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Tidings



St. Thomas' Episcopal Church is an inclusive and worshipping Christian community that accepts the challenge of living the Gospel.

The Rector's Column

As we begin a new year in the church and a new calendar year waits close behind, it's a fine time to reflect on what our community is about. We'll support each other in the coming weeks, help ease the tension of family visits, love the gifts of our many relationships, and celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Lovely as those parts can be, being in Christian community is more than all that. There's also a level of responsibility and accountability we share with each other. So much of the Christian world focuses on an individual's personal relationship with Jesus. I've got no problem with that, of course. Please, cultivate that relationship and let His teachings change you!

But there's also a thread in Christianity that says none of us can be Christian alone. In other words, while we each foster our personal relationship to varying degrees, we absolutely need the community, too. One can't love their neighbor if they avoid neighbors altogether, for example. It goes deeper, though. It's not just about fostering community so that you will know who to serve. It's about fostering the community while the community works on you, too.

There's a great old quote from the prolific author Anonymous that says, "Living in Christian community is like being stones in a bag rubbing each other to smoothness." We each have our jagged edges and pointy bits that need to be chipped away. Sometimes that's my pre-coffee grumpiness, but sometimes that can even extend to beliefs. Individuals live within, inform, and inspire the community. In turn, the community challenges, informs, and inspires the individual. And we all tumble around this gift of community together.

I'd like us all to sit with, "stones in a bag" idea for a while. I know it's a near-impossible thing to ask anyone to set aside to do anything extra this time of year, so instead, plant those stones in your mind and let 'em percolate in the background while you go about your preparations and celebrations. I'm sure we'll each gain our own insights if we let 'em grow in there, and the community will be richer for it.

Blessings,
Brooks+

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Interfaith Thanksgiving Food Drive



Many thanks to all those who contributed to the Interfaith Thanksgiving Food Drive! Working with the other churches and the Food Cupboard in Hamilton, distribution to 94 households occurred on Saturday, November 23. Within these households there were 188 adults and 129 children. St. Thomas' contributed 29 small household bags, four large family bags, and additional funds for Price Chopper cards to be used for buying the main course. Thanks be to God and you wonderful people!

A Prayer

Creator, give us the courage to love and serve our neighbors, welcoming the stranger and working for justice.

—Sojourners

Join the Conversation: Bible Study

The book of Jeremiah will keep us busy a little longer, and then we'll start on the Letter to the Hebrews.

Where: Jeremiah sits almost exactly in the middle of the Christian Bible. Hebrews is near the end of the New Testament.

What to Watch for: For Jeremiah, the greatest hope is that God is in control, but that isn't exactly comforting for his audience. In Hebrews, we'll be looking at both the author and the audience for clues about their context.

References: Lots of references to Moses and the Exodus in Jeremiah. Hebrews makes use of a fair bit of the Old Testament but not always in a favorable light.

Content: Jeremiah takes place immediately before and at the outset of the Babylonian invasion and exile. Hebrews is a little harder to pin down, potentially as early as 60 AD and as late as 100 AD.

Lectionary: Only 11% of Jeremiah shows up in our Lectionary. We typically encounter Jeremiah in Year C and occasionally at both Christmas and Easter. A little less than half of Hebrews appears in the Lectionary, primarily in Years B and C and certain holidays.

Upcoming Events

December 8: Lessons & Carols at
St. Thomas'

December 14: Celebrating Artists at Arts
at the Palace Gala

December 25-27: Office closed

January 5: Epiphany Pageant

Nave Gazing

Over on Page 383 of the Book of Common Prayer, there's a list of six topics to be prayed for every time we do the Prayers of the People. That list includes:

- The Universal Church, its members, and mission
- The Nation and all in authority
- The welfare of the world
- The concerns of the local community
- Those who suffer and those in any trouble
- The departed

While there are certainly others we can and do pray for, those six cover most of our concerns. This time around, though, I'd like to focus on the second: The Nation and all in authority. It has long been the tradition of this parish and our denomination to pray for those who "bear the authority of government," and depending on which form of the prayers we are using, to pray for those people by name. In my time at St. Thomas', when we use names, we've listed the President and the Governor. In that time, we've prayed for Barack, Donald, and Joe, and beginning in late January, we'll pray for Donald again. This is what praying with integrity looks like.

