is "near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit" (Psalm 34:18). The cross itself is God's ultimate statement that He enters fully into our suffering. God does not stand far off. He weeps with us. He bears the agony of human cruelty. And in Christ's resurrection, He promises that death and violence will not have the last word.

This tragedy also raises the question of whether evil is a real and present force in the world. Evil is not an abstract idea — it is a destructive power that works against the life God created good. Paul writes: "For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12).

We see its reality in violence, hatred, and the devaluing of human life. But Scripture also proclaims that evil is limited and already defeated in Christ. John reminds us: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5). Evil is real, but it does not have the final word. God's love is stronger.

So, what can we do to prevent something like this from happening again? We cannot erase all evil, but we are called to be vigilant and to act as agents of peace. Micah 6:8 instructs us: "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Practically, this means: Building stronger communities where neighbors know and care for one another. Addressing mental health needs, offering compassion, and removing stigma. Teaching peace and respect for life, especially to the young. Being watchful for signs of distress or danger, and not being afraid to intervene with love. Above all, we can pray and work for God's kingdom to come "on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10), recognizing that God calls us to be His instruments of healing and justice.

The road ahead will not be easy. Grief will remain, and questions will linger. But our hope rests in the God who brings life out of death and light out of darkness. Paul's words echo this reality: "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38 –39).

That is the promise: evil can wound us, but it cannot sever us from God's love. Violence can shatter lives, but it cannot erase the hope of resurrection.

Closing prayer: O God, our refuge and strength, hear the cries of your people in Daphne. In our shock and sorrow, remind us that you are near. When evil seems strong, remind us that your love is stronger. Give us courage to be peacemakers, healers, and neighbors. And grant us hope, rooted in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that even in the valley of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil, for you are with us. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Peace, Thack

New Great Wednesday @ 6:00 Offering

I will offer a new teaching series for our Great Wednesday @ 6:00 program beginning September 10. We will do a book study with discussion and reflection of Barbara Brown-Taylor's book, *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith*.

Taylor's book is a spiritual memoir and guidebook that helps readers recognize that the sacred is not confined to church walls but is woven into the fabric of daily life. Taylor, an Episcopal priest and gifted storyteller, teaches that one can encounter God in ordinary practices and experiences — walking, paying attention, being still, engaging with others, working, resting, and even making mistakes.

The book is structured around twelve "practices" — ordinary human actions that, when done with intention, open us to God's presence:

- 1. The Practice of Waking Up to God (Vision) Seeing the divine in the world around us.
- 2. The Practice of Paying Attention (Reverence) Cultivating reverence for life by noticing the small and ordinary.
- 3. The Practice of Wearing Skin (Incarnation) Embracing embodiment as a means of experiencing God.
- 4. The Practice of Walking on the Earth (Groundedness) Connecting spiritually through walking and being present in creation.
- 5. The Practice of Getting Lost (Wilderness) Allowing disorientation and uncertainty to lead us deeper into trust and discovery.
- 6. The Practice of Encountering Others (Community) Meeting God in strangers and relationships.
- 7. The Practice of Living with Purpose (Vocation) Finding meaning in ordinary work.
- 8. The Practice of Saying "No" (Sabbath) Observing rest and limits.
- 9. The Practice of Carrying Water (Physical Labor) Experiencing the holiness of manual work.
- 10. The Practice of Feeling Pain (Breakthrough) Letting suffering be a teacher.
- 11. The Practice of Being Present to God (Prayer) Broadening prayer beyond words to presence.
- 12. The Practice of Pronouncing Blessing (Benediction) Speaking blessing into everyday moments.

Her central conviction is that the whole world is God's altar, and life itself — with its ordinary, messy, and painful realities — can be sacramental when approached with awareness and openness.

