



The Beacon

St. Thomas Episcopal Church



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

October 2024

Volume 25 Issue 9

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Sr. Warden
- Joe Tulacz, Jr. Warden
- Lucy Barnett
- Chris King
- Nancy Osborne
- Adele Rennie
- Mike Richardson
- Holly Spruance
- Linda Whitehead

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Watkins

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From the Rector's Desk

October is St. Thomas' season for Stewardship, otherwise known as pledging for Annual Giving. Soon you will be receiving letters from our Stewardship Co-chairs, Tricia Crisafulli and Joe Tulacz, and our Senior Warden, Cindy Jensen. Later in October you will receive Pledge Certificates for 2025, which will be blessed at the altar at the In-Gathering of Pledges on All Saints' Sunday, November 3rd.

As we move into this season of giving to the church, I offer to you this Stewardship Prayer:

Most loving God,
whose will it is for us to give thanks for all things,
to fear nothing but the loss of you,
and to rest in the blessed assurance of your eternal care:
we thank you for the shower of earthly benefits
which fall to us each day of this life.

Empower us to be a people ever grateful for these gifts.
Strengthen us that we might let go of the earthly anxieties
that cloud our values and bind our hearts,
and fill us with the passion to do your will.

Enable us, O God, in this life
to carefully measure and generously apply
all our varied treasures to do your work in the world,
and at our end, gather us into your heavenly kingdom
as good and faithful servants.

This we ask in the name of the one who for our sake became poor
and gave his very life, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Peace and many blessings,

Ann +

Endowment News

Creating a Lasting Personal Legacy

As we approach the end of this year many of us will review our estate plans. That's because we want to make sure that they reflect our current wishes.



This is a good time to look back on moments important to us in our earthly lives and bequeath to those who provided them a portion of our earthly treasures. I hope your list includes **St. Thomas Episcopal Church.**

Leaving a bequest to our church through our Endowment Fund establishes your lasting personal legacy, founded on your Christian principles, while it helps create new programs like **“Young Musicians at St. Thomas,” which has brought over a dozen talented musicians to our worship services.**

Best of all, your gift will provide, in your name, a loving, lasting impact on your church.

Would you like to know more? Rev. Ann or I would love to speak with you.

Duncan Murray, Chair



During the September 22 service Endowment Legacy Society certificates were presented to Sandra and Duncan Murray, Cindy Jensen, Barbara Hemphill and Rev. Ann Gaillard. Not in attendance to receive certificates were Beverly Jackson, Holly and John Spruance and Karen Warren, wife of Charles Warren who worked to establish the Endowment Fund.

Altar Guild

Opportunities for Beautiful Worship



Do you enjoy beautiful flowers? Do you enjoy *shopping* for beautiful flowers?

We, the Altar Guild, are looking for someone(s) to shop for the flowers we use to grace the church at seasonal times of the year: poinsettias for Christmas; palms for Palm Sunday; and lilies, tulips, and daffodils for Easter. It's a wonderful way to be a seasonal part of Altar Guild.

Another periodic way to help beautify our worship is the occasional polishing of brass and silver—e.g., the brass candlesticks and candelabras, and the silver patens and chalices.

And of course, we are always looking for people to help set up and clean up for Sunday worship. It's a remarkable way to participate in the beauty of our worship. It's also a profoundly spiritual activity that can bring a person closer to God. Right now, we have three teams of two, who rotate every third week, which is quite a lot. If we could have just one more team of two, the responsibility would be only every fourth week.

If you are interested in helping with any of these contributions to enhance the beauty of our worship, please speak to Altar Guild Directress Linda Whitehead, or to Rev. Ann.



