



# *The Beacon*

## *St. Thomas Episcopal Church*

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

March 2022

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### ***From the Rector's Desk***

For the past month or so, I've been pondering how I might open my heart and soul to God during this Lenten season. I believe I found my answer a couple of weeks ago. For several days in mid-February I attended a workshop in California, The School of Earth and Soul. A three-year program, its focus is on Celtic Christian spirituality, and its fundamental text is the book *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul* by John Philip Newell. Newell is an acclaimed spiritual writer and teacher and led the workshop I attended.

I've been interested in Celtic spirituality for many years. Celtic Christian spirituality embraces both listening to the sacred and seeing the divine in all creation, including all humankind and all nature. Its Christ-centeredness is especially grounded in the Gospel of John. I have been using the *Celtic Daily Prayer* book for at least 20 years as part of my daily devotions.

What I realized while I was at the workshop, however, was that my prayer life has gotten stale. Not only that, but I have also lost my engagement with nature, which has always been so much a part of who I am. I'm an introvert and book-lover, so on my days off, especially during Covid, it has been way too easy for me to hide under my throw blanket on my living room couch and devour books, instead of getting out and walking and immersing myself in nature. Don't get me wrong—books are wonderful! But I need balance in my life, and my book-devouring has caused me to be a bit off-kilter, focusing too much on the mind and not enough on the sensory, experiential dimensions of life.

So this Lent, I will be taking on two practices. First, I will be deepening my prayer life in Celtic Christianity both by reading Newell's book, *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul*, and by using his Celtic prayer book, *Celtic Treasure: Daily Scriptures and Prayer*. The other practice I'll be taking on will be regular forays into nature—walks in the woods, trips to the coast, etc.

Quite frankly, it won't be easy. The season of Lent is a very busy time for priests. We are preparing for Holy Week and Easter, and I will be leading a Lenten series every Sunday, which requires two or three hours of preparation each week. Thus, taking on some things rather than giving up things will be a challenge for me. I hope therefore that you will offer me support and prayer so that I may take on these practices as I believe they are essential for me in

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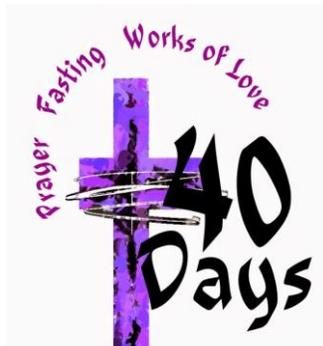
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mind, body, and spirit. And the healthier I am in those areas, the more I am able to offer myself to you, my beloved parishioners of St. Thomas.

Peace and many blessings,

*Ann* +

## ***Ash Wednesday Service***



Wednesday, March 2nd, is Ash Wednesday. We will be having our traditional Ash Wednesday service at 12 noon, with the Imposition of Ashes and Holy Eucharist. This service is a solemn and meaningful opportunity to gather in contemplative prayer as we begin the season of Lent.

## ***A Lenten Prayer***

Dear Lord Jesus,

Tomorrow the Lenten season begins. It is a time to be with you in a special way, a time to pray, to fast, and thus to follow you on your way to Jerusalem, to Golgotha, and to the final victory over death.

I am still so divided. I truly want to follow you, but I also want to follow my own desires and lend an ear to the voices that speak about prestige, success, human respect, pleasure, power, and influence. Help me to become deaf to those voices and more attentive to your voice, which calls me to choose the narrow road to life.

I know that Lent is going to be a very hard time for me. The choice for your way has to be made every moment of my life. I have to choose thoughts that are your thoughts, words that are your words, and actions that are your actions. There are no times or

places without choices. And I know how deeply I resist choosing you.

Please, Lord, be with me at every moment and in every place. Give me the strength and the courage to live this season faithfully, so that, when Easter comes, I will be able to taste with joy the new life which you have prepared for me. Amen.

