



# *The Beacon*

## *St. Thomas Episcopal Church*

*Give thanks and praise to our Lord and share His love.*

January 2020

Volume 21 Issue 1

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### *From the Rector's desk ~*

*“Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.”*

*Where charity and love are, there God is.*

As we embark upon the season of Epiphany, I have been reflecting upon how God in Christ is manifested in our daily lives. “Epiphany” means *manifestation* or *revelation*. Specifically in the Church, it refers to the manifestation of Christ to the Magi, those Gentile astrologers who visit the newborn king, bringing with them the precious gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. As Gentiles, the Magi symbolize the entire world to which Christ is made manifest. Thus, throughout the liturgical season of Epiphany, our scripture readings focus on the revelation of Jesus as God incarnate.

The manifestation of God in Christ didn't end with the Magi, though, nor even with Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. The revelation of God in Christ continues to this very day.

Where do you see God in Christ in *your* daily life?

Many of us experience the divine in nature's majesty and beauty. Many experience it in great music and art. Jesus himself tells us in Matthew 25 that he is present in the hungry and thirsty, the sick and the stranger, the naked and the prisoner. In other words, God in Christ is manifested in the least and lost among us.

But we also experience God in Christ in the love people have *for* the least and lost among us. When we help and care for others, we ourselves are revealing the divine, for we are manifesting the same self-giving love, the *agape*, that Christ himself manifested throughout his ministry and ultimately in his death on the cross.

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est. “Where charity and love are, there God is” is the refrain of an ancient hymn that has been part of Western Christianity since the early centuries. The hymn is commonly sung during the washing of feet in the Maundy Thursday liturgy, including at St. Thomas. Here is the first verse:

Where charity and love are, there God is.

The love of Christ has gathered us into one flock.



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Let us exult, and in Him be joyful.  
Let us fear and let us love the living God.  
And from a sincere heart let us love each other.  
Where charity and love are, there God is.

Through the giving and receiving of charity and love, may you experience the manifestation of God in Christ each day throughout this Epiphany season.

Peace and many blessings,



## ***Parish Annual Meeting***



The parish annual meeting is scheduled for January 26 following the 9:00 am service. (Please note, there is only one service on that Sunday.) All church members are encouraged to attend as attendance is vital to the health and vitality of St. Thomas. We will begin our gathering with a potluck brunch, always a wonderful array of tasty fare contributed by the good cooks in our parish family. Meeting highlights will include acknowledgements to outgoing vestry members and election of new vestry members, a review of the 2020 parish budget, ministry reports and news from our companion ministries, and consideration of parish bylaw updates.

## ***Ministry Reports***

Parish ministry chairmen are asked to provide their ministry reports to the church office no later than Monday, January 20 to allow Donna time to prepare the booklet of parish reports for the January 26 annual meeting. Reports are to be typed and delivered by hard copy or email attachment.

## ***Proposed Bylaw Changes***

St. Thomas is required to have bylaws in order to be a corporation. We have had them since our inception in 1956. Since we are part of the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon, we are required to have our bylaws be in compliance with diocesan bylaws. In addition, both the diocese and the parish are part of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America and are required to be in compliance with TEC bylaws.

That's a lot of bylaws we have to keep up with. A small committee of the vestry undertook a review of our bylaws and found some places where we were not in compliance with the Diocese or TEC. We also found many instances of lack of clarity in our own bylaws.

We have therefore rewritten our bylaws to comply with all those required, and to make it clearer what our bylaws are trying to say. We are proposing a number of changes in wording. In accordance with the bylaws, all changes must be voted on at the parish's annual meeting on January 26. The vestry has reviewed and agreed with the changes being proposed.

There is a copy of the original, showing all the additions and deletions on the Vestry bulletin board outside the Rector's office. There is also a clean copy showing only the final version. The bylaws cover the annual meeting and election of vestry; the duties of vestry, wardens, clerk and treasurer; the duties of the rector and election of a new rector, among other things.

Please take the time to review the changes.

Anne VanDerveer  
Vestry Member and Bylaws Review Committee





## Sunday School



### Endowment News



#### Welcome New Legacy Society Members!

On Sunday, January 12, at both services, our St. Thomas congregation will join in welcoming new Legacy Society members as Rev. Gaillard blesses the engraved plaque displaying their names.

Legacy Society members are those who have created a personal, holy legacy by including The St. Thomas Endowment Fund in their estate planning. They are:

- Tamara J. McMillin
- Beverly Jackson
- Barbara Palmateer Hemphill
- Ann Gaillard
- Duncan & Sandra Murray

If you have included The Endowment Fund in your estate planning but are not listed here or on the framed list of Endowment Fund Founders, Benefactors, and original Legacy Society members outside the church office, please let Ann or me know.