This practice also bears some explanation about what prayer is not. Prayer is not the same thing as an endorsement. It wasn't an endorsement of Joe or Barack or George or Bill or the other George or Ronald, and it won't be an endorsement of Donald, either.

Let's revisit those Prayers of the People and see what we are praying for when we pray for the Nation and all in authority. From Rite I, we pray "that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world." From the various forms in Rite II, we pray for "our President and the leaders of the nations," for "peace and good will among the nations; and for the wellbeing of all people," for "justice and peace," for "all who govern and hold

authority in the nations of the world, that there may be justice and peace on the earth," for "the peace of the world, that a spirit of respect and forbearance may grow among nations and peoples," for "those in positions of public trust that they may serve justice and promote the dignity and freedom of every human person," for "this community, the nation, and the world," and for "all who work for justice, freedom, and peace." We also pray that God will "Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good."

In other words, no matter who occupies the office, we don't pray for these people because we really like them or really don't. We pray for them because we know the challenges and temptations of high office are so great that it may just take divine intervention to keep them on the right track or to encourage them to get on the right track.

With all that in mind, we're going to continue to pray for our leaders by name when the Prayers of the People call for it. I know some will be glad to hear a change and others will not, but this is our task. We pray for the needs of the world, not just the parts we like. And our prayers are sincere. We really do want those in authority to live into these prayers. May they always come true, regardless of who bears the authority.

Scrabble Club Schedule Reminder

Scrabble Club will meet only on the first Tuesday of the month. We'll be slinging tiles from 4:00 - 6:00 pm in the Unicorn Suite. If you'd like to join, feel free to drop in or reach out to Denise Dixon to be added to the text list for updates and other information at (315) 416-2323.

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church Vestry Minutes October 27, 2024

Present: Debbie Barker, Martha Berry, John Bowen, Brooks Cato (presiding), Connie Harsh, Deborah Knuth-Klenck, Kerry Linden, Rose Novak, John Orr, Jane Welsh, Ellie Weyter

Absent: Wynn Egginton

Call to Order

The meeting began at 11: 37 a.m. in the parish hall. Brooks Cato led the opening prayer.

Clerk's Report

The minutes of the August 25th vestry meeting were approved as submitted in final draft. Approval was moved by Kerry Linden; seconded by Jane Welsh.

Treasurer's Report

John Bowen submitted the following report to the vestry members:

“The month of September was a quiet one. There were no unexpected expenses. Pledge income remained solid. There were gains in all endowment funds.

The Budget and Finance Commission has been working on the 2025 budget. It will be a challenge to meet expected increases in operating expenses. Last year's deficit was covered by a draw from our endowment funds and a portion of a very generous bequest. We will have a clearer projection for 2025 when pledges have been received and expenses, particularly insurance, come into focus next month.

Giving statements will be sent out later this week.”

Martha Berry moved that the Treasurer's Report be received; Debbie Barker seconded the motion. The Report was received as submitted.

Rector's Report

Brooks Cato welcomed new vestry members. He noted the usefulness of the vestry packets and reviewed the Treasurer's Report for new members. He then defined the roles of the vestry and rector so that new members would be familiar with them. Brooks stated that he was

eager to hear the Jazz Eucharist scheduled for the next Sunday, November 3rd, and he reminded everyone to turn their clocks back one hour on Saturday night.

Wardens' Report

Martha Berry also welcomed new vestry members and thanked them for their willingness to serve. She noted that she and Jane Welsh have been attending the Budget & Finance Commission meetings and they have been learning quite a lot about the budgeting process. She too is looking forward to the Jazz Eucharist. Jane Welsh seconded everything that Martha had expressed and had nothing further to add at the moment, except to comment that she had been very impressed by how many different scenarios the treasurer had generated for the budget discussions.

Commission Reports

- *Historic Preservation Fund/Ramshaw Fund:* Brooks Cato stated that there was an order of business involving the Historic Preservation account and the Ramshaw Fund. The Budget & Finance Commission has recommended that instead of all of the earnings from the two funds being reinvested, that a portion of the earnings should go into St. Thomas' operating budget. (In fact, this occurs with other funds as well, and it is a very small percentage. The same small percentage will be applied to these two funds.) John Bowen added that the payment from the two funds will generate about **\$2500** per year. Brooks Cato confirmed that there are no restrictions on the Ramshaw deed of gift to prevent the church using the funds as it sees fit. A motion to adopt the change was made by Deborah Knuth-Klenck and seconded by Jane Welsh. The motion carried.
- *Buildings Commission:* John Orr reviewed the background of the work concerning the Buildings Commission for the new vestry members. This was outlined in the August 25th vestry minutes as follows: “*Since receiving the 187-page “Buildings Condition Report” prepared by Crawford and Stearns in March, the Buildings Commission has met several times to discuss priorities and next steps.*”
The consensus opinion is to initially prioritize work on the Rectory. Based on the report,