--Henri Nouwen in *The Road to Daybreak* (N.Y.: Image, 1990)

## ***I Believe***

In these anxious times, consider this message written on the wall by a child in a Nazi concentration camp:

I believe in the sun even when it shines not.  
I believe in love even when I feel it not.  
I believe in God even when He is silent.

## ***Endowment News***

### **2021 – The Year of Our First Grant!**

Thanks to your generosity and our Endowment Fund's stellar returns, we made our first Endowment grant in December

2021. It was indeed a very good year.

At the end of the year our Endowment Fund balance totaled \$275,722.52. That's an increase of \$56,549.15 (25.8%) for the year. Even during the financially turbulent fourth quarter we gained a modest \$10,608.77 (4.0%).

From this growth we created and funded the first five months of the Young Musicians' Program which, in January and February, brought to St. Thomas the outstanding voices of Payton Swartout and Katie Anderson. Watch for more inspiring music during services in months to come.

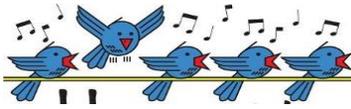
Please join me in aiming for another successful Endowment year in 2022.

On behalf of your Endowment Board, thank you again for your support of The St. Thomas Endowment Fund!

Duncan Murray, Chair



## Grace Notes



### Return of the Choir



For the two years we have endured the pandemic – first with virtual church only and then a year ago the introduction of a hybrid model for worship – our small but ever faithful choir has been on hiatus. Choir director, Keri Davis, delighted us with many recorded musical renditions of inspiring music. Then when we returned to in-person worship, Keri and Chris King supported our singing efforts with piano and organ and the service of a single cantor. But on February 6, just in time for the visit of Bishop Diana, the St. Thomas choir returned to make a *joyful noise* – grace magnified!

**Choir rehearsals** have resumed at 9:00 am every Sunday morning prior to the 10:00 am service. Rehearsals will continue through the second Sunday in June when the choir begins its summer break. Keri also announced the exciting news that four new members have joined the choir.

#### **And more choir news...**

Before COVID the choir traditionally put on the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper. Last year because of the pandemic that event could not take place, and regrettably the same holds true for this year. At one point Rev. Ann was in discussion with the choir about possibly having a take-out pancake supper, but for a number of reasons the decision was made not to do that, so there will be no pancake supper this year.

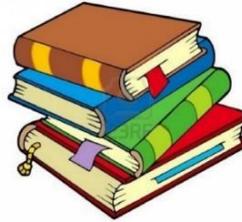
Given that the pancake supper was also the choir's yearly fundraiser to collect funds for the purchase of music, robes, etc., it is quite probable that there will be a different kind of choir fund-raiser later this year. For one thing, we have new people in the choir who will need robes. Keri and Rev. Ann will be keeping parishioners posted on what the choir's needs are and how they might be funded.

## Daylight Savings Time

Be sure to set your clocks forward before you go to bed on March 12 as Daylight Savings Time begins at 1:00 am on March 13. You don't want to be late for church!



## St. Thomas Book Group



The St. Thomas Book Group is currently reading their assigned March book House of Splendid Isolation by Edna O'Brien. Interested readers may be inspired to read along with them even if you are unable to participate

in the lively discussion sessions. The book group will meet on March 24 at 1:30 pm in a hybrid session in the church library.

## Ushers

### We Welcome New Ushers

Sandra and Duncan Murray, who schedule 10:00 am service ushers, are pleased to announce two new members to this ministry.

We welcome our two new ushers: Lee Gaillard and Adeline Hoover. Let's all thank them for their dedication and commitment to usher at St. Thomas.

Please join us in thanking our 2021 "retiring" ushers for their years of service. Shirley Collard, Gerrie LaQuey, Ann VanDerveer, Judy and Larry Wilson. Each deserves a round of applause for a job well done. And a special thanks goes to our other ushers: Chris & Dale Bixler, Len & Janet Calvert, Diana Garcia, Dan and John Paulson, who continue to be a blessing to our Usher Ministry.

