



The Beacon

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

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

May 2022

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- Jon Davies, Jr. Warden
- Diana Garcia
- Cindy Jensen
- Ed Johnson
- Linda Whitehead
- Anne VanDerveer, Treasurer
- Beverly Jackson, Clerk

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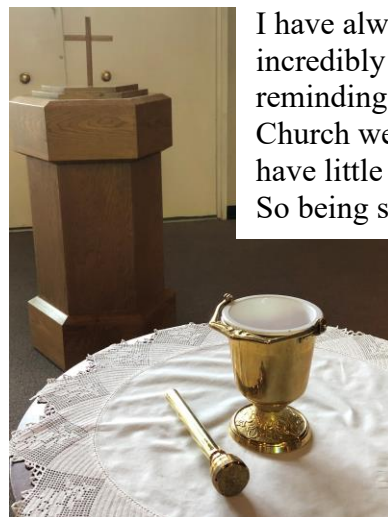
Webmaster –

From the Rector's desk ~

During the Peace on Easter Sunday after I asperged the congregation, one parishioner said to me, “You really enjoy doing that, don’t you?!” I laughed and replied, “Yes, I really do!”

It is indeed customary for a priest to asperge a congregation after the renewal of our baptismal vows, which we recite several times every year: Easter, Pentecost, All Saints’ Sunday, and the Sunday right after Epiphany, the Sunday that commemorates Jesus’ own baptism. And of course we renew our baptismal vows every time we have an actual baptism. In some churches, the priest also asperges the Palm Sunday palms when they are being blessed, or the casket/urn at a funeral.

To asperge a congregation means that the priest sprinkles holy water on the congregants, using an aspergillum, a liturgical implement that the priest dips in the water and shakes over the congregation. The St. Thomas aspergillum, which we purchased several years ago, is essentially a hollow ball on a stick. The ball has tiny holes that allow the water to come through and soak the sponge that is inside. In other parishes, I have simply used an evergreen branch for sprinkling.



I have always found asperging and being asperged to be incredibly meaningful because it is a tangible way of reminding us of our baptism. Most of us in the Episcopal Church were baptized as babies or small children and have little if any memory of our baptism—I know I don’t. So being sprinkled with water that has been blessed with

the same prayer that we use to sanctify the water in the font during a baptism connects us symbolically and kinesthetically to that moment in our past when we have been baptized into Christ’s death and have been raised to the new life of grace.

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So yes, I do enjoy asperging, because it is such a powerful action connecting us to Christ and to one another, the Body of Christ. But I also enjoy it because just as a baptism is a joyful occasion, joyful asperging reminds us that life in Christ is meant to be joyful. Alleluia!

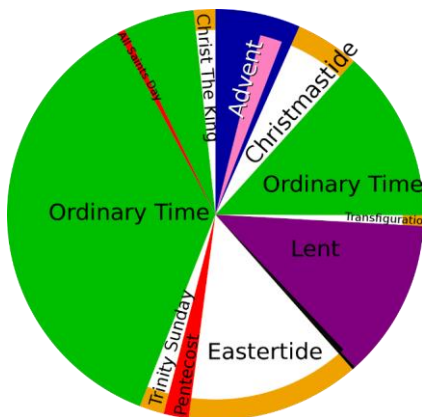
Peace and many blessings,

Ann +

The Easter Season

According to the Anglican Calendar we are now in the season of Easter, or *Eastertide*, and the altar and vestments are adorned with white and gold hues. A similar article was published in the May 2021 Beacon, but the message bears repeating for the colors of our church year have wonderful significance. Following Pentecost on June 5 and Trinity Sunday on June 12, we will resume Ordinary Time and the color green will again grace the altar and vestments and frame our monthly newsletter.

Over the years I have explained it to Sunday school youth in the simplest terms: the blue of Advent is for the promise of a savior; the gold or white of Christmastide and Eastertide signifies the light of Christ in the world; the purple is the royal color signifying the majesty of Christ; red is for the presence of the Holy Spirit and the green – the most apparent color – is for growth and recognizes the most important charge of Christians to grow the church with outreach as we are the feet and hands of Christ in the world.



Endowment News

Tax Wise Giving – Right For You?



Could you benefit from “Tax Wise Giving” to the Endowment Fund? Probably, because **charitable giving can have tax benefits for people at all income levels**. So even if our incomes are modest or we’re retired (as I am), we can probably use our gifts to get a tax break.

But before we look for ways to reduce our taxes, let’s remember why we give to our Endowment Fund. Here are some of the thoughts behind our gifts:

- We enjoy our Young Musicians Program, underwritten by our Endowment Fund, and want to see more exciting new ministries;
- We want to create a lasting personal legacy;
- We give in memory of a loved one;
- We want to make a loving, lasting impact on St. Thomas.

