

The Archangel's Voice

St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church E-Newsletter

SPECIAL EDITION
SUMMER 2019

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 4

Civil Rights Pilgrimage to Montgomery: A Reflection

~ The Rev. Hugh Chapman

"Good things are happening at St. Michael.

Come and see!"



This pilgrimage, jointly shared by parishioners from both St. John's and St. Michael and All Angels, afforded participants the opportunity to look back at our history, yes, a history that included slavery, the Jim Crow era and the fight for Civil Rights, particularly here in the South and more especially in Alabama. Rev. Abi did remind us that this pilgrimage would

have a transformative effect on all thirty-one souls who got on the bus. To quote her more directly, pilgrimages invite us "to expect the sacred waiting to be discovered wherever we travel." Pilgrimages often provide those who undertake such journeys an awakening, indeed a deep wrestling sometimes with uncomfortable truths that we would rather avoid or possibly deny. We did learn that a fellow Episcopalian tried to convince one of our pilgrims, that what we were told and shown while in Alabama was not to be believed – just another made up story! Well, I suppose such thinking is a reflection of the times in which we live.

Our journey saw us visit **Dexter Avenue Baptist Church** where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr began his ministry. It felt like hallowed ground as we entered the office he occupied as Pastor. Mind you, that office has remained undisturbed to this day! Our tour guide, Wanda, with her infectious smile and melodic voice, turned out to be the perfect historiographer as she shared countless stories of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church's journey.



While at Dexter, we were joined by a group of exchange students (from China and Vietnam), two of whom shared their musical gifts with us, along with our own DL LaSeur-Helfand, organist at St. Michael and All Angels.

KEY DATES

August 15
SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN

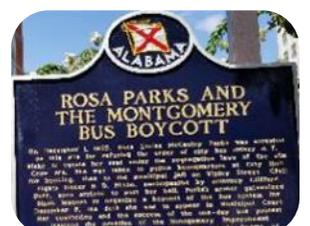
August 24
SAINT BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE

September 8
THE FEAST OF ALEXANDER CRUMMEL

The visit to the Legacy Museum proved more gut wrenching than anything else, with the vivid images of the torture employed to keep the slave population in subjugation. These methods included whippings, lynchings and the daily threat of family separations if the need arose for labor on another plantation. The harrowing image of a mother pleading with her laughing owner not to sell all five of her kids will remain with me for a while to come. Perhaps more disturbing was the complicit attitude displayed by many of the white churches of the day that openly supported racial segregation, and their total refusal to permit black folk (well, after slavery came to an end) to worship in their churches. I tried not to attach too much significance to the lone African American male who was present for worship at St. John's Episcopal in downtown Montgomery on Sunday July 21st. I was left wondering whether he was the only African American congregant, or that others just decided not to be present that day.



Then it was on to the **Rosa Parks Museum**, where we were reminded of the pivotal role played by that seemingly graceful and non-confrontational figure, whose stubborn action ushered in the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Amidst threats and other forms of intimidation, the Black populace remained resolute until their objective was achieved – to be able to sit in any seat on the bus. Dr. King was instrumental in helping to organize taxis to get folks to work and other chores they had to complete. Not enough mention is ever made of the supportive actions of the white residents of the city, who did not penalize those who got to work late, often.



Upcoming Events



Tuesdays, 12:15 pm
Said Mass

Wednesdays, 6:00 pm
Bible Study

Thursdays, 12:15 pm
Healing Service

August 17
Fundraiser:
Rummage/Yard Sale

August 18
Rector's 40th Anniversary,
Ordained Ministry

August 31
Fifth Saturday Breakfast
Service
at Grace Mission

September 8
UBE Sunday:
Commemorating Racial
Justice

Ongoing
Capital Campaign

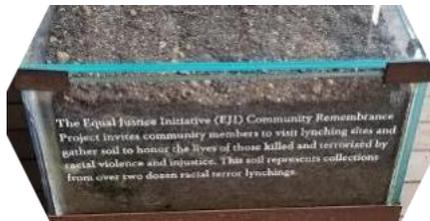
Our pilgrimage concluded with a tour to the **Peace and Justice Memorial** where



on full display were the names of those who were lynched as well as jars containing remnants of the aforementioned. On that somber afternoon, we were joined by hordes of persons including young people who solemnly read the names of the martyred.

I left Montgomery more convinced than ever that the Christian Church needs to atone for our complicity as we openly defended the institution of slavery or just remained silent in the face of such atrocity. This atonement must include our complete rejection of all forms of segregation and the continuing injustices that are very much evident with us, even here in Tallahassee.

More images from the Peace and Justice Memorial



Dexter Avenue Baptist Church



The Legacy Museum



Tallahassee's Pilgrims – St. John's and St. Michael & All Angels



"History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again."
Naya Auerhan

St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church

1405 Melvin Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Telephone: (850) 681-0844

Email us at:
office@stmichaelandallangels.org

We're on the Web:
www.stmichaelandallangels.org

Find us on Instagram:
[smaa_tally](https://www.instagram.com/smaa_tally)

Follow us on Twitter:
[@SMAA_Tally](https://twitter.com/SMAA_Tally)