



The Beacon

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

Give thanks and praise to God and share God's love.

July 2023

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- Jon Davies, Jr. Warden
- Lucy Barnett
- Chris King
- Mike Richardson
- Holly Spruance
- Joe Tulacz
- Linda Whitehead
- Beverly Jackson, Clerk

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Sabbatical Notes ~

As Rev. Ann has sent a selection of Celtic prayers, which she has used in her daily devotions during her visit to Iona.

Opening Prayer and

Thanksgiving

O Sun behind all suns,
I give you greeting this new day.
Let all creation praise you.
Let the daylight and the shadows
praise you.
Let the fertile earth
and the swelling sea praise you.
Let the wind and the rain,
the lightning and the thunder
praise you.
Let all that breathes,
both male and female, praise
you.
And I shall praise you.
O God of all life
I give you greeting this day.

Intercessions

There is no plant in the ground
But tells of your beauty, O Christ.
There is no creature on the earth
There is no life in the sea
But proclaims your goodness.
There is no bird on the wing
There is no star in the sky
There is nothing beneath the sun
But is full of your blessing.
Lighten my understanding
of your presence all around, O
Christ.
Kindle my will
to be caring for Creation.



The chapel at Iona



Closing Prayer

Bless to me O God
My soul that comes from on high.
Bless to me O God
My body that is of earth.
Bless to me O God
Each thing my eye sees
Each sound my ear hears.
Bless to me O God
Each scent that goes to my nostrils
Each taste that goes to my lips
Each ray that guides my way.



Scenes from Iona – the rugged coast, pastoral views, the ancient ruins, the chapel, the Celtic cross and a closing prayer for the end of the day.

Sabbatical Return Celebration



On Sunday, July 16 following the 10:00 am service the Vestry is hosting Coffee Hour and all parishioners are encouraged to join in the celebration of Rev. Ann's return from her sabbatical journey. While we will be delighted to have Rev. Ann and Lee back among us and look forward to the sharing of their Celtic journey, we are equally enthusiastic about celebrating our faith community. A priest on sabbatical has been a new experience for St. Thomas and there is much to celebrate.

As a parish we faithfully committed to contributing our fair share to Rev. Ann's sabbatical expenses. We navigated the administrative responsibilities and worship opportunities of St. Thomas with dedication, diligence, and good faith. All was in order because of Rev. Ann's thoughtful planning, Vestry oversight, JB's consistent administrative efforts, and the Building and Grounds and Facility Oversight Committees regular attention to campus care. The members of this faith community bless us in countless ways, and we are all part of the effort. That is indeed something to celebrate!

Endowment News

Young Musicians Program – What's Next?

A few Sundays ago we enjoyed the wonderful singing of Thomas Guastavino at our worship service.

Thomas, a junior in Music Education at UO, was the tenth performer featured on our Young Musicians Program. Thanks to our own Keri Davis the previous nine were just as inspiring.



Our Young Musicians Program came to us thanks to seed money from our Endowment Fund. We all owe our thanks to St. Thomas members whose generosity provided those funds, which covered the first five performances.

Let's also thank the anonymous donor who funded the additional five young musicians. Your Endowment Fund did its part by planting the seed for this new ministry. God blessed us with a generous donor to temporarily continue funding.

What's next for our Young Musicians Program? Do we want to continue it?

It's up to us in the congregation and our elected representatives in the Vestry. It's better to decide one way or another than to just let the program drift away without a verdict. Whatever our opinions, yay or nay, let's make them known to the Vestry and /or to Rev. Ann.

And whatever we decide, let's all thank Keri for creating and managing this outstanding program!

Duncan Murray, Chair

St. Thomas Book Group

Are you looking for a good summer read? The St. Thomas Ladies Book Group always has some great suggestions. You can

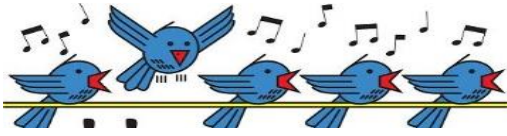


read along with them! Better yet, consider dropping in on a Book Group session to listen and share your thoughts on the latest book selection.

For July Book Group members will be reading American Express by Nancy Ruben. As is their monthly practice, readers will gather for conversation and refreshments in the parish library at 1:30 pm on Thursday, July 27.



Grace Notes



On Father's Day Sunday the St. Thomas congregation was treated to a delightful and heartwarming surprise. For the offertory anthem Jon Davies picked up his guitar and in his deep resonant voice sang the lullaby he wrote for his children and grandchildren. Of course, his appreciative audience responded with enthusiastic applause. It was a beautiful moment of grace, for *grace* inspired Jon's message to his loved ones, and the sharing of this lovely lullaby was imbued with Jon's own gracious countenance.

