



The Beacon

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

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

November 2020

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From the Rector's desk ~

"As the people of the United States cast their votes for the office of president and many other offices throughout the land, we gather to pray to the God who is the Creator of us all. We pray that we might learn to stand and hold each other's hands as the children of God." – Presiding Bishop Michael Curry

The other day I exercised my right to vote. I filled out my ballot and took it to the dropbox across the street from the church. I have never taken voting for granted; I have voted in every election since I turned eighteen. But this time, as I put the ballot through the dropbox slot, I realized more than ever before that voting is more than a right. It is more than a privilege, though it is certainly that. Voting is a sacred responsibility and a moral act. As Christians, we have a responsibility to our fellow citizens to vote to support the well-being of all. In a sense, then, voting is a sacrament— "an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace" (BCP 857)—a *civil*, as opposed to a religious, sacrament.

This Sunday, November 1, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will lead *Holding on to Hope: A National Service for Healing and Wholeness*, a live-streamed prayer service from Washington National Cathedral. The service will be held at 1 p.m., Pacific Time. "Amid pandemic, racial reckoning, and an historic election, the live-streamed service will gather Americans for prayer, song, lament, hope, and a call to love God and neighbor. The service will feature an ecumenical and multifaith array of voices, musical offerings, and prayers. Using a combination of live and visually stunning pre-recorded elements gathered from across the nation, the service will be live-streamed in English and Spanish" (Episcopal News Service). You will find the service at this link: <https://episcopalchurch.org/holding-hope>.

I invite you to join with me in watching the service. I also invite you to pray the following prayer as the election nears:

Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 820)

Peace and many blessings,

Ann +

Endowment News



Our Grateful Congregation Adds \$13,000 To Endowment Investments!

That's right! Even in a year as difficult as 2020, grateful members of St. Thomas have added \$13,000.00 to The Endowment Fund.

It would have been easy for our congregation to say "This has been a bad year. I'm zipping up my wallet." But you didn't. Instead, you opened your wallets and got us closer to the amount we need to start funding exciting new ministries.

So this Thanksgiving, please join me and other members of The Endowment Board in thanking God not just for the blessings each of us has enjoyed this year but for the generosity, even in the face of hardship, of our steadfast congregation.

Duncan Murray, Chair

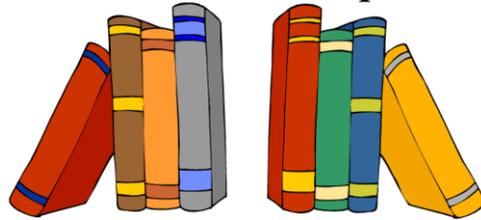
Stewardship



November 1 is the official date for our parish in-gathering, but this year due to COVID-19 restrictions we are unable to share in that giving experience. We cannot be together, process in unison and place our pledge cards on the altar---a tradition that has been a very physical commitment to support the operations of our church. While it is important that we still make that pledge of support in a timely manner so that the Budget Committee and the Vestry can determine an operating budget for 2021, November 1 is by no means a cut-off date for confirming your pledge. If you have not already done so, prayerfully consider your stewardship commitment and mail or drop off to the church office your pledge card.

During these many months of social distancing, your 2020 pledges have sustained the operations of the church, kept the lights on and supported the work of Donna Hall in the office, Rev. Ann's pastoral care and the always uplifting music of Keri Davis. But the stewardship of our faith community has accomplished so much more---truly a reflection of love in action. This active and engaged stewardship includes the dedicated maintenance of our grounds and buildings, the donations and volunteer services of our outreach ministry, the technology efforts of our communications team, the Christian education ministry of the Sunday School teachers, all those who faithfully participate in the worship ministries and the business and fiscal attention of the Vestry and Finance Committee. Stewardship is the commitment of time as well as treasure, and in our St. Thomas faith community we continue to demonstrate a generous dedication to both.

St. Thomas Book Group



The St. Thomas Book Group met on October 22 with a combined in-person gathering and virtual opportunity for those participating from home. The October selection, The Dutch House by Ann Patchett, was reviewed. During November members are considering suggested book titles to read for the upcoming year and will vote on these at their November 19 gathering to determine the 2021 reading list of eleven books. Also, at their November meeting members will share impressions of the Charles Dickens classic A Tale of Two Cities. The meeting time is 2:00 pm with social distancing practiced in the parish hall or the virtual option for those who wish to attend via Zoom.

Sunday School News



The St. Thomas Sunday School children were recently treated an online sermon from Rev. Ann who provided a message expressly for them. In this children's sermon Rev. Ann shared her own practice of journal writing and encouraged the children to consider writing down their thoughts and feelings of thankfulness. The teachers will continue to prepare monthly lesson packets to reinforce the message in the monthly sermon to keep our youngest St. Thomas parishioners engaged in our faith community.

This practice will continue until the children are once again able to meet in their Sunday School classroom. Pray for this important ministry that shares the life of Christ and His message of love in action with our St. Thomas children.