Outreach

The Outreach Committee focus for the month of September was the orchestration of a fundraising lunch to support our St. Thomas commitment to funding a cottage for the *Cottages of Hope* community

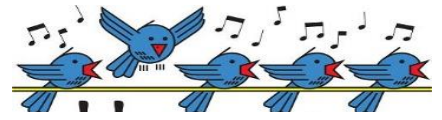


to be located on W. 11th in Eugene. This effort is sponsored by Project Hope to provide transitional housing for those who are homeless and working towards transitioning into affordable housing. The goal was to raise \$500 from luncheon donations, an amount that would be added to the \$500 already committed to this effort by the Outreach Committee. The luncheon was a resounding success in attendance and St. Thomas spirit, and most importantly in the generous contributions of our St. Thomas family members. Tricia Crisafulli, who spearheaded the effort, reported that \$1400 was received in donations at the luncheon on September 15 with more donations coming in. If you have not had the opportunity to contribute to this effort and would like to do so, perhaps the image of this sturdy tiny home will inspire you.



Construction of these shelters are being made in high school shops throughout the local school districts. This is another benefit of the project as practical skills education for ready-to-work opportunities for high school graduates are reintroduced in area schools.

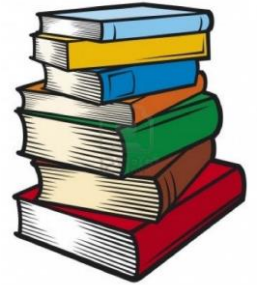
Grace Notes



Abundant grace and delicious luncheon fare was provided by the St. Thomas Outreach angels, who just happen to be good cooks and bakers, and who hosted the benefit luncheon for Cottages of Hope on September 15. It was such a happy event that the goal is to repeat this event annually. Much appreciation goes to Tricia Crisafulli, Sue Colvin, Judy Wilson, Linda Whitehead, Lucy Barnett and Nancy Osborne for their generous grace and good food. They even provided “to go” boxes for those who could not stay for the lunch but wanted the benefit of a Sunday meal, for a donation, of course.

St. Thomas Book Group

So many books and only so much time. That sentiment expresses the frustration of an avid reader, but the St. Thomas Ladies Book Group is making a good effort in filling what reading time they have with some good reads.



The October selection is Hello Beautiful by Ann Napolitano. These dedicated readers will gather in the Parish Hall library on Thursday, October 24 at 1:30 pm to do more than just review the book. They will share their reflections, book related experiences, and their usual spirited camaraderie. Enthusiastic readers are always welcome to join in these lively discussions. Or, just read along with the book list posted on the Parish Hall bulletin board.

October Celebrations



October 6 Katrina Jensen & Russ Duer

Young Musicians Program



Nadia Plumb performed during the September 22 service as a representative of the Young Musicians Program sponsored by the St. Thomas Endowment Fund. Nadia, an accomplished musician, is a senior at Springfield High School. She has played the flute since age 7 and has also learned to play the piano and guitar. Nadia has a special affinity for song writing. For the past two years she has won the SHS Talent Show for performing her original songs. Nadia is a soprano with the Springfield Choir, which recently placed 5th in the state. She is also a member of Kaleidoscope Jazz Choir, serves as section leader in both band and choir, and she is the drum major for marching band. After high school Nadia plans to pursue a degree in Audiology and a minor in Music Performance and Composition.

Apostle's Shield

Through the centuries in the Church our patron saint, St. Thomas, has been called "The Doubter." Not very complimentary, needless to say! He's known as The Doubter because he found it hard to believe that Jesus had been raised from the dead. He wasn't present when Jesus made his appearance on the evening of the



Resurrection in the locked room where the disciples were hiding. When the other disciples told him about seeing the resurrected Jesus, he made his now-famous statement: "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." A week later when Jesus appeared to the disciples again, Thomas was convinced. "My Lord and my God!" he declared. (*John 20:24-28*)

Thomas is believed to have preached in Parthia, in Persia, and in India and to have been buried at Edessa. They say that Thomas was a builder and helped to build a palace in India. The builder's square and the spear, the instrument of his death, are his emblem.

GrassRoots Garden



At this time of year, the garden staff and volunteers are especially busy with the peak of the harvest and the many tasks related to winterizing the garden. Our ever-reliable Parish Administrator provides this article about a very special aspect of the GrassRoots Garden.

