

A photograph of two monarch butterflies with orange and black wings perched on tall, purple lavender flower spikes. The background is a soft-focus field of more lavender plants under a bright, hazy sky.

The LORD bless thee,
and keep thee:
The LORD make his face
shine upon thee,
and be gracious unto thee.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

(Serving the Tuskegee Community since 1912)

Priest-in-Charge: The Rev. H. Mawande Mzongwana

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THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (Proper 16)

August 23, 2026

MORNING PRAYER – RITE II Self-Guided Prayer

HYMNAL

PRAYER BOOK

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** The First Reading: Isaiah 51:1-6

** Psalm: 138

** The Second Reading: Romans 12:1-8

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** **THE GOSPEL Matthew 16:13-20**

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www.episcopalchurch.org/sermons

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THE GENERAL THANKSGIVING

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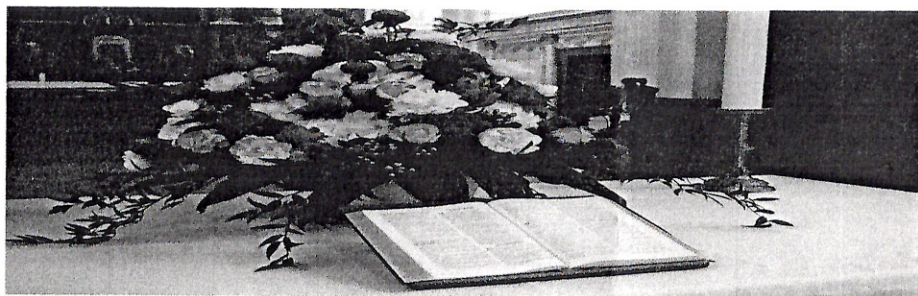
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ANNOUNCEMENTS (See inside Bulletin)

Closing Hymn:

The Dismissal



FELLOWSHIP HOUR

The Christian Gathering continues after this service with fellowship and refreshments in the undercroft.

PLEASE JOIN US!!!!!!

September 6 - A Parishioner



13 PENTECOST

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost: Proper 16



Revised Common Lectionary
TRACK TWO

Sunday, August 23, 2026

COLLECT

Traditional

GRANT, WE BESEECH THEE, merciful God, that thy Church, being gathered together in unity by thy Holy Spirit, may manifest thy power among all peoples, to the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Contemporary

GRANT, O MERCIFUL GOD, that your Church, being gathered together in unity by your Holy Spirit, may show forth your power among all peoples, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 51:1-6

LISTEN TO ME, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many. For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation; for a teaching will go out from me, and my justice for a light to the peoples. I will bring near my deliverance swiftly, my salvation has gone out and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for

my arm they hope. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats; but my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

Refrain

O Lord, your love endures for ever;
do not abandon the works of your hands.

Psalm 138 from the Book of Common Prayer

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with my whole heart; * before the gods I will sing your praise. | 5 All the kings of the earth will praise you, O LORD, * when they have heard the words of your mouth. |
| 2 I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your Name, * because of your love and faithfulness; | 6 They will sing of the ways of the LORD, * that great is the glory of the LORD. |
| 3 For you have glorified your Name * and your word above all things. | 7 Though the LORD be high, he cares for the lowly; * he perceives the haughty from afar. |
| 4 When I called, you answered me; * you increased my strength within me. | 8 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe; * you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my |

enemies; your right
hand shall save me.

- 9 The LORD will make
good his purpose for

me; * O LORD, your
love endures for ever;
do not abandon the
works of your hands.

SECOND READING: Romans 12:1-8

I APPEAL TO YOU therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

GOSPEL: Matthew 16:13-20

NOW WHEN JESUS came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday, August 24, 2026

Tuesday, August 25, 2026

Wednesday, August 26, 2026

Thursday, August 27, 2026

Friday, August 28,
2026

Saturday, August 29, 2026

Sunday, August 30, 2026 (T.U. Football, Red Tails Classic)

11 a.m. - Morning Prayer, self-guided

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY & BIRTHDAY!!

