



The Beacon

St. Thomas Episcopal Church



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

February 2025

Volume 26 Issue 2

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- Cindy Jensen,
Sr. Warden
- Joe Tulacz, Jr. Warden
- Lucy Barnett
- Susan Christensen
- Chris King
- Nancy Osborne
- Mark Pezzoni
- Mike Richardson
- Holly Spruance

Rector – Rev. Ann Gaillard

Deacon – Mike Watkins

Parish Administrator –
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From the Rector's desk ~

As I write this, it is still January. Just a few days ago was the feast day of the Rev. Dr. Florence Li Tim-Oi, the first woman in the Anglican Communion to be ordained to the priesthood.



When I was in my final year of seminary, my class decided, as part of our class gift, to give to the seminary chapel an icon of Mtr. Li Tim-Oi. The statues, icons, and figures in the chapel's stained glass windows were exclusively male, so the class decided it was time to begin to alter the gender balance a bit. We therefore commissioned a gifted icon writer, Sr. Ellen Francis Poisson of the Anglican Order of St. Helena, to create the icon for us. We were in good company: Sr. Ellen Francis had written an icon of Florence Li Tim-Oi for the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Mtr. Li Tim-Oi's ordination.

Already having been appointed as a deacon to serve in the colony of Macau, Florence Li Tim-Oi was ordained priest on January 25th, 1944, in the Anglican Diocese of Hong Kong and South China in the Free China village of Shui Hing during the Sino-Japanese War. Her ordination was conducted by Bishop Ronald Hall so that Anglican Christians in Macau could receive the sacrament of Holy Communion properly authorized.

Since it was to be nearly thirty years before any Anglican church regularized the priestly ordination of women (the Episcopal Church in the U.S. finally gave the go-ahead in 1976), Mtr. Li Tim-Oi's ordination was controversial, and she resigned her license (though not her priestly orders) after the end of the war. Eventually, she was officially recognized as a priest in the Diocese of Hong Kong in 1971.

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Mtr. Li Tim-Oi was appointed as an assistant priest in Toronto in 1983, where she spent the remainder of her life. In the Episcopal Church, her feast day is January 24, the eve of the anniversary of her ordination.

I keep a photograph of her icon on a shelf in my office to remind me that if it weren't for women like Florence Li Tim-Oi, I as a woman would not be a priest in Christ's Church. I am humbled by that thought and grateful to her and all the other women who served as pioneers for women seeking Holy Orders.

Peace and many blessings,

Ann +

Parish Annual Meeting

Following the service on January 26, a lively gathering was enjoyed as St. Thomas parishioners participated in the Annual Meeting to review the success and challenges of 2024

and to consider the budget proposed for 2025. There were many highlights that will be shared throughout this Beacon edition. Those who were not able to be in attendance are encouraged to pick up a copy of the Annual Parish Report. Take some time to read the informative reports from Rev. Ann, the Senior Warden, the various Committee Chairmen, and our Companions in Ministries – the GrassRoots Garden, the Center for Community Counseling, Head Start, and All Ears. The Annual Parish Report also includes the comprehensive parish budget for 2025, prepared by our dedicated parish treasurer Anne VanDerveer.

The Annual Meeting is always a celebratory event as the faith inspired efforts of our committees are recognized and applauded. It is also an essential occasion as retiring Vestry members are recognized and new members are introduced. Outgoing Vestry members – Linda Whitehead and Adele Rennie – were gratefully acknowledged. The Vestry members appointed to three-year terms are Susan Christensen and Mark Pezzoni. Cindy Jensen was appointed to

an additional one-year term. Following the requisite motion, the Vestry for 2025 was installed.



Commissioning of the Vestry

Vestry from left to right: Chris King, Mark Pezzoni, Lucy Barnett, Holly Spruance, Nancy Osborne, Susan Christensen, Joe Tulacz (Jr. Warden), Mike Richardson, Cindy Jensen (Sr. Warden)

Rev. Ann leading the commissioning.

Rev. Ann closed the meeting with a heart-felt message of appreciation and love for our St. Thomas faith community. She stressed that her message was not a “goodbye” as she will be our very active rector until August, but it was a message of encouragement to remain positive and hopeful for the new opportunities for St. Thomas. Ann emphasized that while we



are smaller than we once were, we are mighty in spirit and committed to the operations of the parish. We were reminded of the second lesson for January 26 from I Corinthians 12:12 shared in the service.

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Endowment Fund

As noted in the January 2025 Beacon, Duncan Murray has retired as the Endowment Board Chairman after six and a half years of dedicated service.

One of the highlights of the Annual Meeting was the opportunity to recognize Duncan and present him with a formal Recognition of Gratitude from the Vestry on behalf of the Endowment Board and parish of St. Thomas.