a list of projects/issues to be addressed was developed. Jane Welsh and John Orr met with Ted Bartlett (senior associate with Crawford and Stearns) on June 28 to see if he would act as general contractor for the project. He told them that their firm no longer does that type of work, but they could act as a consultant on the job site, particularly with issues regarding historic preservation. He will work up a proposal for consultation services.

He also offered to compile a list of potential contractors with the necessary experience. He will vet all candidates before passing on the names to the Buildings Commission.

A follow-up meeting with Bartlett on August 20 was postponed and re-scheduled for September 4.

John Orr expressed the sense that it will probably take another 12-18 months to select a contractor, firm up a list of the tasks to be done, and to create timetables and budgets before actual work can begin.”

As an update to the above, John Orr reported that in keeping with the initial recommendation, the work on the rectory will begin first. Crawford and Stearns has now provided a proposal costing **\$9,275.00** for consultancy services involving: assisting in the prioritization of project work, organizing the bid process for a general contractor, and preparing the preliminary plans for desired work, among other services. Budget & Finance had not discussed whether to go ahead with this at the time of the vestry meeting on October 27th; however, it was agreed that they could take this up prior to the November meeting and vestry members could be contacted with the outcome by email before November 24th in order to keep the process moving.

Additionally, John Orr stated that a proposal for the control and abatement of moisture issues in the basements of the Church, Parish Hall, and Rectory was recently received and is being studied. The total cost for work on all three areas is **\$50,832.46**.

Old Business

- *Safe Church Training:* Brooks Cato said that he thought that most everyone had completed the course, but Leah would check and send vestry members links to the online course if they still

needed to do this.

- *Bible Case:* Recently, Brooks Cato managed to locate a case through Facebook Marketplace that he thought might be a good fit for St. Thomas' Bible. He sent around photos with details to vestry members who approved it tentatively by email depending upon Brooks' visit to the seller and what the case actually looked like in person. It was priced at **\$50**. As it turned out the case seemed perfect for our needs so it was purchased and has now been placed in the eastern end of the church near the ambry.
- *Homelessness Task Force:* Brooks Cato reviewed the situation briefly for new vestry members. He reported that the committee is in touch with other churches, as well as social service agencies in our area, so that we aren't reduplicating efforts.

New Business

- *Crop Walk:* Brooks Cato announced that the Crop Walk, which would take place at 1:00 p.m. today, had raised over **\$10,000!** The vestry was impressed and delighted.
- *Budget & Finance Budgeting Process/Stewardship:* Brooks Cato announced that as of the start of the meeting the church had received 19 pledges for **\$88,410**. Eleven persons had increased their pledges and eight persons had stayed stable. Brooks mentioned that he sent an update to Budget & Finance each week as pledges are sent in. Just previous to the meeting it was noted that a few more pledges, not noted in the tally above, had come in on October 27th. After a brief interchange the vestry decided that it would be best to look over budget scenarios at the November meeting when it will be clearer how many pledges come in and how large the budget will ultimately be.
- *Good Neighbor Grants:* Brooks Cato made the vestry aware of two orders of business. The first consisted of a change to the wording of the guidelines for the Good Neighbor Grants. Currently the statement regarding "Eligible Applicants" reads:

"Eligible applicants: Grant applications will only be accepted from established charitable organizations or parishes engaged in the creation or continuation of projects that address the basic goals of the fund. We do not provide funds directly to individuals."

The proposed addition of text would read:

“Eligible applicants: Grant applications will only be accepted from established charitable organizations or parishes engaged in the creation or continuation of

Projects that address the basic goals of the fund. We do not provide funds directly to individuals *or to support regular operating expenses.*” [Added text in italics.] Debbie Barker moved to approve the expanded text; Kerry Linden seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Brooks Cato then presented the second order of business, the need for the vestry to approve four applications that had passed initial screening for Good Neighbor Grants. These were to be given to: (1) Camp Fiver for the purchase of a minivan, facility repairs, and program supplies (**\$45,000**); to (2) Camp Lookout for the sponsorship of a cabin (**\$5,000**); to (3) the Community Action Partnership for the purchase of furniture for their tiny homes project (**\$10,000**), and to (4) the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees for costs involving transport for refugees (bus passes, Uber and Lyft cards, and gas cards, **\$7500**). The total granted came to **\$68,000**. One grant request had been declined by the screening committee. Connie Harsh moved that the vestry approve the grants as recommended by the Good Neighbor Committee; Debbie Barker seconded. The vestry approved the motion.