August

1 – James & June Samuel

1 – Carolyn Bland

2 – William E. Gunn

7 - Titus Smith

22 – Deborah Richie

22 - George & Tiffane Bulls

26 - *Lewis & Carolyn Bland*

26 - E. Drake Whitelaw

**NEWS FROM AROUND THE EPISCOPAL
& ANGLICAN DIOCESES**

Clergy and Lay Leaders of Color Retreat will be *Friday, September 11, 2026, at 5 pm* and *September 12, 2026, at 4 pm* at Camp McDowell. Registration is available on-line at dioala.org

T.U. NEWS/EVENTS (www.tuskegee.edu)

Classes have resumed with a few new changes: There is a new University-wide dress code in place and the time for Chapel Service has been changed to Sunday at 1:30 pm.

COMMUNITY EVENTS (Auburn, Montgomery, Tuskegee)

August 30, 2026, down-town-on-the-square, Tuskegee, a parade, entertainment, fellowship and food vendors.

2026 Football Schedule -- Tuskegee U.

August 30 – Red Tails Classic, T.U. vs U. of West Ala., Cramton Bowl, 7 pm, Montgomery

September 24 – T.U. vs Benedict, HOME (Thursday night at 6pm)

October 3 – T.U. vs Morehouse, Cramton Bowl, 6 pm, Montgomery

October 17 – T.U. vs Albany State, 2 pm, HOME

November 7 – Homecoming, T.U. vs Miles, 2:30 pm, HOME

November 26 – Turkey Day Game, T.U. vs Alabama State U., Cramton Bowl, Montgomery

2026 Football Schedule -- Auburn U.

September 12 – Auburn vs Southern Mississippi, 6:45 pm, HOME

September 19 – Auburn vs Florida, 6 pm, HOME

September 26 – Homecoming, Auburn vs Vanderbilt, 2 pm, HOME

October 24 – Auburn vs LSU, 11 am, HOME

November 7, Auburn vs Arkansas, 11 am, HOME

November 21 – Auburn vs Samford, 2:30 pm, HOME

November 28 – Iron Bowl, Auburn vs Alabama, Tuscaloosa

PRAYER LIST

CHRISTINA ANDERSON

STEPHANIE BOSWELL

THOMASINE BRAYE

THOMAS BRAYE*

JAMES BRAYE

REBECCA LYN CARTER

CURT CARTER, SR*

CHARLES M. CRANK, II

PRESTON CRAYTON

LUCENIA DUNN*

SHANNON DIXON

TEDDY DOWDY*

ANITRA FULLER

ROBERT FRAZIER

MARGARET 'KATIE' JONES

THERON JONES

DIANE KENNEY*

JULIUS MYHAND. JR.

MARIAN GARMON*

MARIO LIGHTFOOTE*

DAVID NGAWA**

MARTHA OSGERBY

ANNA C. OWENS

TUNESHA SMITH

ANGELICA SNOWDEN

YOLANDA P. SEAWRIGHT

DARRYL SEAWRIGHT

BRENDA D. ROBINSON*

LISA TECZAR

CHARLES THOMPSON**

E. DRAKE WHITELAW

*Local Parishioners

** Shut-In Parishioners

THE DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER

We pray for our Companion Diocese of Honduras and their bishop, Lloyd; The Clergy and people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church; Diocesan Department of Recovery Ministries; Holy Cross, Trussville; Holy Cross, Uniontown; St. Bartholomew's, Florence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS!!

