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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

I don't know about y'all, but I had a blast at our Annual Meeting, and of all the things that came up, there's one that I want to focus on in this letter: the church paint color.

We are planning to paint the church in 2022. I'm in the process of getting quotes and setting up all that needs to be in place for that to happen, but before a single drop of paint touches the building, we've got to decide on a color. For all of my five years here, y'all have been telling me what you think about the paint. Some love it, some hate it, some don't care, but just about everyone has something to say. I had a preference, but Covid has done wonders to reframe all of this for me and reset my priorities. If I'm being honest with y'all, I'm less worried about what color we choose and more concerned about ensuring that St. Thomas' is taken care of and is known for doing the work of God's Kingdom in our community.

With the help of the Buildings Commission, various contractors, grant issuers, the Vestry, and many, many individuals within the church, we've explored the history of St. Thomas' and its paint colors over the years. We've uncovered a lot of information, and we've hit a few deadends. But in all this, we have approached the issue with respect for our church and the history it represents.

In all our digging, we found a wonderful line from Jim Ford's book on the history of St. Thomas'. In an article dated December of 1879, "The exterior [of the church] has received a coat of very fashionable paint." Unhelpfully, we don't know what that very fashionable coat of paint looked like, but we do know the church was painted, and it was a hit.

Now, I know that this may be a contentious topic for us to take on as a church, so I've devised a way for us to take the issue seriously while having a little fun along the way. To pick the paint color we'll be using in 2022, we're going to do a March Madness-style bracket of paint colors. We'll have 16 colors facing off, two at a time, and by the time we get to the end of the bracket, we ought to be able to crown a champion: the new color for our church. I'm thinking of calling it "The Swatch 16" - though I'm open to workshop the name.

We have selected a slew of colors to choose from using the research done back in 2000, other churches in the area, other Upjohn churches, and churches from further afield as references. Some colors St. Thomas' will love, some you won't. It's up to y'all to decide what route we take.

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And I want to be completely transparent here. Whatever color wins the bracket, that's the one we'll use. No smoke and mirrors, no mysteries lost to time, just a deliberate and transparent decision made by the community.

So, how is this going to work? We've collected the color samples and made mock-ups using the same Bob Kuiper picture of the church as a foundation--the only difference from one image to the next will be its color. Every Sunday, two of those colors will go head-to-head, and everyone in attendance in-person and on Zoom will be able to vote. The recipient with the most votes progresses to the next round to face another winner, and this process will repeat until we have two remaining and, finally, a winner.

For your vote to count, you've got to attend church in-person or online! We'll use secret ballots so you can make your choice without worrying what your pewmate will think. And yes, if you love a color so much that you bring 50 of your closest friends to stuff the ballot box, those votes count, so long as they're attending the service! Why, you may ask? For the simple reason that the paint color actually got people to connect with St. Thomas'!

We will also be doing some fundraising alongside the ongoing bracket to pay for this project. If you would like to make a contribution to help pay for the work, we would appreciate your donation. One quick caveat: we will not accept donations that endorse a particular paint color. This is the entire congregation's decision.

As we get deeper into the process, we'll absolutely share more information as broadly as we can, from specific paint colors to Q&As on the ins-and-outs of the process. I hope this will be a fun way to do this work and honor who we are and have always been in this place.

Keep your eyes peeled and your voting preferences at the ready!

In God's love,
Brooks+

Nave Gazing

Ever wonder about the bread and the wine? I mean, why bread and why wine? There's a long tradition in the church of using exactly bread and exactly wine in our Eucharistic services, sure, but from there, we get all sorts of debates. Can the bread be leavened; that is, can the bread be made with yeast? Or does it have to be unleavened? Or what about the wine? Must it be actual wine? Or can it be grape juice? And where do these questions even come from?

Ultimately, we base what we do at Eucharist in scripture. So, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul all give us the details of the Last Supper (and John? John's less interested in what the Last Supper was made of and more interested in what happened after they finished eating: the foot-washing). For all of them, Jesus takes bread, says this is my Body, then shares it with the disciples. Same with the wine: this is my blood, share with disciples. All of them assume some proximity to the Passover meal (though exactly where in relation to Passover is yet another debate)--but as a church with bread recipes in question, we kind of round up. In the Passover meal, the bread must be unleavened, so we tend to make that assumption. But why was the Passover bread unleavened? That goes all the way back to the Exodus, when the Hebrew people needed food for their sudden journey into freedom, but they didn't have time to wait for leavened bread to rise.

And what about wine? Must it be wine? Can it be grape juice? Some denominations say yes, and some communities that are especially invested in recovery ministries will go this route, too. But for most of Christendom, the wine is actual grape wine. The scriptural references are pretty clear. The word for wine is actually the word for wine, not something with juice box ambiguity.

The bigger question, I suppose, is "does it have to be this way?" In typical Anglican fashion, that depends on who you ask. For us in our context, yeah, we should probably stick to bread and wine. But liturgists in other parts of the world have been debating this question and living into different interpretations for many, many years.

