

The Beacon

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

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

April 2021

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In this Issue:

- Rector's message
- Preschool Building Announcement
- Endowment News
- Book Group
- Sunday School News
- GrassRoots Garden
- Outreach
- Grace Notes
- Reflections

Vestry:

- Sue Colvin,
Sr. Warden
- Janet Calvert
Jr. Warden
- Jon Davies
- Dave Fredmonsky
- Ed Johnson
- Erica Mongé
- Sally Ward
- Anne VanDerveer,
Treasurer
- Beverly Jackson,
Clerk

Rector – Rev. Ann Gaillard

1465 Coburg Road
Eugene, Oregon 97401
Phone: 541-343-5241

Email:

stthomaschurcheugene@gmail.com

Beacon Editor –

Cindy Jensen

Webmaster –

Joshua Mongé

From the Rector's Desk

The crocuses in our yard are gone, but the daffodils are in bloom and the tulips are about to pop. Our pear tree is in its full glory, and the cherry tree blossoms are promising to gift us with their riotous pink color in another week or two.

I love spring.

And I love spring especially this year. The pandemic is easing, though we all must continue to be careful (get your vaccines, my dear friends, as soon as you can!). After what for many of us has felt like a year-long Lent, we have arrived at a place where because of God's grace we can rejoice in the hope of a post-pandemic time. We don't quite know what that post-pandemic time will look like, but we know that we will be safer from infection than during the dark, pre-vaccine months. This is a time of renewal, of new birth, of resurrection.

As we celebrate the resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ, I would like to offer you one of my very favorite poems, a poem that I believe expresses the spirit of the Easter season:

i thank You God for most this amazing

*i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes*

*(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)*

*how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any—lifted from the no
of all nothing—human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?*



Continued on page 2



Continued from page 1

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

--e.e. cummings

Happy Easter,
and
Peace and many blessings,

Ann +

Endowment News



We're Not Bragging, But...

Since our Endowment Fund was established in June 2010 Oregon Community Foundation

(OCF) has managed our investments. About three years ago we asked ourselves, "Should we stick with OCF? Could we do better?"

The Board answered these questions by comparing OCF's five-year performance with that of similar foundations. We learned that OCF was definitely the company to trust with our money.

Is OCF still the right home for our funds? We answered that question with a loud "Yes!" when we learned that a Diocesan fund resembling ours gained 15.4% last year. **Our gain? 25.3%!**

Thanks to your generosity and OCF's smart investing we had a very good year. Now please join me in looking forward to an even better 2021!

Duncan Murray, Chair

Preschool Building Announcement

Dear wonderful parishioners,

On behalf of the Vestry, it gives us great pleasure to inform you that St. Thomas has entered into a verbal agreement with Head Start of Lane County to lease our preschool building. At a special meeting this past Sunday, the Vestry voted unanimously to accept the Preschool Building Committee's recommendation that Head Start be our new tenant.

Head Start is a long-established non-profit organization that provides early childhood education (ages 0-5) to children of low-income families. The Preschool Building Committee and the Vestry believe that, in addition to providing much-needed income to St. Thomas, Head Start's mission is an excellent fit with the mission of St. Thomas and the missions of the Grassroots Garden and the Center for Community Counseling. You can find out more about Head Start here: <https://www.hsolc.org/>.



We do not know yet when Head Start will move into the building, but we are working on the details of the lease agreement. That agreement will need to be approved by the diocesan Chancellor's office.

At Sunday's meeting, the Vestry gave special commendation to the Preschool Building Committee. The committee has met weekly since the beginning of January, and members of the committee have worked tirelessly--making phone calls and sending emails of inquiry, "staging" the classrooms for photographs, leading tours, reviewing proposals and potential contracts, etc. Nearly ten entities expressed interest in the building, and four came to tour the space. The members of the committee are: Janet Calvert (co-chair), Dave Fredmonsky, Ann Gaillard (co-chair), Cindy Jensen, Katrina Jensen, Dallis Rohde, Mike Watkins, and Judy Wilson.

In addition, parishioners Anne VanDerveer and Sally Ward have spent countless hours going through Preschool files and storage units determining what should be kept, recycled, or thrown out. Parishioner Tom Whitehead measured the square footage of the space so that we could determine the appropriate rent; parishioner Joshua Monge was invaluable in locating a professional photographer to take photos of the space and then posting the photos and other important information on our website. And Senior Warden Sue Colvin and members of the Vestry have provided immeasurable support every step of the way. As a parish, we owe all these people our profound gratitude.

