



# *The Beacon*

## *St. Thomas Episcopal Church*



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

July 2025

Volume 26 Issue 6

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- Chris King
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### *From the Rector's Desk ~*

I have always been cautious about referring to a particular church as a “family,” simply because the term “family” may feel too intimate for some parishioners.

However, during the past six-seven weeks you parishioners have truly been a family to Lee and to me. From the moment Lee was diagnosed, through his death, and still now, you have been loving and caring, offering help and giving help when I needed it, and supporting Lee and me with prayers and compassion. That's what a family does, and you have been and are continuing to do that. I know Lee felt it until his very end, and I could not be more grateful.

In a different way, I'm also grateful that Lee died at the end of May. His favorite season was spring, and Eugene had a beautiful spring this year. There wasn't a day when he was walking around the block, driving to do errands, or working in the yard (he was mowing the lawn until two weeks before he was diagnosed!) that he didn't marvel at the blossoms on the rhododendrons, forsythia, dogwoods, and flowering plum and cherry and pear trees. He was the first person to report to me when the crocuses and daffodils and tulips came up, and when the leaves on the trees first became a pale green mist and then unfurled in welcome of the new season. I know theologically that spring and resurrection are not the same thing: spring is a time of *rebirth*, and death and resurrection are a time of *new birth*. But I don't think that God will quibble about semantics in this case. Like spring, Lee is experiencing both rebirth and new birth in God.

I know that over the years I have shared with you a number of Lee's favorite poems. Here's one more. He first recited it to me on the evening before our wedding, forty years ago:

*Aedh Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven*

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,  
Enwrought with golden and silver light,  
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths  
Of night and light and the half light,  
I would spread the cloths under your feet:  
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;  
I have spread my dreams under your feet;  
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

*W.B. Yeats*

Peace and many blessings,

## Endowment News

On Sunday, June 22 the retired Endowment Board Chairman, Duncan Murray, was presented with a certificate of commendation for his tireless service to this valued parish entity. The framed certificate

was presented by the Senior Warden in behalf of the Vestry and our faith community. The certificate reads as follows:



*St. Thomas Episcopal Church Resolution  
This document confirms the commendation by the  
St. Thomas Vestry of  
Duncan Murray*

*for his six years of dedicated service as the Chairman of the  
St. Thomas Endowment Board.*

*Throughout his tenure Duncan provided careful oversight  
of the endowment investment portfolio and monitored the  
bank account; provided detailed and consistent reporting of  
funds; led regular and efficient board meetings; and guided  
the Endowment Board*

*in its decision-making to encourage fund growth. Duncan's  
tireless commitment to the Endowment Board has  
contributed to the financial stability of the parish.*



## St. Thomas Book Group



Summer is always a great time to read. Enjoying a good book on the deck or patio or under the shade of a tree in the park – wherever one finds a moment of peace – is a pleasant way to rest, learn and reflect in the summer sun. The St. Thomas Ladies Book Group has another good read selected for July – Apples Never Fall by Liane Moriarty. These avid readers will gather in the parish library on Thursday, July 24 at 1:30 pm to share their thoughts on the book and enjoy some lively conversation. Interested readers are always welcome.

## Outreach

The outreach focus for July is peanut butter! Start shopping now so you will be ready to contribute to this special collection of peanut butter on Sunday, July 13. Of course, peanut butter contributions



can be delivered to church ahead of the designated collection date. Place contributions in the labeled bin under the Narthex table. Peanut butter contributions will benefit those in our community who are dealing with food insecurity. It is an excellent source of protein and convenient to use. So be sure to add peanut butter to your early July grocery list.





## Creation Care



Due to our busy facility use schedule, the Creation Care Team has delayed the collection of items for electronic recycling to mid-July. During the week of July 7, any electronics for recycling – audio equipment, computers, copiers, phones, televisions – can be placed on the counter in the Parish Hall. On Tuesday, July 15 Gary and Cindy Jensen will load up electronic recycling contributions and bring them to Next Step. Clean out your closets and attics of those old and outdated electronics and help fill another pickup load for this recycling opportunity

## Young Musicians



On their last Sunday before their summer break the St. Thomas Choir was joined by Shield and Song, the Marist High School vocal group formerly known as the Spartones. This talented group of young vocalists is led by our own Keri Davis, who has worked to grow this choir from its fledgling beginnings with just four members to its current number of twelve members. With each new class at Marist, the choir promises to grow under Keri's direction. The group meets twice a week before school, and during the 2024-25 school year they presented six performances. The plan is for Shield and Song to join our St. Thomas choir every last "Choir Sunday" before the summer break.

## Grace Notes



This may seem like an anxious time for St. Thomas, and yet everywhere one looks we see loving and determined efforts to care for our campus and sustain our ministries. We are a community of faith-filled people who don't just love this church but cherish each other. Yes, it has been a challenging year as we prepare for the retirement of our dear Rev. Ann, strive to maintain a balanced budget while attending to necessary maintenance issues, and consider the way forward with a new dynamic for St. Thomas. Added to all these concerns, we have been impacted by the health issues facing members of our parish, and we have dealt with the painful losses of much loved members of our congregation. It has been a lot to bear, but with each challenge, each concern, each loss we have rallied with the divine grace that truly blesses this community of faithful souls.

Led by members of the Vestry and Rev. Ann, we are embracing the opportunity to get to know members of neighboring Episcopal parishes – St. John the Divine and St. Matthew's – as we all strive to navigate a way forward. St. Thomas is a welcoming community, and together we will enjoy visiting with members of St. John's and St. Matthew's as they visit us for future services. The first such opportunity is Sunday, June 29. In turn, members of St. Thomas will have the opportunity to visit these parishes for services.