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Anscar Chupungco, a Roman Catholic monk from the Philippines, argues that the essence of the Eucharistic elements is bigger than the strict limitations of "bread" and "wine." For one thing, in a part of the world where the introduction of Christianity came hand-in-hand with the colonialist introduction of European culture, bread made from wheat and wine made from grapes was as foreign to the local people as the language the invaders spoke. So not only were they told to worship this foreign God, but also they were told to worship him by eating a foreign food. As more and more people chose (rather than were coerced in) to follow Christianity, this tension grew.

And this is where the second part of Chupungco's analysis comes in. It's not about European recipes; it's about the act of Eucharist sanctifying a staple food (bread, for the Europeans) and a celebratory drink (wine). In so doing, participants recognize the holiness of every aspect of their lives, from the humdrum to the humdingers. So, if that's what the Eucharistic elements "do," what would non-European cultures use for Eucharist? Perhaps, some local staple food and some local celebratory drink? In Japan, for example, Chupungco cites the common practice of replacing bread with rice cakes and wine with sake!

Now, here in Central New York, it makes sense for us, culturally, to stick to bread and wine. Even though we may love salt potatoes and hard apple cider, we are connected enough to the long tradition of bread and wine to feel it in our day-to-day. But I wonder, as we receive on Sunday mornings and then as we move into the lives we live in the world, from the humdrum to the humdingers, what other things can communicate the love and the sacredness of God?

--Fr. Brooks+

Worth Repeating

Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public.

--Cornel West

Bible Blurb

This month, we aim to finish our long journey through the surprisingly complicated Gospel according to John. We've covered a lot of ground, from Socrates to Maundy Thursday! The writings of the Johannine community keep us grounded in faith, soaring in prose, and scratching our heads more often than not. Join us at 9:30 on Thursday mornings in-person or on Zoom! ■

--Fr. Brooks +

Hamilton Crop Hunger Walk Fundraising down to the Wire

You Gotta Move [excerpt of lyrics from
Cassandra Wilson]

You may be high /You may be low
You may be down /No place to go
But when the Lord gets ready
You gotta move

Every Sunday we pray: "Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten; Nor the hope of the poor be taken away." What can we do on our end to make that happen? Praise to those on the front lines right now who are serving up meals to the hungry in places like our own Friendship Inn; those who are unloading groceries from Central NY Food Bank trucks; those who are stocking shelves at the local food cupboard or directly assisting those in need; those who regularly bring food or hygiene items to the food pantry. Those who respond to the requests of international aid agencies for disaster relief supplies; and those who raise money to help put food on the table here and abroad.

Why do I fundraise for the Crop Walk every year? I get angry when I consider the number of hungry families in Central New York, and I am upset when I read about the high level of food insecurity in the non-Western world. No one should have to worry about feeding their families here in Madison County, NY or anywhere else in the world.

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FAO Report: [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World](http://www.fao.org/3/cb4474en/online/cb4474en.html)

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb4474en/online/cb4474en.html>

Close to 12% of the global population was severely food insecure in 2020, representing 928 million people – 148 million more than in 2019.

“Hunger affects 21% of the population in Africa, 9% in Asia and 9.1% in Latin America and the Caribbean.”

The October 17th Crop Walk is just a few weeks away. Many **many thanks** go out to those who have already donated or given time to fundraising in the past month. Together we have raised \$5812.52. We hope to at least meet the amount we raised last year, \$9,100, if not exceed it.

By raising money for the Crop Hunger Walk, you will be directly benefiting local food cupboards and the Friendship Inn. A quarter of the money raised is returned to Madison County. The number of families that are seeking food assistance in our county has grown during the pandemic. Currently there are some 138 families in desperate circumstances in our area.

Money raised in the nationwide Church World Service’s Crop Walk also goes to assist those in poverty overseas. Their goal is “building a world where there is enough for all.” They provide expert guidance, supplies and funding to help struggling communities overcome their most pressing challenges whether it is clean water, sanitation, child nutrition, or farming sustainability in a world of climate change. They provide assistance to the homeless, to immigrants, and to those affected by disasters including those in Haiti and in Afghanistan. You can see the details of their projects at <https://cwsglobal.org/>

Action items for the coming weeks:

1. Ask three of your friends or neighbors if they will support the Crop Walk. It is not as hard as you think. Most people want to help those who are food insecure. You just need to explain why the Crop Walk is worth supporting.

If you are able, donate yourself at

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/team/highroad-walkers-st-thomas-episcopal-church>

If

you would prefer writing a check, you can make it out to “Church World Service”, but please write “Hamilton Highroad Walkers” in the note field so our team gets credit for the money raised. **All donations must be raised before** Oct 17, 2021. Thank you so much for joining in the fight against hunger.

Emily Hutton-Hughes
ehutton@colgate.edu

Confirmation Rescheduled

The Confirmation Service has been postponed until Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at 7 p.m. The Rt. Rev. Dr. DeDe Duncan-Probe will be joining us to Confirm and Receive a handful of the body of St. Thomas’ into the Episcopal Church. Congratulations to Heidi Riley, Nicky Moore, Jacob Abell, and Diane Rich Krause!