Core Priorities: Prayer List Experiment (10 minutes)

Brooks Cato informed the vestry that he had had a preliminary discussion with the Worship Commission regarding a review of the procedures for the prayer list as it is currently used in St. Thomas’ Sunday liturgy. There are other ways to handle this, Brooks explained. For example,

some churches simply print a list in various places (service booklet, parish newsletter) and then use an unembellished version of the Prayers of the People for the liturgy. Or, he wondered aloud, perhaps the spoken list might be used in some way during the Wednesday Morning Prayer services? One person suggested that perhaps the list could be read occasionally, but not at all Sunday services. Some persons responded that the list of names felt repetitive and meaningless and is occasionally too long. On a different note, John Orr stated that when he first joined St. Thomas’ he had never heard a list of names read during a service and he actually found it a very powerful moment. Light discussion followed. In the end, Brooks Cato stated that he would follow up by speaking with members of the congregation and see what ideas emerge.

Announcements:

- *Announcements:* Announcements of importance to the parish were made.
- *Next meeting:* The next meeting is set for November 24th, which is the weekend before Thanksgiving.
- *Prayer Leader:* John Orr will be leading prayer at the opening of the next vestry meeting.

Jane Welsh moved that the meeting be ended; Debbie Barker seconded the motion. The meeting ended at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Cerasano, Clerk

Consider This

There is one thing that I know will be true in the face of the coming unknown: No matter what happens, our boat will sail on and our faith will keep us afloat.

—Rev. Kaeley McEvoy,

“A Prayer for Calm Amid an Anxious Election Season”

A Prayer

Grant us peace of mind and heart, that we may trust in you so fully that we can feel your presence deep in our soul.

—Sojourners

On the Lighter Side



Sermon for the Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost:

Mark 12:38-44

Proper 27

The Rev. Brooks Cato

November 10, 2024

Now, I know it's not everybody's idea of a good time, but I'd love to see our Bible Study grow. We meet Thursday mornings from 9:30 to 11:00. You don't have to stay for the whole thing, and there's really no prerequisites. And if you can't make that time, we record every session and put 'em in the weekly Notices so you can watch 'em at your leisure. One quick caveat: I'm out of town this Thursday, but that should give ya time to clear your schedule and join us next week. See, here's the thing. I grew up in the Bible Belt where Biblical literacy is king. You were expected to cite scripture by chapter and verse. You were supposed to memorize as much as your brain could hold and then cram in more. There was a bit of a hierarchy of passages to memorize. John 3:16 was a good starting point, and from there, you'd get things like the Beatitudes or the Creation Narratives or the White Horse from Revelation. My uncle used to have trouble sleeping, so instead of counting sheep, he recited the Begats of Jesus's lineage. He got so good at it, that it stopped working, though, so he did it backwards instead!

Problem is, there were lots of passages we didn't memorize. And truth be told, that's understandable. There's a section in Numbers, for example, that lists what the head of one of the tribes of Israel gave for the completion of the first Tabernacle. It's basically a giving statement. And then, they repeat the passage nearly word-for-word 11 more times so it's clear that all 12 tribes gave the same. It's not pointless, but it is mind-numbing and not exactly the most inspiring daily mantra. It's one thing not to memorize those, but it's another thing to ignore or discard them altogether. Biblical literacy isn't great in the Episcopal Church, but I'd argue it's not that great in the Bible Belt either. More words memorized, sure, but maybe not really "inwardly digested." For what it's worth, the Sunday Lectionary is a point of pride for folks like us, as well it should be. But there's a fallacy surrounding it that says, if you attend church every Sunday for three years straight, you'll

hear the entire Bible read out loud. The truth is our Sunday Lectionary only covers around 25% of scripture. So, much as we may love and benefit from it, it's not the complete scriptural deployment device we often think it to be. I'm working on figuring out how much we'd ingest if we used the full Daily Office Lectionary, but I'm not there yet. It's more, I just don't know by how much.

