

# The Beacon

ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

JANUARY 2019



## *From the Rector's Desk*

As I write this, it is December 27--Day 3 of the Christmas liturgical season, which extends to January 6th, the Day of Epiphany, when we celebrate the arrival of the Magi at Jesus' manger. As I am a big believer in celebrating the Twelve Days of Christmas, I am thoroughly enjoying this special time.

Even so, I am keenly aware that while the Church's new year began about a month ago on the first Sunday of Advent, January 1 marks our culture's New Year right in the midst of the Christmas season, so like many others I am pondering New Year's resolutions. One resolution that I am determined to keep is to get more exercise in 2019. I know that good health is holistic: physical well-being supports mental and spiritual health. Thus in exercising more I will not only be strengthening my body but also taking care of my mind and soul.

Another resolution I have in mind is not just for me but for the whole parish. It's actually something that the Vestry discussed at their December meeting. The resolution is for all of us at St. Thomas to be more intentional in how we extend hospitality to visitors on Sunday mornings.

Don't get me wrong: St. Thomas parishioners are a wonderful, welcoming group of people. Visitors frequently comment on how friendly and helpful our ushers/greeters are. And I have always been impressed by the efforts you as a congregation make to exchange the Peace with visitors. But when it comes to coffee hour, visitors can slip through the cracks. Although we certainly invite them to come to coffee hour after our Sunday services, we pretty much leave them on their own to make their way there. Unfortunately, visitors can feel a bit shy or awkward about walking alone from the church to the

parish hall. They can feel intimidated, too, when they get to the parish hall and see parishioners seated at tables, obviously enjoying one another but seemingly oblivious to the strangers in their midst.

As someone who has battled shyness all her life, I know how hard it is to break into a seemingly closed social group. During the years before I became a priest, I visited churches where no one spoke to me at coffee hour, or invited me to sit with them at their table. Not surprisingly, I did not continue to attend those churches!

I am hoping therefore that when you see people you don't know in worship, you will make a point of inviting them to come *with* you to coffee hour so that they don't have to go alone. And if you see a stranger in the parish hall, go over to that person (even if it means getting up from your table!), introduce yourself, and invite him or her to sit with you.

Coffee hour is often jokingly referred to as the eighth sacrament of the Episcopal Church! But it is no joke to say that coffee hour is an extension of what we do in church as the Body of Christ. In worship, we break bread together with the wafer and the wine, with Christ as our Host. In coffee hour, we break bread together with our coffee and cookies, extending Christ's hospitality to one another. Let us make sure that just as Christ intentionally includes all of us at His holy table, we intentionally include everyone during our time of fellowship after worship.

Peace and many blessings,

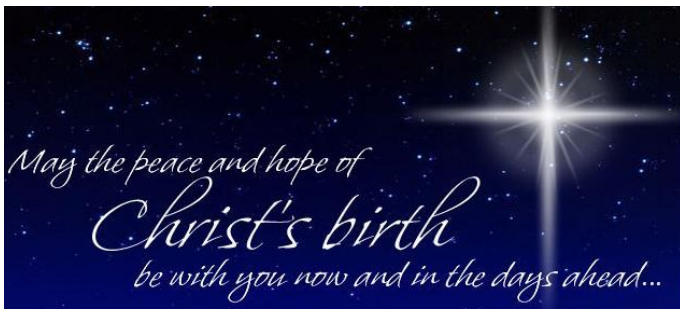
*Ann* +

## Advent Reflections

During the Advent season of preparation St. Thomas friends and family shared special times together. On December 14 some serious Bingo gamesmanship was enjoyed with sincere thanks to Debbie Pezzoni who orchestrated the event; and to Bill Janes who delighted participants as the Santa Bingo caller.



By all reports the competition was fun-loving but fierce.



### *Journeying The Way of Love*

During the season of Advent members of our St. Thomas family traveled *The Way of Love* with Rev. Ann as our thoughtful guide. This Advent program was inspired by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry who has invited members of the Episcopal Church to embrace spiritual practices that can help lead us to a Jesus-centered life so we can bear witness to His way of love in and for the world. Called the "Way of Love," the seven spiritual practices provide a Rule of Life that all Episcopalians are encouraged to adopt in our daily lives.

- **TURN** Pause, listen and choose to follow Jesus
- **LEARN** Reflect on scripture each day, especially Jesus' life and teachings
- **PRAY** Dwell intentionally with God each day
- **WORSHIP** Gather in community weekly to thank, praise, and draw near to God
- **BLESS** Share faith and unselfishly give and serve
- **GO** Cross boundaries, listen deeply, and live like Jesus
- **REST** Receive the gift of God's grace, peace, and restoration

Find resources from across the church and share your gifts and stories:

[www.episcopalchurch.org/wayof/love](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/wayof/love)

Text WAYOFLOVE to 51555

**#WAYOFLOVE**



## Greening of the Church

On Saturday, December 15 the parish Christmas angels arrived early to decorate the church with greens, ribbons, poinsettias and a bit of glitter to make the church ready for Christmas.