On the Lighter Side

A priest, a pastor and a rabbit walked in to blood donation clinic.

The nursed asked the rabbit: "What is your blood type?"

"I am probably a type O" said the rabbit.

**Sermon for the Eighteenth
Sunday after Pentecost:
James 5:13-20 & Mark 9:38-50
The Rev. Brooks Cato**

A few weeks ago, we went into the theological weeds talking about transubstantiation and where we land with that, or rather, where I land with it and maybe where some of y'all do too. Like all theologies in The Episcopal Church, there's room for some wiggle across the theological spectrum there. But that sermon was such a surprise hit that I thought we could spend some more time talking theology this morning. I figure, if we can talk about transubstantiation and still be friends, why not? So today, we're going into another theological place. Today we're gonna talk about sin. Dianne, now would be an appropriate time for a "dun dun dun!" In all seriousness, I feel like I should give a trigger warning right here at the beginning, not something I usually do, 'cause we may end up going through a darker place than normal this morning.

So, sin. There's this idea floating around that Episcopalians don't like talking about sin. It makes us squeamish and when preachers start going on about sin, we start to worry that they're gonna say something about us or wrap things up with an altar call or, and I say this as a preacher, worse yet, say something unintentionally that feels like a judgment on me. There's an old saying that says, in church, a priest's words can never be a whisper. Put another way, the words of a priest carry an extra weight, so folks like me have to be extra careful when we make statements of preference or opinion or, hopefully rarely, judgment. I'd extend that to any churchy person, lay or clergy, when there's someone unfamiliar with the church around. I say all that not because I'm stalling but because I think it's important to be honest about this dynamic for a second, to sort of break the liturgical fourth wall. I know that when I step into this precise place, my words carry more weight than normal. I pray there are times when that works out for the best, and I pray there are fewer times where it doesn't. I try not to put stumbling blocks before y'all. Sometimes I inadvertently do, but on balance, I think we're

doing ok. But I want to acknowledge that reality, that there is an uneven dynamic going on here. I want to be clear with y'all and remind you that, while I'm pretty fond of the things I have to say, we are a broad, big-tent kind of church. And theologically, that means we are more likely to have a spectrum of belief around any given topic than we are to have a single point of definition.

But we do have some solid starting points. The Book of Common Prayer provides one such starting point, naming sin as "the seeking of our own will instead of the will of God, thus distorting our relationship with God, with other people, and with all creation." Great, that's pretty clear, right? I mean, the words are clear. In practice, it gets tricky. Right from the get-go, how are we supposed to go about figuring out the will of God? It's far too easy for me to do the thing I want to do and then back-project some half-baked theology to justify my actions. I'd never do that, of course, and neither would any of you. But we could. What's the will of God, then? Again, the BCP says that we are created in God's image, which means we are to love, to create, to reason, and to live in harmony with creation and with God. That's actually kinda helpful. I'm feeling a callback to last week's sermon, to the commandments Jesus gives us: Love God, love your neighbor, love your enemy, love one another. If you can check all those boxes, you're probably getting pretty close to God's will. But sin is the seeking of our own will instead of God's. It's failing to tick those boxes. Maybe it's gentler to say it's falling short of ticking those boxes?

Ok, ok, ok. Another fourth wall break for a second. How many of you already hate this? I kinda do. Truth be told, I can read that Book of Common Prayer definition 'til the cows come home and leave again, but I can't shake the idea of sin that I grew up with. And there's nothing gentle about that kinda sin. In that sense, sin is the thing that means I'm going to hell. It's the thing that means I'm a bad kid even when I'm doing everything right. It's the thing that says a relative I'll not name to keep 'em from being outed, it's the thing that says they aren't allowed to love who they love. Sin is a convenient fall back when something rubs someone else the wrong way. "I

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don't understand it, I don't get it, I don't like it, it must be sin." For some of you, that may not be your baggage, but it is mine. I'll own that. Sin is a word that makes me shudder just hearing it, and I gotta admit to feeling a little awkward trying to paint sin as something other than that for y'all. It's not that I don't think it's important; it's just that I worry I'm piling the same crap on all y'all that I hated getting piled up on me.

In his book *Unapologetic*, Francis Spufford recognizes this whole bag of junk tied up with sin, so instead of trying to convince his readers that they just need to trust him on what he means by the word, he comes up with an acronym - THPTFTU. It doesn't just roll off the tongue, I'll admit that. THPTFTU--Stands for "the human propensity to mess things up." (If you're paying attention, that acronym doesn't check out. I had to edit for the sake of the pearl clutchers among us. Replace the word "mess" with one that has the same number of letters and starts with "f.") I don't know about y'all, but that actually helps me a ton. The human propensity to mess things up makes the whole idea of sin easier to swallow, as much a part of the world as chaos or entropy. It's just a thing that is, a natural part of how we exist. And yes, we have some ownership, but it's not singling anyone out. Of course, we each do things that take that human propensity a little further, put a finer point on the messing things up in a way that we do need to take responsibility for the fallout. But even then, somehow this THPTFTU idea makes sin a whole lot easier to talk about. I hope it's easier to listen to! So THPTFTU - the human propensity to mess things up--exists. What then?