In Memoriam



Long-time parishioner, George Lamont, passed from this earthly life on October 7. He was able to be at home with his daughter Linda by his side. He suffered no pain, for which we are all grateful. After learning that his cancer had returned and spread, he shared with Rev. Ann that he'd had a good life, was not afraid, and that he had done things his way!

George was a dear friend to many of us. He has now joined his beloved wife, Becky, in the nearer presence of God. We will keep George and all his loved ones in our prayers.

Bishop Transition Announcement



The Standing Committee is delighted to announce that we have received and confirmed majority consent for the election of our new Bishop, The Rev. Diana Akiyama. In addition, we have signed a Letter of Agreement with our Bishop Elect who will start her duties on December 14, 2020 and work alongside Bishop Hanley until the Ordination on January 30, 2021 at Trinity Cathedral. At that time the transfer of Ecclesiastical Authority will occur. We give hearty thanks to God for the many long hours of work by the Search Committee, Transition Committee, Diocesan Staff and all the leadership of the Diocese for bringing about the election of the 11th Bishop of Oregon under such extraordinary circumstances.

Please join with the Standing Committee in prayer for Bishop Michael and Bishop-Elect Diana, as well as their loved ones, as the transition continues to unfold in the weeks ahead.

– Rev. Dr. Patti Hale, OPA President of Standing Committee



GrassRoots Garden Happenings



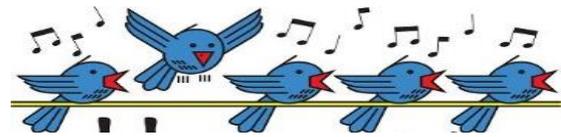
Now that the growing season is winding down and requiring less of our energy and time, we reached out to long term Garden participants and offered fresh produce that we had held back from the harvest. These participants had come regularly to the Garden for years and were used to accessing and receiving fresh produce for them and their families. We're delivering a box of fresh produce every week for four weeks directly to their doorstep. Given the choice of either a large or small box of fresh fruits and vegetables, their boxes include tomatoes, red and green peppers, carrots, potatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, chard, apples, herbs, and more.

2020 has been an unanticipated extraordinary year, full of extreme challenges and needed adaptations. We've missed our Garden community, and know that they have missed the Garden, too. We appreciate everyone's patience and understanding as we move through this unprecedented time. We look forward to when we're further through the pandemic, and can open the Garden again, welcoming everyone back. We treasure our GrassRoots Garden family.

"Give a Gift that Grows!" Our Adopt-a-Plot Program at FOOD for Lane County GrassRoots Garden can fill many of your holiday 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 2021 gardening year. Choose a bed from sections with names such as Ladybird Beetle, Dragonfly, or Damselfly 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. 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. A kiwi arbor, blueberry patch, greenhouses and other structures are also available for adoption in 2021 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. GrassRoots Garden is currently closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, contact Merry Bradley: 541-484-7144, merrybradley@foodforlanecounty.org.

Grace Notes



Sometimes a picture truly is worth a thousand words.



Touching the hem of heaven at the coast

November Birthdays

- 1 Nancy Thompson
- 8 Dick Braun
- 11 Diane Landon
- 13 Sandra Murray
- 15 Gloria Duce
- 21 Cindy Jensen
- 26 Shari Janes
- 27 Keri Davis



November Anniversaries

- 19 Len and Janet Calvert

Reflections

During this nine-month pandemic siege we have seen winter turn to spring and spring to summer and now autumn. The seasonal cycle continues despite our feelings that we may be stuck in a COVID quagmire. The changing leaves and vibrant orange



and gold hues offer some reassurance that nothing is permanent---that this too shall pass.

There is, however, an exception to impermanence. As a young child whenever I questioned my mother about God---Who is He? Where is He?--- she would confidently respond, “He always was and always will be.” And that reassurance was enough. In this current tumultuous world that simple certainty is more than enough.

So here we are in another season of Thanksgiving, but this year there will be no grand celebrations. Perhaps that is a good thing for as we dial down the noise, we can better reflect on the simple blessings in our lives---finding gratitude for the moments of grace that fill our days. Being mindful of those points of grace enables us to recognize how words and acts impact our lives. That recognition of grace encourages us to affect positive change not only in our own lives but also for the benefit of others. And gratitude just feels good! It is God’s ever-present and reassuring embrace that inspires us to share His giving spirit – grace.

C. Jensen



Schedule for November

Sunday Morning Worship: Access anytime at <https://www.facebook.com/st.thomas.eugene/>.

Sunday Coffee Hour following the Zoom service
[Facebook.com/st.thomas.eugene/](https://www.facebook.com/st.thomas.eugene/)

November 26 ~ Thanksgiving

November 29 ~ First Sunday in Advent
Worship in the St. Thomas Sanctuary – to be confirmed



Every leaf speaks bliss to me, fluttering from the autumn tree.

Emily Bronte

Committee reports and articles for the Beacon are welcome. Please submit in a WORD document, New Times and 12 font, single spaced. Send email attachment to Cindy Jensen at LAJotKDK@aol.com by the 25th of the month.