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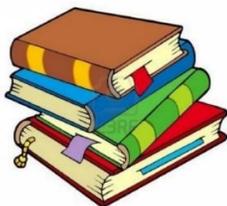
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We will keep you updated as things progress. But in the meantime, let us all give thanks to God for blessing us with our new partnership with Head Start.

Many blessings,

Sue Colvin, Senior Warden
Ann Gaillard, Rector

St. Thomas Book Group



With the COVID recommendations for social distancing and more at-home time, people are reading more! The St. Thomas Book Group certainly reflects that reality with the enthusiastic participation of book group

members. At their February 25th gathering 14 members were in attendance. Eleven participants met in the Parish Hall, socially distanced and masked and three attended via zoom to share a lively discussion of The Golden Poppies. A similar gathering is expected for the review of their March selection, A Light in the Wilderness by Jane Kirkpatrick. All women of the parish are invited to attend or to contact the church office for a zoom link. The April selection is Clementine: The Life of Mrs.... by Sonia Purnell and will be discussed at their gathering on April 22. The book group looks forward to adding more members in the months to come.

Looking ahead, the Book Group members agreed that each member would take responsibility for choosing one book for the group to read during 2022. Members drew months and if there is an official commemorative observance during that month, the responsible member will try to find a book that relates to that observance. If there is no observance in the month, the member is free to choose any book that they would like to read with the group. Members will share their chosen book by the November 2021 meeting. Sounds like fun! So, if you want to join in this reading extravaganza, the Book Group is happy to welcome new members.

...and speaking of books

The St. Thomas Vestry is reading We Shall Be Changed – Questions for a Post-pandemic Church. Parish members are invited to read along with them and join in this important conversation. Copies of the book can be purchased through Amazon at \$6.95 or Kindle for \$1.95.

Sunday School Connections

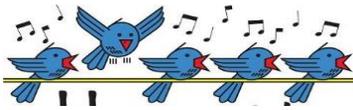


Though it has been wonderful to be back in the sanctuary for our thoughtfully socially distanced services, the energy of our young parishioners is greatly missed---their whispered voices and crumpled workbook pages, their giggles and Sunday school lesson sharing. Judy Wilson has continued to send out the monthly lesson packets and will do so through the end of May and the beginning of the summer hiatus for Sunday school.

Most schools will return to in-person hybrid learning March 29 , but we may not see our youngest parishioners back in church before the beginning of the new school year in September. Continue to keep in your prayers Christopher and Emily Hente, Maddie Baker-Fones, Mason and Lucy Duer, Caleb and Emma Mongé, Russell Farr, Sofia Garcia, Lily Heltman and Lottie, Harlan and Tilda Rohde. This has been a challenging school year for them to navigate. They are the future of our faith community.



Grace Notes



The challenges of the past year are too numerous to consider all in one sitting – pandemic, natural disasters, political discord, social injustice, food insecurity. The world seems to be in turmoil and our communities in upheaval. But...there is great comfort in constancy. Not to appear dismissive or simplistic as we face such concerning issues, but it is healthy, even restorative to take note of the bright spots, the points of joy that uplift and encourage. And so, I cannot help but take note of the ribbon of daffodils that grace our St. Thomas median. It has been many years, perhaps a few decades since those bulbs were planted, and every year the bright golden blooms emerge to remind us of the grace that offers renewal. The daffodils proclaim the coming of Spring, but for our faith community they are a reminder of the promise of new life in Him. They are also a welcoming beacon to those who pass by our church, and for those who might follow that golden ribbon to our doors, let us reflect His grace with our own bright light of welcome.



To Daffodils

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

With thanks to Lee Gaillard, there is this poem by Robert Herrick.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

Thankfully, we can be assured that our St. Thomas daffodils will return again, as they do every year.



Until we are able to return to more normal operations, the St. Thomas Outreach Committee is on hiatus. However, Outreach funds are still being collected and appreciated, held in reserve for the time when St. Thomas can once again make those valuable and necessary contributions to community services. Remember Outreach when you celebrate special events in your lives – birthdays, anniversaries, honorariums – or when you feel a concern for community needs. When writing a check, please note *Outreach* on the memo line.

Altar Flowers



Now that Lent is over, we will begin to have flowers for our Sunday service. If you would like to sign up to donate flowers on a particular Sunday, please call or email the office: 541-343-5241; stthomaschurcheugene@gmail.com. If you would like, you may give the flowers in memory or in honor of someone or in thanksgiving for a birthday, anniversary, etc. If so, please let us know. The cost of the flowers is \$55.00.