This is where it gets fun. Good ol' James says we should help anyone among us who wanders. Recognize that THPTFTU exists and then lend your enemy, your neighbor, one another a hand. This isn't about judging. It's not about fixing someone that's a little odd. It's not about praying the gay away or whatever new device some church has come up with to demand conformity. It's about helping someone who has stumbled, with the full knowledge that I stumble all the time, too. At times, we do need to own up to where we've stumbled, make right what we made wrong. The Rite of Reconciliation (or

Confession for you former Catholics out there) is the first half of that. Name the thing to God, be reassured of God's forgiveness, and then go and make it right. Amen. We're all done, right? No more talk about sin until the next time Brooks gets a bad idea for a sermon.

Well, almost.

See, the church has a long and difficult relationship with how it's approached sin, and I'm looking at Jesus in the Gospel of Mark here. For a very, very long time, definitely back as far as Augustine, probably as far back as Paul, maybe even further back still, for a very long time, the church has been using the concept of sin as a means of control. Standing up for someone else that's preaching on Jesus' coattails, Jesus says if you "put a stumbling block before one who believes in me, it would be better to have a millstone hung around your neck and be thrown into the sea." And then he goes on in a way that's extraordinarily difficult for some of us to hear today. "If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and go to hell." For far too long, the church has been coming at this backwards, and I'm sad to say, many still do. We never would, of course, right? But churches have been seeing themselves as the prophets preaching on the coattails of Moses and Jesus, and we've been pointing at those other prophets popping up and condemning them, saying they're the ones setting up stumbling blocks, running them down and burying them under the weight of sin. We've cut off their hands to "save" them from sin, reminded them just how maimed they are, and then condemned them to hell anyway. Or, just as bad, we've called their very person a stumbling block so many times that they begin to believe it's true and take Jesus at his word and with shame or fear or anger do the cutting on their own. And y'all, making someone feel like that, that's sin. It's not the shame or whatever they bear, but the forces that made that person feel so broken that this was the only way to address the pain. That's the sin. The THPTFTU there, that sin, it's in the churches and their leaders and their people putting such massive stumbling blocks in front of God's people that they can't,

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they just can't. Everything breaks when one's already tenuous connection to God gets shattered by the forces of God's church going astray, and in this way, it absolutely has and often still does. The sinner ain't the person doing the loving, it's the one saying that love is sin.

When we talk about sin, I want to be abundantly clear. The human propensity to mess things up is a real thing in our world. It is both something that just is, and also something we occasionally participate in actively. It's what happens when we distort our relationship with God, other people, or creation. It's what happens when we fail to set up a space where all of God's people can come to be fully and freely themselves. What sin is not is anything that checks all the boxes of Jesus' commandments: Love God, love your enemy, love your neighbor, and love one another.

Earlier on, I asked the question how do we discern God's will and suggested that if what you're doing ticks all these boxes, we're on the right track. I want to stand by that. And I want us as a church to keep these commandments in mind. As we meet later this morning to consider the life of our church, let's keep coming back to this. Are we really living into God's will, are we really loving God, loving enemy, loving neighbor, and loving one another? Are we putting stumbling blocks at bay, and are we making room for prophets to pop up among God's people, especially ones whose voices we've traditionally hushed? Are we making room for people to bring their pain, their fear, their anger, their distrust, or their doubt here? I think we have. I think we do. I pray there will be no question. What are we about at St. Thomas? Love God. Love your neighbor. Love your enemy. Love one another.

A Poem

O blessed Lord I come to thee
 On my knee so willingly
 Repentance of the heart tis true
 I want to live my life for you
 Lonely though, I've been through all my life,
 Struggle, worry, conflict, worry, strife
 On this today, has gone from me
 When I accepted Jesus, I did peace
 My hopes, my plans, my dreams come true
 I care not now for I have you
 I sing your songs of praise, of need
 in hopes you'll know my love, my plea
 I pass on faith from one another.
 To love each man, as though a brother
 To be kind, to love, to live obedient
 All this I vowed, in my repent
 To be kind, to live obedient
 Of this I vowed, in my repent
 Whataever my life may be, is of your choice
 For you, I'm free, I have no voice
 To do what, my will, be done
 Be it soon, or in the world to come

--Sandy Franklin
 June 11, 1966

(submitted by Millie Franklin)

A Prayer

Grant us a heart for all humanity, eyes to see
 injustice, and a will to be your changemakers.

--Sojourners

The following meeting was conducted online, via Zoom, due to conditions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.]

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church Vestry Minutes August 18, 2021

Call to Order and Opening Devotions:

The meeting began at 7:03 p.m. Lee Anne Miller offered a prayer to open the meeting.