Anyway, all that to say, that's why we need Bible Study. It's an active way to consume the entirety of our sacred text. We started moving through each book several years ago, and now we're only two books from completing the whole thing--but it's still not too late to join up! It's been a rollercoaster. Right now, we're studying Jeremiah. And Jeremiah's a weird prophet. Most of the other prophets say things like, "If you change the way you're living, if you serve the poor, love the foreigner in your midst, and follow God, things'll get better." But Jeremiah, sometimes affectionately known as The Weeping Prophet, has a different message. "Because you didn't change, because you didn't serve the poor, because you didn't love the foreigner, because you didn't follow God, catastrophe's coming and there's nothing you can do to stop it." As you might imagine, Jeremiah was not popular. The people tried to kill him, he was arrested, some said he was a spy, and even those associated with him found themselves in danger all because the truth he spoke was the last thing everyone else wanted to hear. What they wanted to hear was that everything was going to be alright. They even insisted he was a false prophet while all the other prophetic voices preaching hunky dory sermons were the real ones. Remember that old saying, "you will know them by their fruits?" They came to learn, sadly, that Jeremiah was right and they just couldn't hear it. Well, up until a week ago, it felt like Jeremiah was a blowhard and a bit insensitive to those who were already suffering. But after this week, I'm beginning to wonder. 'Cause the reality of our world looms with January on the horizon, and while I'd love to tell y'all everything's going to be hunky dory, Jeremiah seems a bit more relevant. Things are about to get very hard, I'm afraid. I want to be wrong by the way. I want to be so very wrong. I want to be proven wrong from January 6th on. And if I am, I'll happily eat a whole entire crow.

A quick sidebar: if you aren't feeling the same way, I completely understand. But I'd also like to suggest that your lack of fear is a sign of the

privilege you carry. If you don't worry about who controls your body, if you don't worry about deportation, if you don't worry about the risk of walking to your car alone, not to mention dating, that's ok. I'm glad you don't have to worry, but please know that there are many, many people who do worry about these things. A lot. I want all those people to be wrong about all those worries, too. And yet, I feel the need to be so very ready. We've got 71 days to get ready. For what, I don't know, though public statements sure give us an idea.

Thanks to, well, everything, that scene in Mark reads a little differently today than I'm accustomed to. See, usually I read that Widow's Mite bit and think about pledges. Makes sense, we usually hear it this time of year. But there's something else going on I've missed every time before. Look at the first half of that reading when Jesus warns us to beware of the scribes who make a big show of their religion while they, and I quote, "devour widow's houses." When the widow arrives and drops her two cents in the coffers, it's not just that she doesn't have much money and gives anyway, it's that her faith is so deep, she gives even without a roof over her head to the very institution that's taken that roof away. It's predatory. Go with me on this for a second. I know how we're "supposed" to interpret this. For a mighty long time, it's been a story about a tiny gift from someone in need representing a greater witness than large gifts from the wealthy. But if you read it closely, Jesus doesn't actually take us there. He doesn't even say this is good. Let's read it real quick. Feel free to follow along in those bulletins. We're at the Gospel, and I'm gonna read a lot of it. "As Jesus taught, he said, 'Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows' houses.'" Skip on down just a tad. "A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then Jesus called his disciples and said to them, 'Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.'"

See? He doesn't say it's a good thing that she did that. He draws attention to the situation. Maybe he does mean it's good. I mean, it is quite the act of faith on her part. But maybe he draws attention to it to show just how upside-down the

situation is. She has nothing and gives proportionately more than anyone else there, likely to her detriment. We don't hear from her or about her again. Maybe she goes home and wins the lottery! But more likely, she has no home to return to since her home was long since devoured by the wealthy. More likely, she leaves with her last two coins given away and has nothing left to live on. I'm afraid for so many people like her who have so deeply bought into abusive systems that they'll give everything they have to be in the club while that very same club devours them. Now, if the world was all hunky dory as those optimistic prophets liked to say, this situation would be just fine. Because the Temple would take all those gifts from the wealthy and the poor and use them to help widows like her. That's one of the greatest mandates in scripture: serve the widows. But they don't. It's reasons like that that lead Jesus to flip tables and chase people out of the Temple with a whip.