- ARMED FORCES: Please pray for our service men and women stationed in the U.S. and overseas, especially, Sam and Margaret Gunn Bunton, Christopher Childers, Kyle F. Graham, Shavone Marbory Hogan, and Elijah Barber.
- PRAYERS: Continue to pray for those on the Prayer List, friends, family and all humankind afflicted by disease, war and famine. Pray for peace!
- REMINDER: Please continue to furnish our Food Basket with non-perishable food items (located on the ground floor of the Education Building).
- REMINDER: The link for the Sunday ZOOM Companion service can be reached by dialing: 1-312-626-6799, Meeting ID: 882 671 9532, Passcode: 008810 or click on your email invite.
- PARDON THE INCONVIENCE: The church office printer and computer were not functioning correctly, causing an interruption of services. The problem has been corrected so Bulletins can be printed. Thank you for your patience.
- NEW: If you are interested or know of someone interested in assisting with childcare on the first Sunday of every month, please contact the Parish Secretary (Denise Dixon).
- UPCOMING EVENTS: *Baby Shower*, Sunday, September 6, 2026, following Eucharist (Vestine Abera-T.U. Grad student). She is expecting a boy. Please bring a gift to be placed in a bassinet. (i.e. diapers, clothing, baby towels, socks, grooming items, bottles, bibs, blanket, bathtub, stroller..etc.) and *St. Andrew's Annual Fall Picnic*, Sunday, October 4, 2026. Dress is casual. Holy Eucharist and the picnic will be held in the undercroft. You will receive a call for a suggested food or beverage donation.

**Additional announcements are listed inside the bulletin.*



Pentecost 13 (A) – Proper 16

[RCL]: Exodus 1:8-2:10; Psalm 124; Romans 12:1-8; Matthew 16:13-20

Every Part of the Story

Every part of the story is important.

Every piece of the puzzle, every theme in the narrative, every member of the body.

There are so many pieces to our story.

Take today's Exodus reading: Slavery. A jealous Pharaoh. Infanticide. A pair of possibly lying midwives. A hidden baby. A brave mother. A tar-coated basket. A princess. A well-timed sister. This origin story rivals any Marvel epic!

All of these details—all these themes and characters and plot-lines—add up to this central claim: God saves.

Consider the midwives. They ought to be terrified—they work for the Pharaoh who is fearful in a cowardly way—and yet they are not afraid. They choose to fear God instead of man, and so they use their power in a courageous act of civil disobedience.

“Fear of God”—as it's used throughout the Old Testament—is more a concept about human decency, than human fear. The “fear of God” in a human being acts as a stimulus for good and a restraint of evil. Thus the midwives—when faced with a conflict between the laws of God and those of the Pharaoh—follow this goodness, this inner conscience, the “fear of God” within them.

What would have happened if they had succumbed to the fear of *man*? What would have happened to so many babies in the nation of Israel? To the specific baby at the center of this story? To the baby who grows up and, after twists and turns of his own complicated story and identity, went on to free the oppressed, leading his people out of slavery in Egypt. What would have happened to the history of not just Israel, but all humanity, had this baby not gone on to oversee the demise of Pharaoh and his armies in the very waters Pharaoh once used to threaten these innocent children? The midwives change the course of human history.

Then there is the mother who hides her child, the sister who watches from a distance, the daughter of Pharaoh who refuses to see an enemy and instead sees a baby, and the unnamed hands that build a basket and set it among the reeds. Even the basket is an important character here, with its own story—hearkening back to the ark that Noah built; here is another flotation device carrying people away from destruction and death, into freedom.

Each action is small. Each action is essential. It is God who brings salvation through these ordinary objects, ordinary people, ordinary decisions.

Of course, none of these individuals could see the whole story. In the moment, there is fear, ambiguity, and cost. On the page, the story can seem overly simple, as we know the outcome as we read. But do not be deceived: It is never uncomplicated to be human in a broken world.

This is one gift the midwives offer us. They remind us that we are not called to carry the whole story. We cannot bring about salvation. We are called only to do our part within it. It is not perfection God seeks from us, but faithfulness, relationship, and discernment. We are not responsible for control of the outcome, but for courage in the moment.

Paul writes something similar in the letter to the Romans, a few thousand years later. He explains that the body does not consist of one member, but many. Each member has gifts. Each has a place. Each is needed, but none is sufficient alone. Someone has to be the little toe—and have you ever tried to walk or run without your pinky toe?