Clerk's Report: The minutes of June 16th were reviewed. When it came time to vote, John Orr requested a clarification on the rules of majority for a quorum on the vestry. Brooks Cato explained the equation. When all were satisfied that a quorum was present, the June minutes were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Rick Geier noted that the Budget & Finance Commission doesn't meet in August. He noted that the NBT checking account line was quite a bit higher than some might have expected due to several factors, including a generous donation (\$500,000, more to be said later), and pledges that are arriving with regularity. Plus, the account is buoyed by returns from the Employee Retention Tax Credit. Consequently, notwithstanding the donation, a balance of \$74,124.00 (without the donation) is still quite good for the eighth month of the year. A check from NY State for \$3789.83 has been received which is full reimbursement of unemployment claims incorrectly charged by the NY State Department of Labor. The annual Audit Report is finished and will be discussed later in the meeting, in addition to the donation received recently. The Treasurer's Report was received as submitted.

Rector's Report: Brooks Cato was thrilled to report that he and Becca had enjoyed a terrific get-away in Provincetown, Massachusetts, and that he has returned home with renewed energy. Amongst other wonderful experiences, Brooks had gotten to see whales frolicking off the coast. On another topic, Brooks alerted the vestry that there is a growing sense that leadership positions will be emerging soon and that more volunteers will be needed in the weeks and months ahead. He also announced that Marlene Houck and Helen Keabian would be moving away to begin the next phase of their lives.

A special coffee hour has been planned to honor them following the service on August 22nd.

Wardens' Reports:

Hannah McClennen inquired of Brooks as to how he would be able to find appropriate persons to fill all of the positions that he foresees the parish as needing. Brooks Cato responded that he thinks that he has a sense of where the gaps are now and where the new needs will be felt, at least most immediately. Some needs aren't being met as well as possible. Luke Marshall thanked Susan Cerasano for leading Morning Prayer and offering a homily on August 15th. Hannah McClennen seconded these thanks. Luke then informed vestry members that he had purchased a new microphone from Big Apple Music in New Hartford. Jana Laxa said that the sound had been clear and the quality good at the Sunday service.

Commission Reports:

Budget and Finance: Rick Geier presented the annual Audit Report, explaining the elements of the document. He thanked Adger Williams, Nancy Schult, and Deb Barker who were involved in putting it together. The vestry received an attenuated (4pp.) version of the full (over 100 pp.) report. Rick walked the vestry through the key findings on p. 2, noting in which cases, and why, the pandemic had had an effect on the results. There were no questions. The Report was approved as submitted.

Grounds: Brooks Cato reported that the apple tree behind the rectory had lost some limbs due to the many apples that were produced. Thanks go to Edward Page who was kind enough to cut up the limbs and clean up the yard. Millie Franklin and Linda Jenks are to be commended for using the apples to make apple sauce, which is available in jars to members of the parish. A \$5 donation is suggested.

Old Business:

Mutual Ministry Review (MMR): On hold.

Strategic Plan:

Brooks Cato summarized the conversation that he and John Orr had shared with the Rev. Carrie Schofield-Broadbent. She suggested that they should begin the process with a vestry charge. Brooks and John, along with both wardens, had

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drafted the charge which was then read at the meeting. It states:

“The Vestry hereby authorizes you to plan, oversee and evaluate a course of action that will develop a three-to-five-year Strategic Plan for St. Thomas'. This plan should:

- Better define the Parish's identity and enrich the spiritual life of the congregation;
- Prioritize the aspirational goals of various committees and commissions;
- Serve as a working, action-oriented plan that will guide the life and ministries of St. Thomas' in Christ.”

Following this, John Orr explained that the vestry's willingness to embrace this mission is a significant gesture and that a vote in favor of the charge would send a positive message. Additionally, he noted that in the meeting with Schofield-Broadbent she had suggested that, in the future, there should be a retreat for the entire parish. There had initially been some discussion about holding this retreat in late October; however, even if the date wasn't known exactly, John expressed the sense that approving the charge would be significant because this news could then be presented at the Annual Meeting. Brooks Cato reminded the outgoing vestry members that they should think of the vestry as an institution, even though they, as individuals would not be in place to see the Planning Committee through to its end. Sheila Catania thought that the charge was a “great job” and “simply put.” Jana Laxa liked the fact that it is easy to understand. Others seemed also to like the language and the easy accessibility. Lee Anne Miller moved to approve the charge; Hannah McClennen seconded the motion. The vestry voted unanimously to approve the charge as submitted.

Colgate Archives: Brooks Cato proposed that this item be placed in mothballs for a while because it will be some time before it can be addressed. The item will later be returned to the agenda. The vestry members agreed unanimously.

Sign: Things continue to go slowly. Brooks Cato informed the vestry that the small sign hanging from our sidewalk sign, which reads “9:00 service” (and shows only on one side), will be corrected so that the information appears on both

sides.

Banners: Melissa Davies and Jana Laxa are moving forward with this project.