But this isn't the only story in scripture. The Bible covers a lot of ground, so maybe it's helpful to look at what scripture says on the whole. The most frequent topics covered across both the Old and New Testaments are God (obviously), caring for the poor, mercy, justice, forgiveness, redemption, and love. Fundamentally, that's what our faith is about. And the truth is, none of that has changed over the last week. We're likely to have plenty more opportunities to practice our faith. Who'll need our help may have changed. How much'll be needed is probably amplified. But the core of what we're about has not changed. Ya know, Christianity has always been at its best when we've aligned with the oppressed. We don't do well when we get in power and relax so much that we settle into the comfort of inaction. To live into Christianity with integrity, we serve the poor and flip the tables of the broken systems that prey on them.

The scariest part of all this is that pushing against those in power puts us at risk. It's not easy to do this. It's not comfortable. Especially if you don't think you're affected directly, especially if you feel like you finally get to be comfortable, it's tough. It's tough to go against your creature comforts, but remember that while our systems allow some of us to have comforts at the expense of others, it's more than

that. Comfort isn't the only thing on the line. True physical safety is on the line. You may be more comfortable while the widow gives the last she has. You may be comfortable under the same system that crushes those you'd rather not see. Your comfort may come at the expense of another's life. There's a great line that our job as Christians is to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." I wonder about that scene with the widow and her mite. Jesus drawing attention to her may be a comfort, if she saw him look her way. She was, if nothing else, seen in her affliction. And you better believe the wealthy didn't like it one bit that their gift was judged to mean so little. I guess I bring all this up because I'm feeling a real sense of needing to get back to the basics. What is it that Christianity stands for? What is it that you and I stand for? Why bother with all this Christianity stuff when it can be so easily co-opted? I even heard from someone last week that wondered if Christianity even mattered anymore. Honestly, fair point. If we aren't doing what we say being Christian makes us do, then yeah, we don't matter. But y'all, if we do, if we take Christianity to heart and let it afflict us, we will be vitally necessary in the coming world. If we let it afflict us.

I'm gonna do something a little out of the ordinary and change up the bulletin right here in the middle of my preaching. Things are getting wild today! See, I can't think of anything more helpful right now than a reminder of that affliction. Pick up those prayer books and turn to page 304. We're gonna do the Baptismal Covenant instead of the Nicene Creed this morning, so when we're finished, we'll go straight into the Prayers of the People.

Okay, on page 304, I'll start and y'all answer.

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?

People I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit

and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Celebrant

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Celebrant

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

People

I will, with God's help.

Celebrant

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People

I will, with God's help.

Celebrant

Will you proclaim by word and

example the Good News of God in Christ?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant \Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People I will, with God's help.

May we be so afflicted.

Scripture Lesson

Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

—Romans 12:17-18

A Prayer

Creator, help us trust you fully, knowing that sometimes slowing down and breathing deeply is the best way to help us find a path forward.

—Sojourners

Cribbage Club



Seeking anyone interested in participating in having a **Cribbage Club**, such as the present **Bridge Club**. Not to worry, if it has been a very long time since you have played, a refresher can be provided. Also, if you ever wanted to learn the game, teaching and coaching can be made available.

If you wish to join, in please feel to contact Ed Page, via cell 315.825.1639 or via email WA2GDE@gmail.com

Ponder This

God, when we weary of the journey, strengthen us by your Spirit to imagine new heavens and a new earth. Amen.

—The Book of Common Prayer

Consider This

[Discernment] is about listening and responding to that place within us where our deepest desires align with God's desire.

—Henri Nouwen, (1932-1996), a Dutch Catholic priest, professor, writer, and theologian

Free Coffee

St. Thomas' has free coffee in the Parish Hall every Tuesday, 9:00-11:00 am. Stay and enjoy a cup or take one to go!



Coffee Hour Host

If you would like to host a Sunday Coffee Hour, there is a sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall. Parish Life can make the coffee or teach you how, and you can just bring some goodies! If you have any questions, you can reach out to Leah in the office.



DANCE OPPORTUNITIES

ADULT LINE DANCE NIGHTS

\$10 6:00-7:30 PM

Winter dates TBD

REGISTRATION IS STILL OPEN

FOR ALL DANCE CLASSES

Classes for all ages! Students are welcome to try out the first class for free.

Winter Show January 25 at the Earlville Opera House!