GrassRoots Garden Happenings



Spring Plant Sale Benefits GrassRoots Garden and Youth Farm

Online ordering is currently underway for the GrassRoots Garden/Youth Farm Spring Plant Sale and Fundraiser. We are thrilled to be able to offer healthy plants for sale to our community. You can browse and place your order on our website:

<https://plantsale.foodforlanecounty.org>

To comply with safety requirements during the pandemic, plants for our Spring Plant Sale Benefit will now ONLY be available by online pre-order. Customers will have a scheduled time on either 4/2, 4/3, 4/9, or 4/10 to pick up their pre-packaged orders at the FFLC Youth Farm in Springfield. No one will be allowed to browse or shop for plants onsite for safety reasons.

Our Spring Sale includes a wide selection of Youth Farm organically grown and tended annual veggie, flower and herb starts, as well as strawberries and blueberry plants, donated by Fall Creek Farm and Nursery. Starts sell out fast, so order soon for the best selection.

GrassRoots Garden is currently closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, contact Merry Bradley: 541-484-7144, merrybradley@yahoo.com.

April Birthdays

- | | |
|----|----------------------------------|
| 3 | Patty O'Neal
Joan Braun |
| 8 | Laurinda Andrist
John Paulson |
| 9 | Barbara Root |
| 10 | Kathy O'Neal |
| 13 | Erika Hente
Paul Colvin |
| 21 | Mary Lusk |
| 30 | Mason Duer |



April Anniversaries

- | | |
|----|------------------------------|
| 16 | Stu Hogg & Charlotte Heltman |
|----|------------------------------|

Reflections



Soon after spring arrives in Oregon, it seems as if half the population takes advantage of Spring Break to leave for warmer climes. Even in a pandemic when we are emerging from a dark and anxious winter, we have gained the confidence to venture out beyond Oregon borders.

Early Spring in Oregon is usually wet and blustery, and this one is true to form. Our Oregon spring sunrises are too often shrouded in clouds, so Easter sunrise services are not a tradition. But knowing what lies behind the clouds, especially on Easter morning is a golden mental vision of a glorious awakening. There are no words to fully express the spiritual realization of Christ's promised resurrection. The heart swells with joy as the heavens radiate His light in technicolor. We rejoice and lift our voices in song - *Welcome happy morning age to age shall say.*

Just as we celebrate Christ's sacrifice for us with each communion service, so too we can celebrate His glorious resurrection in every sunrise, every beginning of a new day – the opportunity to fulfill His command to live a new life in Him. That is, to be His hands and feet in this early life as we care for and serve our neighbors.

Alleluia, He is risen!

As the Son rises, He lifts us up to rise with Him.



Holy Week and Easter 2021



(All services will take place in the church unless noted. In-person services, with the exception of Holy Saturday, will also be streamed to our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/st.thomas.eugene>.)

The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday (March 28)

10:00 a.m. Liturgy of the Palms and the Holy Eucharist

We shout “Hosannah!”, our palms are blessed, and we celebrate Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Yet triumph turns to tragedy, shouts of “Hosanna” to “Crucify him,” as the Passion Gospel of St. Mark is read at the end of the service.

Holy Monday and Tuesday (March 29 and 30)

5:00 p.m. Evening Prayer (on Zoom; links will be sent out)

Holy Wednesday (March 31)

The Way of the Cross (on-line)

For centuries, Christians of many denominations have conducted services (known as the Way of the Cross or the Stations of the Cross) that commemorate Jesus' journey from being condemned to death by Pilate to his entombment. You will be provided with links to The Way of the Cross as celebrated by other congregations this year.

Maundy Thursday (April 1)

12:00 Noon Maundy Thursday Liturgy

The word “Maundy” comes from the Latin “mandatum” which means “command;” Christ’s Great Commandment is that we love one another as he has loved us. Because of the pandemic we will not attempt footwashing. However, we will commemorate the first Lord’s Supper. The service concludes with the solemn stripping of the altar.

Good Friday (April 2)

12:00 noon The Good Friday Liturgy

This solemn service includes the reading of St. John’s Passion Gospel and the veneration of the Cross.

Holy Saturday (April 3)

10:00 a.m. Holy Saturday Liturgy

A short, simple service of readings and prayers.

The Sunday of the Resurrection: Easter Day (April 4)

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Join us in celebrating the Resurrection of our Lord!

April Service Schedule

In-person worship services will continue with the prescribed restrictions at 10:00 a.m. every Sunday. Because of COVID, we are limited to 25 people. The service is also streamed to our Facebook page so you can view it at home: <https://www.facebook.com/st.thomas.eugene>.