Sidebar (“Keep It Kind”): Brooks Cato reviewed the discussion of the June meeting. From one perspective, he stated that he was less concerned with the choice of action taken—that is, what St. Thomas' does—than the fact that that we do something and people know it. The debate concerning the “Keep It Kind” sign has sort of petered out, Brooks commented, but the church has many opportunities to serve the world. How do we let the world know what we are about? John Orr asked whether the Communications Commission talked about this. Perhaps it is time to revisit this commission, in part because some tactical guidance is needed now. This is what they're here for. Hannah McClennen added that she would hope to avoid responding to the negativity that we see in signs and other public postings by using means that are also too “in your face,” or inadvertently offensive. Sheila Catania stated that she had now been able to actually see the “Keep It Kind” sign that had been discussed at the June meeting. She found it attractive, but wondered whether perhaps the church could order a custom-printed one that would stand out as representing St. Thomas'. Brooks Cato suggested that the church might be able to use our logo in some way on a sign. However, he added, he would also be interested, in the weeks and months ahead, in what it means to be the church without putting up signs.

Video Recording Update: Luke Marshall reported that he is waiting for the electrician to move forward with the next step in the installation of lights and streaming equipment.

Hearing Loop: Brooks Cato announced that previous to the service on Sunday, September 5th, there will be a brief tutorial on how to use all devices related to the hearing loop.

Waterline for the Memorial Garden: Edward Page and Lynn Staley are working with our contractor to begin work.

Continued from Page 9

New Business:

Policy Discussion on Parish Activities: Brooks Cato reported that, given the swelling numbers of Covid cases, the vestry meetings would remain on Zoom for the foreseeable future. The Worship Commission will be keeping an eye on things, along with Brooks, in terms of service practices.

Annual Meeting: Brooks Cato reminded the vestry that this is the time of year when new vestry members are elected and that the outgoing members would need to get together to draft a slate of replacements. Brooks and the continuing vestry members thanked those who had given their time and talent in various positions—Luke Marshall (Senior Warden), Sheila Catania, Michelle Landstrom, and Lee Anne Miller (vestry members). Hannah McClennen will be taking on the position of Senior Warden. The new slate will need to be in place by September 15th.

Mission Gift: Brooks Cato was pleased to announce that an enormously generous gift of **\$500,000** had just been made to St. Thomas’ parish. He then reviewed the terms of the gift, which are:

“[Anonymous] are pleased to endow a fund to assist in local outreach. By outreach we mean active participation by the people of St. Thomas’ church addressing issues of income inequality, racism, refugees, sexual preference, and gender identity. We would see the emphasis as first local and then regional; e.g., within the Diocese of CNY. Although we see this program to be primarily for St. Thomas’ church in Hamilton, other programs in our diocese engaged in essentially the same outreach programs may apply for funds. We intend for this program not only to help the underprivileged but also to encourage and provide the tools and training for the people of the parish, or close by parishes, in their work for others. We hope this endowment may serve its intended purpose for years to come, but we would ask that the investment policy be based more on increasing income to spend on mission rather than preservation of capital in perpetuity. We recognize that the vestry will always have control of the gift and

may make decisions that they feel best meet the mission of the parish in the future.” Brooks stated that he and Rick Geier, as chair of the Budget & Finance Commission, had already visited Alex Erath at Hearth Financial Partners to discuss investment strategies. However, a motion had to be made to accept the gift. Jana Laxa moved to accept the gift; John Orr seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. A committee will be set up to discuss how to manage the gift.

Upcoming Dates, etc.: Upcoming dates were reviewed.

Prayer Leader for September 15th Vestry Meeting: Sheila Catania offered to lead prayer.

The meeting ended at 8:23 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Susan Cerasano, Clerk

On the Lighter Side

Jesus walks into a bar: “Just 12 waters please!” *winks at disciples*



The Banner Is Going Up!



Folks are hard at work getting the banner made and hung in the church! Thanks to Jana Laxa, Melissa Davies, and Lara Scott for lending their time and many talents to make this happen!



Dear Vaccine

Save us, dear vaccine.
 Take us seriously.
 We had plans.
 We were going places.
 Children in kindergarten.
 So many voices, in chorus.
 Give us our world again!
 Tiny gleaming vials,
 enter our cities and towns
 shining your light.
 Restore us to each other.
 We liked our lives.
 Maybe we didn't thank them enough.
 Being able to cross streets
 with people we didn't know,
 pressing elevator buttons,
 smiling at strangers,
 standing in line to pay.
 We liked standing in line
 more than we pretended.
 It's a quick prick in the arm
 You'll barely notice it
 It's the gas in the car
 Getting us going again
 It's the turn in the road
 Face-to-face conversation
 someday soon?
 It's the hug. Forever,
 it's the hug!
 Vaccine, please make the air clean!
 We went to yoga classes,
 deep collective breathing,
 in small rooms in cities
 where we didn't even
 live! How brave we were.
 Vaccine, please.
 Restore our lives.
 Believe they were beautiful.