CONTACT US FOR DETAILS:

SchmittDance@gmail.com

Facebook.com/SchmittDance

12 E Main St., Earlville, NY





Presented By Chartwells

CELEBRATING ARTISTS DECEMBER 14TH, 2024

Arts At The Palace invites you to celebrate the artists and creators who contribute to our vibrant community.

6-7pm - Artist Showcase for Patrons

7:15pm - General Admission

All tickets include:

- Open Bar
- Hors d'oeuvres & Tasting Menu
- Signature Cocktail/Mocktail
- Live Auction
- Music & Dancing
- After-hours Karaoke Party

- Patron & Marketing Packages
- \$375 - Gold (2 Tickets)
- \$750 - Platinum (4 Tickets)
- \$1,500 - Diamond (8 Tickets)

General Admission \$85/each

Purchase Tickets Online:
ArtsAtThePalace.org/Gala



Celebrating Artists
December 14th, 2024
Presented By
Chartwells



ArtsAtThePalace.org



ArtsAtThePalace.org

Make an Online Donation

Ponder This

As for trusting in God, I think it's the reverse. I believe God is trusting in us. God is trusting that in giving us the gift of life, we will bear good fruit. That we who claim to be on a spiritual path will accept our responsibility to co-create the kind of world that God envisioned. It's up to us, each one of us, to be faithful to God's trust and do everything in our power to bring in the day when "justice and mercy embrace." "The purpose of prayer," Saint Teresa of Avila told her sisters, "is good works, good works, good works." And I believe her.

—Joan Chittister, an American Benedictine nun, theologian, author, and speaker

You can make a donation to our parish online with the link below. You will receive an email confirmation of your gift, and the Diocese will forward your gift and contact information to our parish for acknowledgment.

<https://cnyepiscopal.org/give/give-to-my-parish/>

When you go to the link above, you will fill out the donation form. In the Parish section, select "Hamilton: St. Thomas' Episcopal Church" and in the "gift note/designation" line be sure to type pledge, deficit appeal, or wherever you'd like your donation to apply.

A Prayer

God of life, help us see your image in every person, restoring and honoring the dignity you have placed within them, despite all brokenness.

—Sojourners

AA Meetings in Hamilton

TIME	NAME	LOCATION / GROUP	ADDRESS / PLATFORM	REGION
Monday, 7:00 PM	<u>Hamilton on the Green</u>	<u>Hamilton on the Green</u> First Baptist Church	First Baptist Church 27 Broad Street	Hamilton
Wednesday, 7:00 PM	<u>Colgate University</u>	<u>Shaw Wellness Institute</u>	113 Broad Street	Hamilton
Friday, 7:00 PM	<u>Hamilton on the Green</u>	<u>Hamilton on the Green</u> First Baptist Church	27 Broad Street	Hamilton
Sunday, 3:00 PM	<u>12 ½ Group of AA</u>	<u>St. Thomas' Parish House,</u> First door on the right	12 ½ Madison Street	Hamilton

Prayers of the People as of November 22nd

For those in need: Edmund Bradley, The Rev. Dan Carrou, Michael Clough, Cindy Decker, Aster Dinku, Meredith Ewbank, Joan Fales, Lisa Gee and her children, Kaia Harding, Amanda Harlan, Kathy Hynes, Angela Jones, Pat Osowski, Cynthia Rell, Joe Rupp, David Sturges, Patricia Tayntor, Paula Tayntor, Ed Vantine, Becky Vinopal, Christine Watkins, Ellie Weyter, Deb Willis, Pavla Zakova-Laney, Bruce & his Family, Deb, Bill, & their family, Dennis & his family, the Finnegan Family, Jerry & Roseann Fitzgerald, Anthony & Vincent Pacillo, Charles & Susan, Chris, Dave, Jan, Janice, Kate, Mary, Maureen, Meral, Nick, Paula, Scot, Tara, Brian, Dan, Katie, Richard, Rob, and Travis.

For the Departed: Beverly Finnegan



Flowers for the Altar

Just a reminder that if you would like to honor or remember a loved one with flowers on the altar, you can do that by making a donation to the Flower Guild (\$35 is recommended). Write a check to St. Thomas' Church and in the memo write Altar Flowers. Envelopes for flower donations are provided at the back of the church. You may either place the envelope in the collection plate during the Sunday morning service or mail or drop off your check in the Parish Office no later than the Wednesday prior to the Sunday you want your loved one honored or remembered so that the name(s) can be included in the bulletin. You can also fill in a date on the flower calendar in the Parish Hall.

Thank you.