Christmas angels – Sandra Murray, Joe & Anne Konieczka, Lindy Moore and the Hente family

## Sunday School Advent Activities

Our lively little band of young St. Thomas parishioners were very engaged in an Advent curriculum that encouraged them to watch, prepare and be ready for Christ's coming again. Sue Colvin, Judy Wilson and Holly Spruance led the children on this exciting journey. Crafting added to the fun as the children made stars, angels, shepherds and sheep to adorn the narthex Christmas tree.



## Children's Christmas Pageant



A highlight of the children's Advent curriculum is the practice for the Christmas pageant, which they enthusiastically presented on Christmas Eve.



On January 6, Epiphany Sunday, the Three Kings will arrive during the 10:00 am service to complete the story of Christ's birth. Thanks and accolades to our St. Thomas children for their loving re-enactment of the Christmas story, and to Judy Wilson for her orchestration of this memorable experience for our children.

## *Nursery Child Care*

St. Thomas can now claim a dedicated child care service for the 10:00 am service. Lottie Rohde has been engaged as the child care attendant. Lottie is certified in child care training and as she has been involved in St. Thomas Sunday School and Youth programming, she is well-acquainted with the parish and our youngsters. When visitors attend our 10:00 am services, please inform them of the child care opportunity for little ones. This is an important provision for families with children in the 6-month to four-year-old age range attending services at St. Thomas.



*Celebrate!*

### *January Birthdays*

- 5 Kelly Phillippi
- 6 Dallis Rohde
- 11 Gary Jensen
- 27 Duncan Murray
- 30 Russ Duer

## *Grass Roots Garden*



“Give a Gift that Grows!” “Our Adopt-a-Plot” Program at FOOD for Lane County GrassRoots Garden can fill many of your gift-giving needs. This worthy GrassRoots fundraiser allows you to select and sponsor a 40-foot vegetable bed from over 100 producing beds while honoring a friend, relative or associate with a gift that grows throughout the 2019 gardening year. You may want to visit the Garden and choose a bed from sections with names such as Ladybird Beetle, Dragonfly, or Damsel fly or other beneficial insects. Apple, Pear, Asian Pear, Cherry and Plum trees also make a great gift, heralding the seasons with blossoms in the Spring and lovely fruit in the Fall. Choose a specific tree from over 100 trees in the orchards and if you wish, create your own garden tag or marker to give with your gift.

Each bed, tree, or compost bin can be sponsored for a one-year fee of \$50 that includes name placement on our Donor Recognition Wall and a card acknowledging your gift. A new kiwi arbor, blueberry patch, greenhouses and other structures are also available for adoption in 2019 from \$250 to 1000 each and include a donor or gift recipient’s name plaque on the structure. We can send you an Adopt-a-Plot brochure and donation form via e-mail: Please contact Zoë Livelybrooks at [zlivelybrooks@foodforlanecounty.org](mailto:zlivelybrooks@foodforlanecounty.org). Winter Garden Hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. GrassRoots Garden is located at 1465 Coburg Rd., across from Safeway, behind St. Thomas Episcopal Church. For more information contact Merry Bradley at 484-7144 or [merrybradley@yahoo.com](mailto:merrybradley@yahoo.com). Thanks for your caring and support!

- Merry Bradley

## *Usher Ministry*



Saundra and Duncan Murray, who schedule 10:00 am ushers, are pleased to announce that Olympia Minard has joined this ministry.

Let's all thank Olympia for her dedication and commitment to ushering at St. Thomas.

And a special thanks goes to our other ushers: Shirley Collard, Gerrie LaQuey, Dan Paulson, John Paulson, Dave Phillippi, Burt & Sally Schwarz, Anne VanDerveer, Larry & Judy Wilson, who continue to be a blessing to our Usher ministry.

## *Dates to Remember*

January 6 – Epiphany  
10:00 am Service  
Visit of the Magi

January 19 – Saturday Crafting  
2 – 4 pm in the church library  
Bring your current needlework, knitting or quilting project and enjoy creative fellowship

January 21 Ministry Reports  
Due to Donna

January 27  
9:00 am Service (one service only)  
Parish Brunch and  
Annual Meeting following  
the service

## *St. Thomas Endowment Fund Board Welcomes New Members*



Please join me in welcoming Laurinda Andrist, Dick Braun and Barbara Hemphill to the St. Thomas Endowment Fund Board.

Your Endowment Board now consists of these three plus Beverly Jackson, ex officio Rev. Ann Gaillard, Sr. Warden Paul Colvin, and me.

After several years of service, Lindy Moore and Burt Schwarz resigned from the Board. Lindy, as Chair, spent countless hours overseeing rewriting of the Fund's Governing Policies. Burt's valuable contributions were essential to this effort.

Lindy and Burt – Thanks for a job well done.

The current balance of your Endowment Fund is \$140,603.94.

Throughout the new year we'll be presenting ways that we can use planned giving to add St. Thomas Endowment Fund to our bequests.

Duncan Murray, Chairman

*Happy New Year!*