--Naomi Shihab Nye
 Young People's Poet Laureate
 Poetry Foundation

Scripture Lesson

"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

- 1 John 4:7



Arts at the Palace is a nonprofit community arts organization based at the Palace Theater in Hamilton, New York.

Arts at the Palace, Inc.
19 Utica Street (Location)
PO Box 177 (Mailing)
Hamilton, NY 13346
(315) 824-1420
director@artsatthepalace.org

October Performances

October 2 @ 7 PM Modern Jazz Group



October 23 @ 7 PM Monk Rowe and
The Five Families
Ensemble



Where dance is for everyone!
122 North Main St.
Sherburne, New York



Join us for the 2021-22 Season!
Registration for dance classes is ongoing, but classes are filling up.
The registration form, schedule, class descriptions, and more details can be found on the website,
[<https://sites.google.com/view/schmittsistersdance>](https://sites.google.com/view/schmittsistersdance)

Classes will begin the week of October 4th. Registration fees will be due prior to or upon the first week of classes.

[**SchmittSistersDance@gmail.com**](mailto:SchmittSistersDance@gmail.com)
315-750-6040

Facebook.com/SchmittSistersDance

Owners/Instructors
Leah and Jessica Schmitt
Offering a variety of classes
for ages 3-Adult



EARLVILLE AWESOME HOUSE



<p>Courtyard Series <i>Donation Events</i></p> <p>Reyna Stagnaro Sat. September 11, 2PM</p> <p>Jenni Larchar & Tom Murphy Sat. September 18, 7PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sat October 2 5-9PM</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold;">CANCELLED!</p> <p>Arts Café Series</p> <p>Scott Cook Sat. October 16, 7PM \$15/\$12</p> <p>Bruce Ward & Taiward Wider Sat. December 18, 7PM \$12/\$10</p>	<p>9/11 20th Anniversary Memorial Exhibit</p> <p>12PM: Moment of Silence followed by singing of the National Anthem by Jenni Larchar</p> <p><i>(Temporary exhibit on display with items on loan from Norwich Police Department and Fire Department)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QUILT Show</p> <p style="text-align: center;">East & West Gallery September 11 - November 13 Opening Reception: Sept. 11, 1-3PM</p> <p>Featuring Eileen Buel in Arts Café Gallery exhibits are always free and open to the public.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Gallery Hours: Tuesday - Friday, 10am - 4PM Saturday 12 - 3PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Artisan Gift Shop open thru October 23</p>	<p>NYSCA/NYFA Artist as Entrepreneur Program</p> <p>Artists in Central NY and the Southern Tier are encouraged to apply for this FREE entrepreneurial program presented by Earlville Opera House and Sam and Adele Golden Foundation for the Arts in October 2021.</p> <p>Check out our website for more information!</p> <p>Grant Opportunities for Artists and Organizations (Up to \$5k!)</p> <p>Restart NY Re grants Deadline: Sept. 30, 2021</p> <p>Statewide Community Re grants Program Deadline: January 19, 2022</p> <p>Paranormal Tours FRIDAY, 10/22 - \$20</p> <p>For ONE NIGHT ONLY join us for guided Paranormal Investigation tours through the Earlville Opera House's historic 1892 venue on Friday, October 22nd from 7-9pm and 10pm-12am. Tours are led by seasoned Paranormal Investigator Kenny Harris who will provide a night of fun, education and exploration of the paranormal possibilities at the EOH. Reserve now!</p>	<p>AUCTION FOR THE ARTS</p> <p>FRI., NOV. 5-12 VIRTUAL ONLY AUCTION</p> <p>Bid on the future of the Earlville Opera House during the 8th annual Auction for the Arts! Proceeds benefit the programs and services of the EOH.</p> <div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 10px; text-align: center; color: white;"> <p>24TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY ARTISAN SALE</p> <p>11/26 - 12/22</p> </div> <p>HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE 1-3PM & SMTS'S "HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS"</p> <p>SATURDAY, DEC. 4 - 2 & 7:30PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please visit earlvilleoperahouse.com for the latest program updates and Covid-19 protocols.</p>
<p>Thank you to our sponsors!</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">        </div>			

The Sam and Adele Golden Foundation for the Arts

October 3 - October 30

[Claudia Keep](#), Maine
[Meg Hahn](#), Maine
[Wei Li](#), Canada

Contact Details:

Sam & Adele Golden Foundation for the Arts, Inc.
237 Bell Road, New Berlin, NY 13411
Phone: (607) 431-8765

HALLOWEEN

in Hamilton



Reyna & The Rustics
Oct 29 at 7 PM
Arts at the Palace
Live music at the Palace Theater.



Trunk or Treat
Oct 30 at 10am - 11:30am
Broad Street
Hosted by the Hamilton area churches.



Spooktacular Crafts
Oct 30 at 11:30 AM - 12 PM
Hamilton Public Library
Open to kids of all ages.