—Rose Novak & Jana Laxa for the Flower Guild

December Thanksgivings

Birthdays: Barbara Hicks (12/02), Brooke Speer (12/04), Rhea Muller (12/07), Sally Brackett (12/10), John Catania (12/10), Layla Hubbard (12/11), Emilija Morkevicious (12/11), Allen Schult (12/13), Debbie Barker (12/17), Steve Barker (12/17), Fay Cole (12/19), Nolan Dye (12/21), Lynn Staley (12/24), Robert Maziarz (12/28), Madelyn Knapp (12/31).

Baptism Anniversaries: Edward Scheinman (12/), Lara Scott (12/01), Michelle Landstrom (12/02), Daniel Jerome (12/03), Rebecca Hubbard (12/13), Thomas Brackett (12/21), Edward Page (12/22), Susan B Trueworthy (12/24), Laura Schmitt (12/24), Susan Cerasano (12/27), Helen Keabian (12/27).

Marriage Anniversaries: Robert Maziarz & George Weaver (12/14), Abby Palko & John Hayden (12/18), Dee & Michael Keller (12/31).

January Thanksgivings

Birthdays: Stanley Dakosty (01/02), Bruce Rivington (12/05), Dominic Stith (01/06), Simon Williams (01/07), Jane Scheinman (01/09), Shannon Strohmeier (01/09), Kennedy Gigan (01/10), Janice Frutiger (01/13), Jana Laxa (01/14), Isadora Catania (01/14), Susan Trueworthy (01/15), Sena Etefa (01/16), Linda Jenks (01/17), Melanie Martin (01/17), Taylor McDowell (01/20), Millie Franklin (01/22), Nicolas Catania (01/22), Morgan Davies (01/23), Madison DeAngelis (01/24), David Sturges (01/25), Gary Fountain (01/27), Laura Trueworthy (01/29), Brian Tivington (01/31).

Baptism Anniversaries: Susannah Davies (01/), Lucien Catania (01/03), Debbie Barker (01/04), April Stevens (01/10), Anna Owens (01/10), Samuel Owens (01/10), Layla Hubbard (01/11), Jamie Rivington (01/12), Rocco Catania (01/18), Kristen Meadows (01/29).

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church
Scheduled to Serve
December 2024

DATE	LECTOR	LEM	USHER	ALTAR GUILD	FLOWER GUILD	NEWCOMERS
December 1	OT Martha Berry NT Joan Ford	Amy Jerome	Ed Page	Colleen McNerney	Jana Laxa	Linda Jenks
December 8 <i>*Rite One</i>	OT Barbara Bowen NT Barbara Bowen	Susan Cerasano	Ed Page	Colleen McNerney	Jana Laxa	Linda Jenks
December 15	OT Maureen Ghent NT Emily Hutton- Hughes	Debbie Barker	Ed Page	Wynn Egginton	Jana Laxa	Linda Jenks
December 22	OT Wynn Egginton NT Everett Egginton	Amy Jerome	Ed Page	Wynn Egginton	Jana Laxa	Linda Jenks
December 24	OT Kerry Linden NT Vivi Linden	Maureen Ghent	Ed Page	Linda Jenks	The Flower Guild	Linda Jenks
December 25	OT John Orr NT Adger Williams	N/A	Ed Page	Emily HH ?	Jana Laxa	Linda Jenks
December 29	OT Linda Jenks NT Rose Novak	Debbie Barker	Ed Page	Linda Jenks	Jana Laxa	Linda Jenks

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church
Scheduled to Serve
January 2025

DATE	LECTOR	LEM	USHER	ALTAR GUILD	FLOWER GUILD	NEWCOMERS
January 5	OT Jane Welsh NT Adger Williams	Wynn Egginton	Ed Page	Susan Beattie	TBD	Colleen McNerney
January 12 <i>*Rite One</i>	OT Kristin Strohmeier NT Ellie Weyter	Susan Cerasano	Ed Page	Susan Beattie	TBD	Colleen McNerney
January 19	OT Joan Ford NT Martha Berry	Debbie Barker	Ed Page	Emily HH	TBD	Colleen McNerney
January 26	OT Wynn Egginton NT Everett Egginton	Amy Jerome	Ed Page	Emily HH	TBD	Colleen McNerney



December 2024 / January 2025

Readings

Address Service Requested

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church
12 1/2 Madison St.
Hamilton, NY 13346