Join us Sunday, January 12 as we dedicate our new plaque and say a special "Thank You" to these dedicated Legacy Society members!

Duncan Murray  
Endowment Fund Chair



Christopher, Emily, Mason, Lucy and Sophia participated in the greening of the church and decorated the Narthex tree.



Our Sunday School youth were fully engaged in Advent as they waited with anticipation the *coming of the Messiah*. As they marked each Sunday of Advent on their clothesline, the children recognized the *hope, joy, love and peace* of Christ's *coming* to all mankind. On Christmas Eve the children shared their simple and loving story of Christ's birth.



On January 5, Epiphany Sunday, the children will celebrate the visit of the Magi to the Christ child and present their gifts of love.



### ***The GrassRoots Garden***



The GrassRoots Garden never sleeps, even in the darkest days of winter. Faithful garden attendees continue the maintenance of the garden beds, weed the winter vegetables, repair garden structures, plant starts in the green houses and plan for spring planting. This two-acre plot of land is a cornucopia of sustenance for food challenged citizens of Lane County.

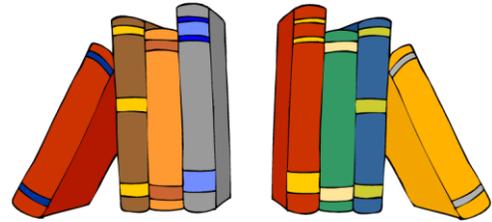
**Winter Garden Hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.**

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).

### ***Coffee Hour Hosts***

Hosts are needed for the coffee hour following the 10:00 am service. Sign up after church any Sunday Larry and Judy Wilson will make the coffee and tea, but volunteers are needed to provide the goodies. The signup sheet for Annual Meeting brunch provisions is on the Narthex table.

### ***St. Thomas Book Group***



The St. Thomas Book Group will resume their regular fourth Thursday gathering this month. The January reading is Babylon's Ark by Lawrence Anthony. The meeting location for this month is the St. Thomas library on Thursday, January 23 at 2:00 pm. All interested are welcome to come and discuss the book or just enjoy the fellowship.



### ***January Birthdays***

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

### ***Nominees for Vestry Service***

An important action during the annual meeting is the consideration of new members for Vestry service. The following individuals have agreed to have their names placed in nomination for three year terms:

- Bill Janes
- Ed Johnson
- Sally Ward

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In addition, these individuals are nominees to serve as St. Thomas representatives to Diocesan Convention:

Mary Adams  
Erika Hente  
Sue Colvin (alternate)

These members of St. Thomas and all current Vestry members are gratefully acknowledged for their willingness to serve our parish.

## Reflections



My favorite time of Christmas are the quiet days – minus New Year’s – after Christmas Day and the days leading up to Epiphany. The gifts are opened and put away, the cookies are consumed, and the decorations can be appreciated without the clutter and frenzy that consumes all the days leading up to Christmas. The lights have not dimmed and the presence of Christ in our lives is ever more apparent. It is a time to reflect on what matters most – *a peace that passes all understanding* – a Savior has come into the world for all mankind.

Winter can be a gloomy time of year, so celebrating the birth of Christ at this time inspires us to illuminate the gloom with lights, candles and yule logs. I often reflect on a long-ago Christmas when as a young girl our family attended the Christmas service in the small chapel of the Episcopal Convent of the Sisters of St. Savior where my mother spent her formative years. There we were five children in the front pew with our parents and a chorus of nuns behind us. I remember a very old, white haired

priest who served the sisters, and on that occasion delivered the homily. His message was directed to the five children in the front pew, and it was a message that has resonated with me all my life. It was the moment that I realized Christmas is so much more than Santa Claus, for this dear priest told us about the gift of Christmas – the birth of Jesus and *the light of the world*. The priest gave us a simple and beautiful understanding that within each of us is a light that warms our hearts, that can light our way and shine for others. This is the light of Christ – the greatest gift. It is intended to be shared, for that light within us lights the way for our love in action.

With each new year we consider a fresh start, perhaps with New Year’s resolutions, cleaning out cupboards and closets, recycling – clearing out the old and welcoming the new. As we look at that clean new calendar and consider the appointments, celebrations and possibilities for the year ahead, may the light of Christ shine in all our endeavors and interactions. It is the light of Christ illuminates the darkest times, not just for us but for all those for whom we open our hearts.

C. Jensen



Committee reports and articles for the Beacon are welcome. Please submit to Cindy Jensen at [LAJotKDK@aol.com](mailto:LAJotKDK@aol.com) by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.