If you would like to be a part of this GW@6 offering, please contact Terri in the church office at (251) 626-2421. The book costs \$10.00 and we will order them before the first class based on the number of people who have signed up for the class. As always, we will gather on Wednesday evenings in Malone Hall at 6:00 for a meal and begin our class promptly at 6:30. Thack

St. Paul's Thrift Shop

St. Paul's Thrift Shop celebrated our volunteers on Sunday, August 2nd with great food, fellowship, awards and amazing door prizes for everyone at our Annual Volunteer Luncheon. Many thanks to Board Member Cindy Hoeb who worked very hard to make this such a special event and to the dozens of merchants who donated new gift items and gift cards for each of our volunteers. We ended the day by honoring the recipients of this year's Nifty Thrifty Award, The Lifetime Achievement Award and a new 3rd award: The Karen Thomason Spirit Award.



Karen Thomason

This year's Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Karen Thomason. In 2007, she began volunteering as a cashier on Thursday afternoons and served several terms on our Board of Directors.

Karen's friendly smile and greeting made everyone feel welcome and special. Karen, thank you for 17 years of faithful service at the shop and we

look forward to your return!

As Karen Thomason recovers in a rehabilitation hospital from a near fatal car accident a year ago, positivity, humor and joy still radiate from her and is so uplifting and contagious that we voted to create a new volunteer award in honor of her indomitable spirit. The first Karen Thomason Spirit Award was



presented to Linda Stealey, one of our earliest volunteers. She has worked at the Thrift Shop for over 40 years and has previously received both the Nifty Thrifty Award and The Lifetime Achievement

Award. Linda still volunteers faithfully several days a week, brings delicious treats, uplifts everyone with her friendliness and embodies the same joyful spirit as Karen Thomason. Congratulations, Linda!



This year's Nifty Thrifty Award was given to Janice Miles. Another of our earliest volunteers, she began working at the Thrift Shop in 1983 and has been steadfast in her dedication ever since. Janice works two days a week and, when asked to come in and help out on very short notice, she comes without fail. Janice is always friendly, fun to be around and very dedicated to the Thrift Shop.

Congratulations, Janice - well deserved!



Final call for 2025 - 2026 EfM registration! Cost is \$350 + \$100 for books.

Partial scholarships are available.

We will begin meeting Monday, September 8, 5:30 pm at the Howard Wilson Life Center.

We have a couple openings left!

Janet Norman

(224) 515-6938

A Note from Choirmaster John Matson

At my age life is supposed to slow down, and changes, especially major ones, are few. The past six years have been a real blessing for me by working with some of the most dedicated folks I have known. We have not been large in numbers, but huge in spirit and in love for the Lord through our singing.

A little over a month ago, Jose was offered a position as Massage Therapist at The Laurel Hotel and Spa in Auburn. It is an excellent professional opportunity for him that he couldn't pass up. We have already "half-moved" to Auburn to an apartment on College Street! We are keeping the house in Daphne, at least for the time being. My last Sunday at St. Paul's will be August 31.

I want to thank the members of St. Paul's Choir and Christopher for their hard work and musical talents. I will miss them all musically and personally......all my friends! Terri and Joan are like family for me and Jose. Thanks to Thack for loving Jesus and his ability to pass that love on to all of us. Finally, love and thanks to all the congregation for their support.

God bless you all. John

August 18, 2025

Parish Finances at a glance:

August to-date INCOME: \$47,711.00

August to-date EXPENSES: \$49,128.70

NET TOTAL: (-\$1,417.70)