Poppas' lullaby By Jon Davies

You were born in a burst of love and joy,
A spirit you've already shown.
To rock you to sleep each and every night,
Is the greatest love I've ever known.

I will always hold you,
No matter where you'll be.
And I'll be warmly smiling,
Neath the cottonwood tree.

May your days always be lively,
May you find peace every night.
May you sleep neath a golden moon,
And awaken with each new morning's light.

I will always love you!
No matter where you'll be.
You'll find me whenever you need me,
Underneath the cottonwood tree.

So let the sand man take you,
As you float down your river of dreams,
Wherever your heart may wander
To the land of honey and cream.

My darling sweet young Sadie,
May you sleep without the threat of war,
And know in your soul, so deep and pure,
What love is truly for.

I'll be waiting for you!
You know where I'll be!
In the shade underneath those ancient limbs
Of the cottonwood tree.

May your path never be too steep.
May you always have enough to eat,
A toasty coat to warm you,
And dry shoes upon your feet.

These things I wish not only for you,
But for all God's children too!
I promise that I
Will do my best to try,
To help the world to renew,
To make It worthy of all of you,
To pass on to you
When I die,
To pass on to you when I die!

I will always love you!
You can hear my caring cry,
Peace for all the children of the world,
It's a poppas' lullaby!

Peace for all the children of the world,
It's a poppas' lullaby!



Outreach

After church on Sunday, June 4th a hearty group of St. Thomas parishioners headed over to join a Food for Lane County fundraising effort – a *Walk in the Park* organized by Westminster Presbyterian Church. Through sponsorships

and cash donations, the St. Thomas team raised \$695 for FOOD for Lane County. Our thanks go to those who walked and those who donated!



Walk in the Park participants – Sue Colvin, Nancy Osborne, JB Hoover and Tricia Crisafulli.

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On Saturday, June 10 a group from St. Thomas organized by the outreach committee volunteered for a couple of hours in the GrassRoots Garden located behind St. Thomas. Under the excellent guidance and instruction from Emily, tomato cages were anchored, four rows of peppers planted, and several wire worm traps were made and buried (see June 2023 Beacon article). Soaker hoses were laid to water the newly planted peppers. A lot of work was accomplished in just a few hours! Emily made it doable with excellent instructions and gave kudos to all volunteering. There were several other groups and individuals volunteering, however the Garden is very large, and Emily would have had no trouble putting more hands to work.

On the way out of the Garden, Emily encouraged us to pick some fresh raspberries to eat (Yum!) and we certainly took advantage of the offer. Thank you to the outreach committee for pulling together this group of willing gardeners. Please look for other group service opportunities in the future. Hope to see you in the GrassRoots Garden.

The Outreach Committee would like to remind all Parishioners that July 9 is Peanut Butter Sunday. Peanut butter donations are needed for the St. John the Divine Food Pantry. Donations of peanut butter can be brought to church any time up to and including July 9.



Buildings and Grounds

The March 2023 Beacon highlighted this essential committee and the work that Paul Colvin, Joe Konieczka, Larry Wilson, Andy Laird and Linda Whitehead dedicate to the management and maintenance of our St. Thomas campus.



Even with all their concerted efforts, there are specific tasks that would benefit from additional assistance from parish members. One such task is scheduled for Wednesday, July 12 – a **Sidewalk Cleaning Work Party**. From 9:00 am to 12:00

noon two additional volunteers are needed to assist with pressure cleaning all the St. Thomas sidewalks, along with the entrance way. Experience handling a pressure washer is helpful but not necessary.



A corner of our beautifully maintained grounds in spring bloom.

Creation Care

St. Thomas is committed to Creation Care with our recycling program. But recycling includes upcycling, as this effort by St. Vincent de Paul attests.

Your appliance donations do more than just stock a thrift store.

Do you have an old appliance or two that you want out of the house? Call St. Vinnie's for free appliance removal from your home. Appliance repair, resale and recycling have helped fund St. Vincent de Paul's local social-service programs since 1955. Items that need simple repairs are refurbished, painted and sold (typically with a 90-day warranty) in St. Vinnie's retail-thrift stores. What can't be repaired is deconstructed and recycled in an environmentally responsible manner. Your appliance donation creates resale and recycling revenue to fund SVdP's efforts in human services, job creation, affordable housing and environmental stewardship. To request free home pickup of appliances, along with furniture, clothing, books and more, please call 541-345-0595 or visit svdp.us.



EfM—Come Join Us!!!

Are you looking for a meaningful, small group? Would you like to have the companionship of people who enjoy spiritual and theological conversations? Are you hungry for Biblical and church knowledge? Are you needing more information about your church and your own theology? EfM (Education for Ministry) can provide all that and more. Developed and managed by Sewanee, the University of the South, it is a 4-year process of learning about the history of the Bible, the history of the Christian church, and the Anglican/Episcopal church. The course looks at the Bible from many perspectives, and keeps the group engaged in lively, deep discussions. It is a college course designed for adult learners. The group meets once a week (time determined by the group), with an offering of a zoom/hybrid possibility when necessary. We draw people from several Episcopal and Lutheran churches, which makes the experience richer.