The *Resolution of Gratitude* acknowledges Duncan for his faithful years of service to the St. Thomas Endowment Board with the following message: “During his six and a half years as chairman, Duncan provided careful and detailed oversight to monitor investments and the Endowment bank account. With grace, thoughtful leadership, financial acumen, and transparency, Duncan guided the Endowment Board in their decisions for the benefit of our St. Thomas parish. *The work that Duncan has provided gives honor and glory to God and will be of enduring benefit to our faith community.*”

Following the presentation, Paul Barnett was introduced as the new chairman of the Endowment Board. Paul has graciously accepted this position and brings to the Endowment Board his considerable business experience. Paul will surely carry forward the leadership qualities of founding Endowment Board chairman Charlie Warren and long-time chairman Duncan Murray.

Apostle’s Shield



Simon the Zealot

Simon had the two words “the Zealot” added to his name in order to distinguish him from Simon Peter and to show that he was a member of an organization called “Zealots.” The Zealots were Jewish patriots who were opposed to the Romans ruling their land and gave the Romans trouble at every turn.

Simon may have been about forty years old when he became a disciple. At first he may have thought that Jesus would lead an uprising to get rid of the Romans. It turned out that Jesus changed *him*. Simon had been a man of violence, but he became a man of peace.

Jesus knew that the Zealots and Publicans (tax collectors) were bitter enemies. One group worked against the Romans, the other for them. Even so, Jesus chose a disciple from each group—Simon and Matthew. They became friends in Jesus’ work.

Simon was the co-worker of Jude, or Thaddeus. They traveled together in Mesopotamia where both were martyred.

Simon’s symbol is a fish lying on a book. This is to show that he was a fisher of people by the power of the word of God.

Grace Notes



The St. Thomas Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Lectors were recognized during the Annual Meeting, but the highlight of that general recognition was the loving focus on Barbara Root. For many years Barbara served as the trainer, scheduler, and grace inspired guide to the corps of LEMS and Lectors. Every LEM/Lector serving at St. Thomas was either directly mentored by Barbara or has been thoughtfully trained by those serving with the benefit of Barbara's direct influence. An Acknowledgement of Gratitude was presented to Barbara along with a loving and appreciative standing ovation.

Recognition of Gratitude certificate presented to Barbara Root for her years of services as trainer of LEMS/Lectors



The certificate bears the following inscription:
The Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, and Clergy of St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Eugene commend Barbara Root for her outstanding leadership in training St. Thomas' lay ministers. During her time guiding the LEM/lector program, Barbara passed on a wealth of knowledge not only about *what* needed to be done at each moment but also *why* things were done in a particular way, underscoring the importance of the ministry rather than just as another aspect of a ritual. She was the epitome of what it means to be a quiet leader: subtle, caring, and inspiring confidence. Barbara has been an amazing teacher and a loving presence at St. Thomas. "Speak slowly and clearly" is her motto! ***The training that Barbara has provided gives honor and glory to God and will be of enduring benefit to our faith community.***

Outreach

The Outreach efforts from St. Thomas in 2024 were impressive due to the faith inspired actions of parishioners, direct contributions to Outreach projects, and the initial budget allocation.

A review of the Annual Meeting Report will provide the breakdown of Outreach allocations. Many of the Outreach distributions and activities have become giving traditions at St. Thomas. These include:

One Hope School supply project in August
One Hope Thanksgiving boxes in November
H.U.G.S. in December
Head Start gift bags for the children in December
Homestarters for Church of the Resurrection
St. John the Divine Food Pantry
St John the Divine housing assistance program
Episcopal Relief and Development
Heifer International

In addition St. Thomas Outreach generated enough funds to purchase a tiny home for the One Hope Everyone Village.

These are beams of light radiating throughout the community from the *beacon* that is St. Thomas.

Ladies Book Group



The St. Thomas Ladies Book Group has a new list of book selections for 2025 now posted on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. It is an eclectic mix of good reads that are sure to inspire engaging and thoughtful conversation. If not a member but wishing to take advantage of some excellent reading selections, take a look at the list and enhance your own reading opportunities this year.

The book group will meet on Thursday, February 27 at 1:30 pm in the Parish Library to consider and review their latest reading selection, Big Girl, Small Town by Michelle Gallen.



GrassRoots Garden

How do you stave off the winter doldrums? With an applesauce workshop of course!

On Friday January 17 Jamie Johnson, GrassRoots Garden Kitchen Coordinator, and Co-Host Jamie Levitan led an applesauce canning workshop in the St. Thomas Episcopal Church kitchen.

Friends, both new and old, turned out for a fun afternoon of learning how to process and water bath can fall picked apples. The special surprise was a yummy vegan apple cake demonstration that ended with an empty cake pan and lots of full tummies!