Whatever your reason for giving to our Endowment Fund, stay for 30 minutes or so after church on **Sunday, June 12** and discover how tax wise giving, no matter what your income level, might make it more attractive for you to make a gift now or endow in your will a gift to The St. Thomas Endowment Fund.

On June 12 Oregon Community Foundation’s Julie Lawrence will reveal tax saving opportunities and answer your questions.

Please mark your calendars **today** and plan on spending a half hour that could be quite profitable for you and your family.

Duncan Murray, Chair



St. Thomas Book Group



Our resident group of avid readers has selected The Pope's Son by Rick Friend as the May book of the month. The group will meet in a hybrid format in the parish library on Thursday, May 26 at 1:30 pm with Kay hosting. New members and visitors are always welcome. If you are unable to join the discussion, you can always read along with them each month and enjoy some great book selections.

Grace Notes



The more subdued and thoughtful days of Lent ended with the glorious procession of Palm Sunday, followed by the trials of Holy Week, the pain of Good Friday and the joyful Alleluias of Easter. And for our St. Thomas parish *grace* prevailed throughout this holy season. The evidence of this abundant *grace* is worth noting, for it is this *grace*, imbued in us by a gracious God, that sustains our faith community.

In the two weeks before Easter Larry Wilson, in addition to his regular grounds-keeping duties, accomplished the following:

- installed a new threshold for the big door in the back of the church that leads out to the playground and is used for the Palm Sunday procession;
- replaced a broken window in the nursery;
- replaced a broken window at the CCC;
- took photos, including the Easter photos for our website.

Our St. Thomas grounds are always a source of pride, but for Easter Linda Whitehead and Judy Wilson gave special attention to the flower beds to prepare them for the application of new bark.

Not to be overlooked is the Altar Guild, particularly Linda and Tom Whitehead, Joe Konieczka and Anne Van Derveer, for all their care in preparing the altar and adorning the crosses multiple times as appropriate to each Holy Week service.



The Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMS) and Lectors graced the congregants with additional services, many readings and presentations of the Passion of Christ.

The choir prepared appropriate music throughout Lent and Holy Week, and on Easter Sunday they truly made a joyful noise as they led us in Alleluias and the glorious musical proclamation that *Christ is risen!*

No listing of accolades would be complete without recognizing the monumental dedication of Rev. Ann who provided thoughtful leadership to the Lenten study group; delivered instructional and inspiring sermons every Sunday and especially on Good Friday and Easter; and gracefully attended to the many additional services that Holy Week demands – all this in addition to her regular duties!



At St. Thomas we know *grace*, feel its presence and share it joyfully.



GrassRoots Garden is Windermere Agent's Favorite Property

For one day every year, usually in June, agents from area Windermere Real Estate offices close their doors so they can volunteer at a local nonprofit. Since 2011, that lucky organization has been the GrassRoots Garden.

"I usually get about 80 agents, and from nine to noon we get as much done as possible," said Scott Weech, Windermere broker and unofficial liaison between Windermere and the Garden. Since 2017, agents have also donated funds through the Windermere Foundation.

Scott works closely with us at GrassRoots to determine what needs to be done meeting before the big day, clipboard in hand. Over the years, Windermere has provided labor and funding for a blueberry patch, a kiwi arbor, a walk-in cooler, shade cloth and new wheelbarrows. They also helped with funding to rebuild a large greenhouse and shade house after severe storm damage.

Every year we know our friends at Windermere will help us get over the hump as we transition from early spring crops to our main season plantings. Their generosity has provided us with funds for crucial renovations and infrastructure, as well as expanded what we grow and provide to the community. Their partnership has been invaluable in so many ways.



"For us it's about what we can do that will benefit people right here right now," said Scott. "FOOD for Lane County produces 50,000 pounds of food a year at GrassRoots. That's used immediately right here for people who need it. That really resonates with our people. Giving someone a meal today is just a very valuable thing."

"We want to give back to the community, and at the end of the day we feel like we've really accomplished something that people are going to appreciate," said Scott.

"We can go touch those blueberry plants and know that's what our money went to."



GrassRoots Garden is currently looking for people with carpentry skills to join our building and renovation team.

New Spring hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, 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 or 458-221-0652.

Cross Relocation

Journey of the Cross

Your Vestry and the Cross Relocation Committee have taken more steps on the project to relocate the cross from the roof to a prominent place on the Coburg Road side lawn.