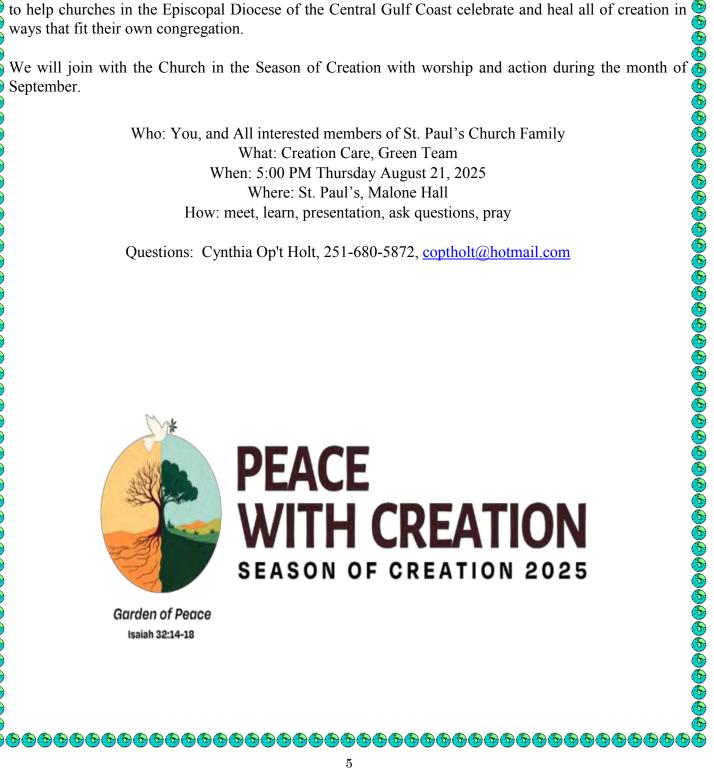
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF ST. PAUL'S PARISH!!!!

Your contributions allow us to continue to share the gospel, serve our community, support ministries and missions, help those in need, and spread the love of Christ.

Creation Care

Are you interested in creation? Concerned about our environment? Do you grow things? Do you recycle? Do you want to help our church family care for our grounds, manage equipment, 60 supplies and each other? September is Celebration of Creation Season. Come hear and learn about being stewards for Creation. Thursday August 21, 2025 5PM Malone Hall. We will learn from Lella Lowe. stewards for Creation. Thursday August 21, 2025 5PM Malone Hall. We will learn from Lella Lowe, member of the Commission of the Integrity of Creation in our Diocese.

A statement of their purpose: The Commission on the Integrity of Creation (CIC) recognizes that 6 humans, being an embodiment of the divine image, are interconnected with all of creation. Our mission is to help churches in the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast celebrate and heal all of creation in ways that fit their own congregation.



The Howard Wilson Life Center

Howard Wilson Life Center operations are moving along nicely this summer. Recently Bay Aire Co. upgraded air conditioning in the gym. This project is part of ongoing efforts to repair, update and maintain HWLC. I anticipate a cool session of Bingo! this Friday, August 22nd! The popcorn smells great and is selling well.

Speaking of maintaining facilities, we will be having floors cleaned beginning next Friday, August 29th. This includes all carpeted spaces upstairs, the gym, nursery, offices, downstairs youth area, etc. I don't think there will be an disruptions to normal business, but expect closed-off rooms and furniture moving, etc. next weekend.

Also on the maintenance agenda recently is the upstairs water fountain between the restrooms, which sprang a leak and soaked the carpet. Subsequent inspection by Justin and Bucky revealed a total loss, however, and it is still undecided whether it will be replaced.

Another huge project on the board is upgrade of HWLC's internet with fiber. In addition, a donor has requested a large 84-inch television be mounted on the wall for multimedia and pre-recorded messages to be presented. We have arranged to have this to be added to the fiber upgrade, and will be finished soon.

Last but not least, a structural engineer made an inspection and pointed out various structural improvements that could be made to preserve and protect our indoor and outdoor assets at the HWLC. I hope to have more information on this project later in my next report.

Outside of outstanding projects, our normal slate of meetings is always ongoing. The Labor Day holiday, with the unofficial end of summer, or lets hope!, is only two weeks away. School has already kicked off; God has blessed us materially and spiritually! Stay tuned for news from the Center!

David



You are invited to St. Paul's

September Parish Breakfast

Sunday, September 7th
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE 8:00 A.M. SERVICE
in the Howard Wilson Life Center.