Attendees were greeted with the smell of warm applesauce as they entered the Church and signed in. After all attendees arrived and shed their winter coats, Jamie J. and Jamie L. took turns talking about proper canning methods while monitoring the attendees as they hands-on learned the steps to fill, lid, and water bath can the applesauce. Once the canners were filled and set to process, Jamie L. took over and taught the attendees how to make a delicious apple cake with caramel topping. And boy was it yummy!

With heads full of new knowledge and tummies full of cake, all were offered printed canning instructions, recipes, and apples from GrassRoots Garden to take so they could try these new skills at home.

Find upcoming GrassRoots Garden workshops on the Mobil website. The next canning workshop will

be held on February 28 at St. Thomas Episcopal Church from 12pm-3pm. Please email jjohnson@foodforlanecounty.org for more information or a link to sign up to attend!

Winter Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 9:00am – 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.

St. Thomas History

Our faith community is anticipating a new dynamic as we look to the future. With the retirement of Rev. Ann at the end of August 2025, we know we can expect changes. Change when accompanied by our devotion to this house of worship, our faithful devotion to Jesus Christ, our love for one another, and the community outreach radiating from our campus can be a blessing and a way forward.

The strength of character of St. Thomas has been developed through our sixty-five plus years of thriving as a faith community. Our parish history is the result of countless stories of joys and challenges, determination and resilience. So, let's share those stories. This will be a new feature for the *Beacon*. The editor invites you to share your stories of your St. Thomas experiences and memories. Whether you have only been among us for a year or two, twenty years or longer, you have a story to tell. This is how history is recorded – one story at a time, each with its own perspective.

It is not necessary to write the story. The editor is happy to do that, if you just provide the talking points. It will be a special gift to the parish to record these memories. Each of you is a bright beam emanating from our St. Thomas *beacon*.

Send articles, information, or photos to the editor by the 25th of the month for inclusion in the *Beacon*.



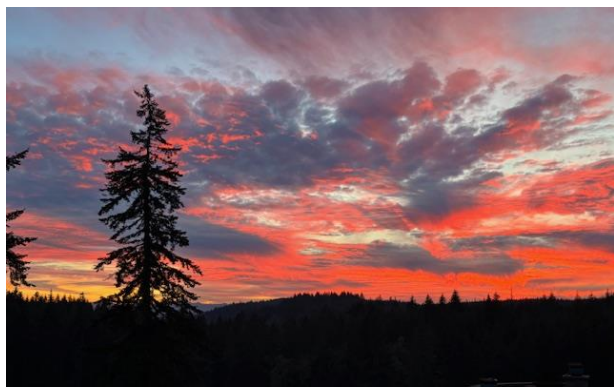
February Birthdays

8 Eli Fisher
27 Sally Schwarz

February Anniversaries

2 Tom and Linda Whitehead
15 Lucy and Paul Barnett

Reflections



On a particularly busy day topped off with care of an active nine-year-old granddaughter, I returned home to our forest hilltop and this sunset view – a breathtaking and godly exclamation point to the day. Sunsets truly do take my breath away. They inspire my reflections and depending on the circumstances, they have the power to enhance my joys, soothe my anxious soul, or fuel my hopes for a better tomorrow. Sunsets are nature’s beautiful sigh at the end of the day and the promise of a coming dawn.

In these turbulent and uncertain times, nature and all its facets can be restorative, if we just embrace the moments to look, wonder and revel in what God

lays before us. Take in the vibrant colors of a sunset; look up at the brilliance of stars in a clear dark sky; consider the expanse of a lush forest; gaze in awe at the majesty of a mountain vista. Then focus on a frosted blade of grass; take notice of a robin pulling a worm from the lawn; watch a squirrel scamper up a tree trunk to grasp a maple seed; notice the winter-bare tree with its single leaf fluttering in a cold breeze. Moments of appreciation of God’s miraculous creation have the power to recharge the spirit, warm the heart, fuel our faith, and encourage hope, if we embrace the moments.

Such moments inspire reflections that can direct our best intentions. As Christians we aspire to do as Christ would have us do. That is “to do good” within our sphere of influence – our family, our school, our neighborhood, our place of business, service organization, our faith community. That is wherever we can make a positive impact. We cannot fix the ills of the world, but we can thoughtfully attend to our “spheres of influence.” This blessing Rev. Ann often recites at the close of a service resonates with me.

Life is short, and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel with us.

So be swift to love. Make haste to be kind.

And as we go may the blessing, the love, the joy, and the peace of the Holy One who is in the midst of us be among you and remain with you always.



***Valentine’s Day is
Friday, February 14***