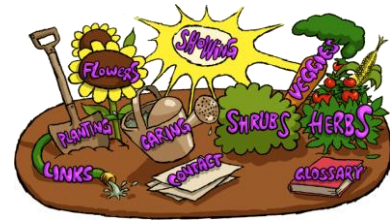
The registration for the coming Fall has already begun. If you are interested, please contact Rev. Mike Watkins (see contact info below) or go to the EfM website efm.sewanee.edu for more information.

There will be two groups, starting in September, but spaces are limited, so let us know if you are interested at all. We will be having a meeting for interested people on July 9 at 4:00 pm. You will have a chance to meet current group members and mentors, ask questions, review the materials, and get someone to guide you through the sign-up process. We are anxious to meet you.

If July 9 doesn't work well for you, don't worry, mentors will be available for any questions and help with the sign up.

Deacon Mike Watkins. (St. Thomas)
918-336-1430 mike.watkins@sbcglobal.net

GrassRoots Garden



The garden is humming with activity this time of year. Take a moment to stroll the garden to see all the developing produce.

Summer Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 9:00am to 4:00pm. GrassRoots Garden is located at 1465 Coburg Rd., across from Safeway, behind St. Thomas Episcopal Church. For more information, contact Merry Bradley 458-221-0652, merrybradley@yahoo.com.



July Birthdays

3	Lucy Barnett
4	Florence Litzenberger
6	JB Hoover
22	Tom Whitehead
24	Merle Spencer
25	Lucy Fisher

Happy Anniversary!

July Anniversaries

9	Ann and Lee Gaillard
11	Gary and Cindy Jensen
18	Burt and Sally Schwarz
25	JB and Adeline Hoover Maggie Meneghin and Cole Jones

Reflections



This is the time of year when we are immersed in tending our gardens, whether they be a collection of potted plants on the patio or a fenced enclosure of raised beds. Tending the plants – pruning, weeding, watering and gathering the fruits and flora of our efforts – provides much time for thoughtful reflection. As Robin Wall Kimmerer states in her book Braiding Sweetgrass, “...we have to put our hands in the earth to make ourselves whole again.” Working in my garden has allowed considerable time for contemplating the messages so beautifully stated in Kimmerer’s book, which reads like a prayer to Mother Earth.

Reading the references to the forced resettlement of indigenous peoples and the overuse and abuse of our natural resources can be disheartening, but Kimmerer’s message is thoughtfully educational and hopeful. By establishing a relationship with our natural world, we can restore our environment. We may grieve for what has been lost or destroyed, but as Kimmerer says, “...if grief can be a doorway to love, then let us all weep for the world we are breaking apart so we can love it back to wholeness again.”

So how to begin? Kimmerer provides numerous accounts and examples of how we can restore our natural world. It begins with a *relationship* that recognizes *reciprocity*. The earth offers so much in the way of food, water, medicinal plants and nutrients, the very air we breathe. Recognize that these are gifts for which we must show *gratitude* with our thoughtful care and *respect*, never taking the first or the last and never more than we need, and always being *mindful* of the interplay of all in the natural world. Then determine what is required

to *restore* what has been depleted or lost. In recognizing all the gifts that nature offers, humans must recognize their own gift, the gift of language. It is our gift to educate, to tell the stories, to engage in the ceremonies honoring the gifts we have received.

These italicized words emphasize the practices of indigenous peoples and was their way for thousands of years. Kimmerer recounts the significance of sweetgrass noting its essential component in the beautiful and utilitarian baskets made by Indigenous peoples. But taking the grass also meant honoring and showing gratitude for the giver. Braiding the blades of sweetgrass for the ceremonial honoring of Mother Earth was like lovingly braiding their Mother’s hair. The *three sisters* – corn, beans and squash – were the staples of the indigenous diet and seeds were judiciously collected and stored for the next year’s crop. The seeds were planted in harmony allowing the corn stalks to support the bean tendrils and the spreading squash vines to protect the corn and beans. It is just one example of harmony and reciprocity that Kimmerer shares in her poetic treatise to the natural world.

So, I dig in the dirt – weeding, pruning and gathering – and contemplate the lessons of Braiding Sweetgrass. One’s commitment to healing our planet does not have to be on a grand scale to make a positive difference, but by applying some basic practices can make a profound difference. We are doing just that in our St. Thomas faith community.

Committee reports and articles for the Beacon are welcome. Please submit to Cindy Jensen at LAJotKDK@aol.com by the 25th of the month.