We are not all the same part, and so we are not all called to the same task. Some are hands, some are feet, some are eyes, some are hidden and unnamed. But all belong. It is not our job to carry out the role of the entire body, only Christ can do that—and he did so with his own body.

Our calling is simpler and harder, a path of surrender: to be faithful where we are planted. To become what we have been given to be. We do not need the full picture, every detail, to know that Christ is with us and within us. And know this: We do not often get the tidy resolution or full clarity we often expect from other stories.

In the Gospel, people are still trying to sort out the story—in this case, the identity of the protagonist. Who is Jesus?

Some say Jesus is John the Baptist bringing fire and revolution. Some say Elijah, combative and declarative. Some say Jeremiah or one of the prophets—a voice of truth preparing the way. All those figures mattered, each voice had their place. But Jesus is not a secondary character. He is the protagonist, bringing main character energy that rivals none.

So he asks Peter, “But who do *you* say that I am?”

The scene is important. Jesus is in Caesarea Philippi, and the location is a literary device that frames the question. The area was full of temples and shrines to ancient religions, markers of Ba’al, Pan, and Caesar. The scholar Barclay writes, “It is as if Jesus deliberately set himself against the background

of the world's religions in all their history and splendour, and demanded to be compared to them and to have the verdict given in his favour.”

In such a place, Peter answers the question simply, plainly: “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

While it is a simple answer, the meaning is deeply confusing. What does it mean that Jesus is the Messiah? Does this mean there will be no more war, no more violence, no more oppression? Does this mean all our hardships will end in neat resolutions?

No. Because Peter, like all of us, is called to play only a part in the larger story. The large story of salvation arrives with a lot of tragedies. Even our Savior dies a criminal's death on the cross.

“But who do you say that I am?”

We cannot decide who Christ is solely based on the stories others tell us, or even only based on the traditions we inherit. At some point, the question must become personal: Who is Jesus to you?

The answer is never static—nor should it be. Like any good relationship, our relationship with Jesus deepens over time. It unfolds. It matures. Like anything rooted in living soil, it grows season by season.

We live in a world as complex as the one captured in the book of Exodus—a world marked by fear and oppression and violence, but also by courage, compassion, and unexpected grace. Even today, courageous midwives choose the fear of God over the fear of man.

It can be tempting for us to try to shoulder it all, to try to be the savior. And it can also be a temptation to just run away, to pretend none of it is happening.

But Paul reminds us, and Exodus shows us, and the Gospel insists: salvation belongs to God. Christ alone saves. Christ alone leads us out of bondage. Christ alone carries the weight of redemption.

Every part of the story matters; every piece of the body matters, because Christ is at work through all of us. We may never part the sea. We may never stand before Pharaoh. We may never be named the rock of the Church.

But we might be a parent who makes impossible sacrifices for their children. We might take professional risks in choosing to follow God instead of man. We might keep watch over a basket in a river and discover a calling we never anticipated. We might take the role of a very, very important pinky toe.

And that is enough. As complicated and long and difficult as our story is, God is with us. God alone can save us—we do not have to. Our help is in the Name of the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

***The Rev. Anna Sutterisch** is passionate about new ways of being and doing church, and is excited about sharing the Gospel in a way that is relevant and life-changing to today's people in today's world. Rev. Anna holds degrees in English and Viola Performance from Baldwin Wallace University and Conservatory, and is a proud graduate of Bexley Seabury Seminary, where she serves on the Board of Directors. She is honored and humbled to serve as the priest at St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Chagrin Falls, a small, strong congregation that loves liturgy, God, and our neighbors, and tries to bring Christ's light and life into a broken and hurting world. She lives in Cleveland with her spouse (also a parish priest), their two small boys, and two cats, and loves to run, cook, and eat vegetables.*



Sermons that Work and Bible Studies that Work are a joint offering of Forward Movement and The Office of Communication at The Episcopal Church.

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/bible-study/>