## New Confirmands

On February 6 Bishop Diana Akiyama presided for the service and confirmed Erica Mongé-Greer, Joshua, Caleb and Emma Mongé, Christopher King and Michael Richardson. Congratulations to these confirmands and may God's grace abide with you as you continue on your journey in faith.

## Musicians' Program

Katie Anderson, the second musician participating in our Young Musicians' Program, was welcomed to our service on February 13. Katie is a senior at Springfield High School. She has sung in her high school's choir since her freshman year and has played the violin since the age of 10.



Katie has participated in many solo activities such as singing the national anthem at an Emerald's baseball game in August. She has also been invited to perform in Europe with the Oregon Ambassadors of Music's choir. Katie will be attending the University of Oregon this fall as a major in music performance and a minor in music composition. She is working towards a career in opera singing.



### March Birthdays

10	Bill Janes
12	Karl Hente
15	Barbara Hemphill
16	Debbie Pezzoni

### March Anniversaries

6	Larry and Judy Wilson
20	Paul and Sue Colvin

## In Memoriam

David Paulson, brother of parishioners John and Dan Paulson, died February 23. He had been fighting cancer for some time and died peacefully in care of hospice



in Denver, Colorado. Please keep John, Dan, David's son Eric, and all David's loved ones in your prayers.

## Books, Books and more Books...



Looking for a good book? The Women's Afternoon Book Club has re-stocked the bookcase in the church entry with a wide variety of titles and there are more options at the east end of the Parish Hall. Drop by during office hours (TuThF, 10-1) or on Sunday morning to browse. Titles currently on the shelves include:

Secrets of the Chocolate House by Paula Brackston  
Lovely War by Julie Berry  
Golden Poppies by Laila Ibrahim  
Alexander Hamilton by Ron Chernov  
The DaVinci Code by Dan Brown  
A New Song by Jan Karon

There is something for every reading taste – historical fiction, non-fiction, motivational texts, mysteries, old favorites and new publications. Donations of money and books are welcome but not required in order to access this library. All money received will go to the Outreach fund.

### A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,  
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.  
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.  
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,  
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.  
We pray for those with power over war or peace,  
for wisdom, discernment and compassion  
to guide their decisions.  
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,  
that you would hold and protect them.  
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.  
Amen.

Archbishop Justin Welby  
Archbishop Stephen Cottrell



## GrassRoots Garden

**The Word is Out!** Saturdays at GrassRoots have seen an upsurge in garden support from college groups beginning this past fall and continuing throughout the winter. In September we reopened our Outdoor Garden



Kitchen serving hot lunches to garden participants. With lunch on the table, we've seen a huge increase of fraternities and sororities, as well as college faith-based groups and community service groups coming to help out at the Garden.

This added involvement has brought hundreds of extremely capable college students to do physically demanding tasks as well as technical and highly focused projects. Large teams trenched pathways, then loaded and hauled leaves hours on end to fill them again, as we renovate garden sections using our path-trench composting method. Another small committed group has come weekly pruning and training our raspberry and blackberry patch.

These young adults are incredibly instrumental in our winter work as we prepare the Garden for spring. They're eager to contribute and enthusiastic to give to the community. They're also very happy and excited to enjoy a warm, delicious lunch on cold winter days. Using COVID safety protocols, we've altered how we serve and feed such large groups of people. On Saturdays we've had as few as 50 participants, but typically we have 70-80 people all coming together to work and eat. Instead of our customary sit-down family style buffet, lunch is now served in bowls as if from the side of a food cart. Once people go through the serving line, they congregate with friends in their risk bubbles to enjoy their meal in the parking lot, coming back for seconds or additional courses as they desire.

Lunch usually consists of big pots of savory soup such as black bean or two bean chili served side by side with curry coconut squash bisque or carrot ginger soup, then topped with cilantro-lime corn and rice topped with a big dollop of Jaime's famous salsa. Other favorites include corn potato chowder, Tuscan white bean potato leek soup and Italian white bean vegetable soup served with garlicky-

sweet pepper pasta and of course more of Jamie's famous salsa. Fresh ripple cut carrots and kohlrabi served with homemade vegan ranch dressing or Joyce's favorite coleslaw, hot crusty bread donated from Metropol Bakery, and warm garden made applesauce for dessert round out the meal.