Costume Parade
Oct 30 at 12:30 PM - 1 PM
Colgate Bookstore
Candy donated by the Community Memorial Hospital and the Partnership for Community Development.



FREE Movie: "The Witches"
Oct 30 at 1 PM
Hamilton Movie Theater
Sponsored by the Colgate Bookstore.

Learn more at bit.ly/hamiltonhalloween2021








October at St. Thomas'

Regular Weekly Events

Holy Eucharist: Sundays, 9 AM.

Friendship Inn Community Meal: Mondays, 5 PM, Parish Hall, Take-outs only.

Bible Study: Thursdays, 9:30 AM. Now in person and on Zoom.

Special Events

Joint Teen/Adult Education, October 10, following the service.

October 10, 4 p.m., Hamilton Area Anti-Racism Coalition, (HAARC), St. Thomas'.

Wednesday, October 27, 7 PM, Confirmation.

Friday, October 29, Friday Night Lights on Zoom, 7-9 PM. Performers sign up at 6:30 PM.

Save the Date: November 14th

St. Thomas' is a beautiful community made up of all of you, which means, when we try to think about what St. Thomas' can and should be, we need your input! The Strategic Planning Committee is inviting all of you to a retreat Sunday, November 14th to help guide the creation of St. Thomas' 3 to 5 year plan.

More information to come!

A Prayer

Increase our reverence before the mystery of life; and give us new insight into your purposes for the human race, and new wisdom and determination in making provision for its future in accordance with your will.

--The Book of Common Prayer

Prayers of the People

For those in need: Amanda Bastia, Andrea Florentino, Richard & Barbara Barnhart, Phil Bisselle, John Brown, Emma Chapman, Barbara Crysdale, Esther Davis, Teddy Engle, Joan Fales, Jerry & Roseann Fitzgerald, Kate Foss, Danny & Anne Foust, Dick Frost, Mary Frances, Daniel Ghent, Miles Goodrich, Marlene Houck, Joe Hubbard, Joseph Henry Hubbard, Tammy Hutchinson, Allen Jones, Danielle Jones, Janna Keser, Laura Jones, Paul Keser, Beth Komaromi & Family, Hannah Hicks & Sage Brantley, Harvey Jones, Patti Lamandia, Anne Leimkuhler, Jeannie McCabe, Liam Meyer, Anthony & Vincent Pacillo, Bill Pratt, Debbie Radford Moudarres, Diane Rich, Shari Rodgers, June Schaupp, Sheryl Scott, Candace Schult, Mark Spearing, Keith Stage, Carol Strozyk, Debra Talbott, Chris Warren, Peter Welsh, Deb Willis, Ryan Wilson, Sue & Ben, Joan & Tom Winkler, Brett, Brianna, Camila, Donnie, Cesar & Paula, Corrine, Jeff, Lisa, Lois, Mary Lou, Melissa, Nick & Vanessa, Robin, Sandra, Sue & Ben, Colgate Professors, Staff, and Students.

For the departed: Herb Beattie, Richard Bohnert.

Thanksgivings

Birthdays: Edward Page (10/09), Susan Geier (10/17) Wynn Egginton (10/18), Joan Ford 10/18), Nancy Heck 10/19), Kathleen Catania (10/20), Andrew Hengst 10/20), Courtney Trueworthy (10/25), Ryan Dye (10/25), Daniel Wheeler (10/26), Daniel Jerome (10/26).

Wedding Anniversaries: Melanie & Michael Cough (10/01)

Baptism Anniversaries: Patricia Tayntor (10/04), Max Michelson (10/05), Stephanie McClinkick (10/07), Greg Owens (10/07), Michelle Dye (10/08), Kenji Yoshino (10/10), Luke Marshall (10/11), Gina Sakal (10/12), Daniel Wheeler II (10/12), Regina Conti (10/15), Kerry Linden (10/20) Amy Jerome (10/22), Anthony Sitts (10/27), Wynn Egginton (10/30).

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

Scheduled to Serve October 2021

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

Telephone/Fax: 315-824-1745
E-Mail: stchurch@cnymail.com
Website: stchurchonline.org

Date	Lectors	Chalice Bearer	Usher	Altar Guild	Flower Guild	Coffee Hour
October 3	9 AM Deb Barker	9 AM Deb Barker	9 AM Edward Page	Emily Hutton-Hughes	Jana Laxa	TBA
October 10	9 AM Amy Jerome	9 AM Amy Jerome	9 AM Edward Page	Susan Beattie	Erin Loranty	TBA
October 17	9 AM Barbara Bowen	9 AM Barbara Bowen	9 AM Edward Page	Susan Beattie	Erin Loranty	TBA
October 24	9 AM Wynn Egginton	9 AM Wynn Egginton	9 AM Edward Page	Wynn Egginton	Erin Loranty	TBA
October 31	9 AM Rose Novak	9 AM Deb Barker	9 AM Edward Page	Emily Hutton-Hughes	Jana Laxa	TBA



Qidings
October 2021

Address Service Requested

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

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