The breakfast is prepared for you by
St. Paul's Men's Group.

No charge for children.

CHILDREN'S CHAPEL

WHAT IS CHILDREN'S CHAPELS

Now that school is back in session, we are back to our usual routine! In children's chapel we have a worship service that mimic's our services in church. This allows them to grasp a better understanding of what is happening when they transition into serving in church or following along with the services. Everyone shares a part in our worship service, whether leading in song, reading, acolyting, or leading in prayer. Our "sermon" is usually a Godly Play lesson that sometimes builds upon itself for several weeks at a time.

At the Peace, we join everyone in the service for Communion. Our lessons are tailored for ages 4-3rd grade.

WHATWERE

LEARNINGS

This July, we started at the very beginning with the creation story, the Great Flood, and Father Abraham. In the month of August we are learning about Moses and the Exodus of God's People into the Promised Land!



CODLY PLAY

REMINDERS

We can always use small snack donations, such as fruit loops, ritz crackers and butter cookies for special activites!





Prayer Requests

Please let the office know of names to be added, moved to ongoing, or removed from the list.

Immediate Prayer Requests:

Stephanie Barksdale, Townsend Bessonen, Christopher Blackwell, Kit Caffey, Pam Carlson, Fletcher & Judith Comer, Deanna Cook, Diana Costlow, Mark Costlow, Linda Crissy, Wayne Davis, Lillian Deason, Sara DeWitt, Phyllis Dillow, Reid Dyson, Nancy Dziubakowski, Kay Fisher, Dana & Tommy Fletcher, Curran Foose, Jr., Richard and Patrick Foster, Laura Ann Gibson, Toni Gray, Mary Green, Catherine Greenslade, Stewart Hampton, Marian Harris, Jessica Head, Kelsey Henderson, Sharon Hoiles, Linn Hyde, Dave Johnson, Leslie Johnson, Phil Kelley, Doug Kinney, Tracie Knight, Beverly and Mike Koepp, Pat Lieb, Debbie Love, Donelle McBride, Freda McDonald, Herb McDonald, Bob McKnight, Eileen McSpadden, Marcie Morrow, Lisa Nash, Josh Plotniak, Bob Powell, David Powers, Judy Reeves, Kem Rutledge, Marie Schreiner, Nick Shoultz, Fran Siemssen, Lee Stassen, Bobbi Surgenor, Mark Taylor, Karen Thomason, Tim Turpen, Anna & Bill Waid, Ken Wallis, Julia Warren, Bob & Beth Wickwire, Kern & Mary Wilson, Coleman Wood

Ongoing Prayer Requests:

Marty Adams, Allison Badurak, Jim Blackwell, Betty Borroni, Dakota Burchett, Pat Cannon, Janice Clifford, Jim Clifford, Joe Cook, Sr., Faith Cornett, Jim Council, Margie Cowart, Suzanne Damour, Beth Dearmon Einig, Sylvia Forbes, Jim Gordon, Dee Grantham, Joyce Griffis, Terri Hare, Eddie Hill, Susan Hill, Jossie Hurst, Shannon Kern, Alexander Kielek, Matt & Penny Kratochvil, Jim Lonnergan, 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, Albert Thompson, Vicki Thompson, Diane Young, Joe Young, Mike Young

For the Departed: Eddie Adams

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, Dan Eshed, Chris Evans, Steven Grey, Matthew Harris, Rusty Henry, Karen Hubley, Walker Jackson, Daniel James, Jake Jerome, Matt Jones, Harrison Key, Daniel Lambert, Chris Lessard, Jackson May, Patrick Mong, Bryan Quinn, Holden Quinn, Madie Quinn, Justin Ramsey, Neil Sevelius, Michael Strohlein, Dan Strohlein, Aiden Walker, Brad Yonkers

For Those with Birthdays:

August 1-31: (01) Crystal Anderson, (02) Bill Cody, Bailey Mitchell, (05) Kathy Lovell, (06) Terri McMillan, Sarah Hinote, (07) Lee Keel, Alice Gordon, (08) Sophia Brooks, (09) Patricia Glover, (11) Jackie Brettel, Sandy Davenport, Lila Sharp, (12) Gabe Dyson, (14) Clay Rankin, Patrick Foster, Joshua Bond, (15) Marty Ollinger, (16) Deborah Baldock, Judi Gulledge, (17) Lea Verneuille, (18) Hope Brooks, Drew Lathan, Aiden Walker, (19) Kristina McKenna, (20) Marie Schreiner, (21) Judy Hale, (22) Sid Jackson, David Chavers, Will Kiser, (23) Frances Coleman, (24) Eric Smith, Brittany Lapeyrouse, (25) Chuck Bryan, (26) Alan Talamo, Glen Burgess, (27) Marjorie Perry, (28) Baba Hendricks, Michelle Beckham, (29) Liz Ray, Sean Beckham, Diane Watson, Cage Connell



Come join us on Sunday mornings from 9:15–10:00 AM for a time set apart to read, discuss, and learn from the Word together. Whether you're new to the Bible or have grown up in church, this is a space to ask questions, share thoughts, and grow alongside friends.

ST. PAULS EPISCOPAL MOVED H KICKOFF

Join us as we send off summer and kick off the school year with friends, fun, and plenty of ice cream! Whether you're ready to make a splash or just hang out poolside, there's something for everyone.

WHO: 6tH-12th Graders (and Parents)

WHEN: AUGUST 24^{th,} 4 PM

WHERE: 30023 D'OLIVE RIDGE

SPANISH FORT AL

Bring your swimsuit if you want to swim, or just come chill and enjoy the fellowship.

Let's celebrate together before school starts!

Dear fellow women of St. Paul's,

You may have heard of a type of Bible study that's most commonly known by one of two names: the African Bible study method or the Lambeth Bible study method.

With this method, members of a group consider a particular passage of Scripture and are guided by the study leader to meditate on how God might be speaking to them and how they might more faithfully live according to His will. If you will take a few minutes to google "African Bible study method," "Lambeth Bible study method" and/or "Lectio Divina," you can see how such a study is conducted.

Our rector, Thack Dyson, has participated in this type of Scripture study and would be highly supportive of us forming a similar group for women here at St. Paul's. We would meet for about an hour one evening per week.

If you are interested in developing a deeper relationship with the Lord through meditation, reflection and sharing, please email Terri McMillan at officestpaulsdaphne@gmail.com.

Meanwhile, please pray that God will steer us all toward a deeper understanding of His unwavering love for us and for every man, woman and child in His creation.



SPAGHETTI DINNER and BINGO ...

Come join the fun in the Howard Wilson Life Center of St. Paul's

Friday, August 22nd & September 26th beginning at 5:45 pm

with delicious spaghetti dinner

followed by 11 games of exciting BINGO

fun ... food ... fellowship ...

and cash prizes!

supporting the ministries of St. Paul's.



Spaghetti Dinner

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 a.m. 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 - Saturday 10:00 a.m. -- 3:00 p.m.

Donations Accepted

Thursday - Saturday 10:00 a.m. -- 3:00 p.m. 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 (Malone Hall) 10:30 am

Great Wednesday 6:00 pm Malone Hall

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Adult

9:10 am in Conference Room A

Youth

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

Children

9:15 am K-5th Grades in the Children's Chapel

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 Gulledge 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

 ${\bf www.stpaulse astern shore.com}$

Email Address officestpaulsdaphne@gmail.com

> <u>Facebook Page</u> St. Paul's Eastern Shore

> > Phone 251-626-2421

Church App

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

St. Paul's Episcopal Church	US Postage Paid
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Daphne, Alabama 36526	Permit 46
	Daphne, AL 36526
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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
John Matson, Choirmaster
Christopher Conger, Church Musician
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