The Vestry agreed with the recommendation of the committee to engage McKenzie Commercial as general contractor for the work. Time has not been decided, but probably will involve the weather as moving the cross from the roof will undoubtedly leave a major hole in the roof to be repaired by River Roofing. More details including financing, are being worked out. Stay tuned!

Ed Johnson chairs the committee, which includes John Spruance, Frank Moss, Linda Whitehead, Cindy Jensen and Rev. Ann.

Honoring Earth Day

Earth Day has been celebrated every year on April 22 since 1970. In the 52 intervening years we have come a long way in recognizing the need to more mindfully and deliberately address pollution and mitigate the depletion of our natural resources. But there is so much more we can do. It is often our youngest citizens who are the most enthusiastic about the need to *reduce, reuse and recycle*. At St. Thomas *red for recycling* waste baskets for paper recycling have been installed throughout the church and parish hall. Parishioners, our Companions in Ministry and user groups have been diligent in using the receptacles. This is Phase 1 of our overall recycling initiative.

On Sunday, April 24 in honor of Earth Day, Rev. Ann blessed the red waste baskets featuring the children's posters proclaiming thoughtful recycling.



Emily and Christopher Hente and Sofia Garcia join Rev. Ann at the altar for the blessing of the *red for recycling* paper recycling waste baskets.

Young Musicians' Program



On April 3rd St. Thomas welcomed Margaret Boggs, the fourth musician participating in our Young Musicians' Program, which is made possible by a grant from the St. Thomas Endowment Fund. Margaret is a senior at Springfield High School and plans to study music composition at the University of Oregon. At our 10:00 am service Margaret played hymns on the viola, bringing tears to more than one parishioner's eyes. Margaret has a deep love for the fine arts, including orchestra, theater, and drawing, and has been playing music for a lifetime. When not making music, Margaret's time is spent drawing, writing, working on theater projects at school, and spending time with family.

Our fifth and final musician in the YMP is Aaron Bettencourt. Aaron is a graduate student at the University of Oregon and is also the student director at Springfield High School. Aaron will be singing at the 10:00 service on May 15th.

We are hugely grateful to the people of St. Thomas who have contributed to the Endowment Fund, thus enabling the Young Musicians' Program to take place this year.



May Birthdays

- 3 Sofia Garcia
- 4 Lottie Rohde
- 7 Joe Konieczka
- 14 Christopher Hente
- 26 Ann Gaillard
- 30 Mark Pezzoni



May Anniversaries

- 17 Karl and Erika Hente



Memorial Service

On Saturday, May 14 a Memorial Service for Robin Barrett will be held at River Park, Lebanon, Oregon in the Main Shelter beginning at 11:00 am. Robin died in the Veterans' Home in Lebanon during the early days of COVID, and with the easing of COVID concerns, it is now possible to celebrate this dear and faithful friend and longtime St. Thomas parishioner. It will be a day of stories, laughter, lunch and no tears. Contact Dana Yamauchi for questions; 808-937-2843 or pawsnfins@hotmail.com.

Reflections



In the dark days of this past winter when the world was overwhelmed with turmoil and strife and attempting to emerge from an erratic pandemic, it is no wonder we were too often consumed with grief, anxiety and anger. But the cleansing spring rains and the emergence of bright green foliage and new blooms remind us that we are *Easter people*. Our

risen Lord proclaims that we have new life in Him. Just as new life emerges with spring, we too are renewed.

Whether you have an array of garden beds, pots on a porch or a window box, the effort to clean, weed and refresh the soil for new growth is restorative for mind, body and spirit. Who can toil in the soil without reflecting on life? Pruning, transplanting, spreading seeds and contemplating the possibilities energizes us with hopefulness.

The turning of the seasons must surely be by divine design. While we may have some control over our garden efforts, a walk beyond our garden spaces truly reveals God's grace. Whether enjoying a vigorous hike on a mountain trail, a trek along an ocean shore, a stroll through a city park or a walk along your neighborhood streets, nature reveals herself in glorious majesty. We must simply engage all our senses to take in the details --- the trill of the birds, the colors of the earth, the shapes of the clouds, the feel of the wind, the smell of the foliage.

It is especially remarkable that some of the first harbingers of spring that break through the dull winter hues of the earth are the most vibrant in color and yet the most delicate in structure. Wildflowers faithfully return every year to boldly announce the arrival of spring. After anticipating their arrival, we now rejoice in the appearance of the fairy slipper orchid and trillium that grace our forest floor. These spring delights are certainly not exclusive to our little forest. They are everywhere, even in the most painfully ravaged places in the world. God is gracious, but He is also persistent and reliable. How can we not recognize that our hope for rebirth is only through Him?



Fairy slipper and trillium, or the Trinity flower.