For now, let us rejoice in the divine grace that sustains us. It is not just a *grace note* or even a *stanza of grace*. It is a *symphony of grace*. Thanks be to God. Alleluia!



With thanks to Larry Wilson for this photo of St. Thomas in bloom – a welcoming faith community.

## Twin Baptisms

The Sunday, June 8 service was an especially joyful occasion for St. Thomas. Maggie Meneghin and Cole Jones presented their twin boys, VO and William, for baptism. The celebration of baptism is always a special event, but to witness the baptism of our St. Thomas twins was indeed a service to celebrate. Not only were VO and William dressed for the occasion in their very dapper outfits, but they were especially cooperative. No doubt the sighs of delight could be heard all the way out to the parking lot when VO and William were blessed, followed by joyful applause as they were presented as Christ's own.



## GrassRoots Garden

The Herbies and GRG staff met in January 2025 to assess what worked in 2024, what could be improved, and what we want to do in 2025. Overall, Herbies were satisfied with the partnership and support provided by GRG. Some improvements Herbies suggested were irrigation system adjustments for more effective watering and pruning the Bay tree to add space for new herbs. GRG recommended soil rejuvenation of some of the beds. Herbies wanted to add some international herbs in response to suggestions from Herb Walk attendee surveys. They recommended rejuvenating the North (Oregano) bed drier area for adding some Middle Eastern and Central American herbs and to include increasing the size of the moist Basil bed to add Basil varieties and Lemongrass used in Asian and Central American cuisine when rejuvenating that bed.

GRG agreed to install an improved irrigation system and prune the Bay tree. GRG also recruited experienced garden participants to expand and renovate the Basil bed including the removal of the Oregano from its section of the North bed, and saved twenty of the best Oregano plants prior to refreshing the soil. Subsequently the Herbies replanted the saved Oregano *Origanum vulgare* a European oregano, and added new plants, Zatar *Origanum syriacum* a middle Eastern herb, Sweet Marjoram *Origanum majorana* a native of the Mediterranean region and western Asia used in Mediterranean and European cuisines and Mexican Oregano *Lippia graveolens* native to the southwestern United States and Central America.

During the period of April through June 2025 the new directional signs provided by the Lane County OSU Extension office helped guide 50 visitors (including one baby) to the Herb Garden location for the Herb Walk. The walk includes a brief overview of steps for starting an herb garden, a look at each herb in the garden with a short explanation of culinary uses and conditions for optimal growth and concludes with a conversation on Edible Flowers and how to grow and use them.

All the plants are doing well in the rejuvenated bed and the Herbies greatly appreciate GRG's

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cooperation and support of their goals to upgrade the Herb Bed space so they can expand the types of herbs displayed in the garden and share with visitors. The garden renovations and improved irrigation system provide increased flexibility for watering based on plant needs and demonstrate types of herbs that can thrive in dry, moderate or moist soils which helps Herbies better inform our visitors of what they can do with varying soil conditions in their gardens. More plant labels and educational information signs provided by Lane County Master Gardener Association (LCMGA) are being created by the Herbies and Lane County OSU Extension staff to help visitors ID the herbs during the talk and will be available for visitors, garden participants and staff to view whenever the garden is open. Herbies and GRG team also added some fun additions to the walks. Visitors can now enjoy tea made by the GrassRoots Kitchen with flowered ice cubes made by Herbie Kimbre and participate in plant and herb giveaways depending on availability. In conclusion, based on the positive survey responses, our visitors continue to be interested in and satisfied with the Herb Walk topics and their survey responses will continue to provide useful suggestions to help Herbies and GRG further enrich the walk experience.



Some herb education after the herb walk.

**Summer Hours:** T, W, Th, Sat, 9am-4pm.  
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@foodforlanecounty.org](mailto:merrybradley@foodforlanecounty.org).



Participants enjoying the herb walk

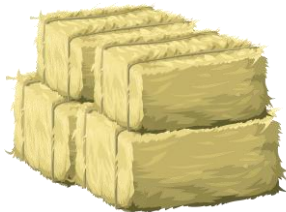


## Reflections



In June we anxiously await the arrival of the hay man. The hope is that the hay can be cut before July 4<sup>th</sup>, baled, and hauled away soon after. Of course, that timeline is all up to Mother Nature. The equipment cannot be running in the field when it is too hot because of fire restrictions. Weather must be monitored to avoid any pending rain showers that will dampen the mown hay, thus impacting the timing of cutting, raking, baling and hauling away . It is a process, but so satisfying as this little field will sustain the stable of rescue horses managed by our neighbor.

So, while the tractor traverses the field, I work in my garden and listen to the hum of the engine that provides a steady rhythm to my reflections. We count on this annual event as it is essential to the safety of our forest hilltop. Important as it is to get our hay cut, it is a process that only occurs for one week annually.



As people of faith we know the much greater and more impactful presence of an almighty and gracious God whose presence is not confined to a week but is constant. Our hay man is greeted with great appreciation for his annual visit, and we delight in the steady hum of the tractor as the field is mowed. God's visit to the faithful is not a singular event, but provides daily attention to us with a steady rhythm that nourishes the soul. God's grace is fulfilling and enduring.

Growing up in a large city, I never imagined that one day I would be so concerned about getting our field of hay cut and baled. But in my reflections I am filled with gratitude for my parents who took us to church weekly and instilled in my siblings and me the value of faith and encouraged a relationship with God. And so I watch the tractor circle the field and rejoice.



### July Birthdays

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



### July Anniversaries

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

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.