Celebrating their efforts and good cheer, many of these groups come to GrassRoots repeatedly two to four times each month. Their adventures spread by word of mouth, bringing yet more groups and people to the Garden.

We send our heartfelt thanks to Alpha Sigma Phi, Chi Psi, Delta Tau Delta, Duck Corps, Gamma Phi Beta, Kappa Sigma, OSPIRG, Oregon Hillel, and Theta Chi. Their energy and efforts



have been an incredible gift to GrassRoots, to all of us who work there and the greater community.

**Winter hours:** Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 9 to 4. GrassRoots Garden is located at 1465 Coburg Road across from Safeway, behind St. Thomas Episcopal Church. For more information, contact Merry Bradley at [merrybradley@yahoo.com](mailto:merrybradley@yahoo.com) or 458-221-0652.

## And speaking of the Garden...

Our St. Thomas campus is an oasis at the heart of Coburg Road. As a recent email from Rev. Ann noted, the grounds crew for HeadStart has been hard at work maintaining the playground with sweeping, blowing and weeding. And not to be overlooked is our own St. Thomas grounds crew – Joe Konieczka, Larry and Judy Wilson, Linda and Tom Whitehead, Paul Colvin and so many others who give their time and labor to grooming our grounds. When facility users from the community attend events at St. Thomas, they often praise our well-maintained gardens and grounds. Our St. Thomas garden is another way in which this faith community honors the Lord who is central to our presence on Coburg Road.



## Happy St. Patrick's Day ~ March 17



*May the road rise up to meet you.  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face.  
And rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the hollow of  
His hand.*

### Reflections



This Irish blessing seems appropriate for this reflection message inviting us to take up our walking sticks and set off on that road that meets us. Science and health experts tell us that walking is good exercise for mind, spirit and physical well-being. Better yet, a walk in the forest, a park or nature preserve provides the cleanest of air as one exercises and clears the mind of all distractions.

We are blessed to live in a community surrounded by forest, and for me and mine, we are immersed in a forest environment. There is no excuse for us not to enjoy regular walks, and considerable work, in our woods. If one cannot physically walk in the woods, perhaps roll or ride along a forest path, or sit on a bench and just take in the trees, the birds flitting from branch to branch, the squirrels scampering up and down the trunks, deer browsing at the base, and bees buzzing among the wild flowers that push up through the forest duff.

A recent walk through our forest allowed us to do our annual gleaning of tree seedlings. We gather fragile shoots of Douglas-fir, grand fir, oak and madrone that have germinated in the path or logging road and will not survive in that location, carefully digging them up and transplanting them in our tree nursery where they can be nurtured for a couple years before being replanted in a more suitable location in our forest. It is a true labor of love – quiet, contemplative, deliberate – as we carefully search for the precious shoots and tenderly transfer them to a raised garden bed.

The effort is much like our Lenten experience. This is the time when we consider our faith commitment. We focus on the gifts of God's grace, glean what is good and worthy of our attention and strengthening. Just as one might weed and prune the seedlings, we cast off that which separates us from the love of Christ and become renewed with His grace.

### Welcome Spring ~ March 20!



#### March 2022

- March 2** – Ash Wednesday
- March 13** – Daylight Savings Time begins
- March 17** – St. Patrick's Day
- March 20** – Vernal Equinox

In-person worship services will continue with the prescribed restrictions. St. Thomas is offering an in-person service at 10:00 a.m. every Sunday. The service is also live streamed to our Facebook page so you can view it at home:

<https://www.facebook.com/st.thomas.eugene>.

Morning Prayer services are at 8:00 a.m. on the second and fourth Sunday. In whatever way you wish, please join us for worship!

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.