GrassRoots Grub Galvanizes Gatherings

It is not hyperbole to say that the best place to have lunch in Eugene, if not in the whole state, is right in our backyard. If you have never enjoyed a Grassroots Garden vegan lunch, you are missing out on one of the great joys of life. Twice a week I join the shaded chow line underneath the grape arbor. Invariably I will have a fascinating conversation as we make our way to the serving table. Because the clientele is so diverse, conversations are never even close to being the same.

Where else in Eugene might you break bread together with a Tibetan, a young fellow with a

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developmental disability, a student taking a gap year, an intern excited about sustainable agriculture, an 82-year-old retired contractor, a person perfectly at ease wearing a variety of colorful male and female clothing, a local businessman, or a grassroots garden staff member having just returned from Japan? Once you get to the table laden with gorgeous vegan dishes made mostly from fruit and veggies recently picked within 100 yards of that table, you are greeted by a volunteer or staff who will serve you and tell you about the food. Since you get exactly what you ask for, and the food is so darn tasty, there is very little waste.

When you finish you will feel transformed by being so nourished, both in body and in soul. What is the cost of the best dining experience in Eugene, if not the state? It is freely given, just like God's grace. But if you are like the others who come to the garden table, I suspect you will feel delightfully motivated to pay it forward in a way you may never have imagined. Please feel free to join me anytime. I normally go on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:20 pm.

Garden Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday 9am – 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@foodforlanecounty.org.

Reflections



On my trips into town, I drive by Fernridge Reservoir, and always with an eye on the road, I

cannot help but notice the level of the water. Once a dense wetland and source of the Long Tom River, the area was dredged to create a lake that is part of the Corps of Engineers Willamette Valley flood management system of reservoirs. In spring the water in the lake begins to rise to its “recreation” level – the dock is gradually lifted off the lake bottom and by summer it is at capacity. Sail boats skim across this windswept surface; canoes and kayaks ply the waters fueled by determined rowers; jet boats carve wakes over calm waters. Summer on the lake – but the season is coming to an end as the waters gradually recede with the annual draw down to accommodate the spring rains.

Over the years the lake has become my seasonal monitor, from the dark and quiet winter landscape, to the vibrance of spring, the fast-paced summer recreation, and the brilliance of fall colors that frame the lake. Perhaps my favorite lake view occurs on my drives to church when the lake is especially calm – a mirror reflecting the trees bordering the shore and the clouds billowing above. The myriads of birds are a special delight from the white egrets that strut in the shallow waters fishing for their next meal, the osprey soaring overhead, the wood ducks roosting in the trees along the shore, and the blue jays and red winged black birds flitting from tree to tree. It is a birder's paradise!

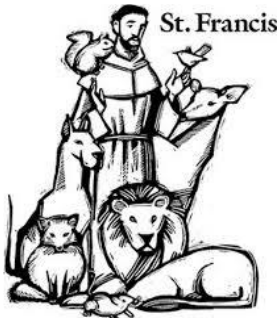
The muddy waters of Fernridge have earned it the nickname of Fern Ditch, but the water tested regularly is quite pure. It gets its murky color from the silty bottom and wetland ecosystem. My driving route takes me along the shore that is lush with camus in spring and willows throughout the summer and into fall. These were essential food staples for the native tribes that inhabited this valley. They understood how to thoughtfully harvest and use the bulbs, roots and fruits of the vegetation that grew naturally and provided them with sustenance, as well as clothing and implements.

So, I ponder all this as I make that shoreline drive, or canoe Coyote Creek that feeds into the reservoir, and walk the wooded trails. It is a marvel of a lush ecosystem – just one of countless such offerings of God's magnanimous creation. Living in the Willamette Valley affords us the opportunity to fully embrace God's creation. What a marvelous place to

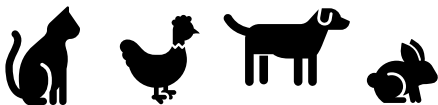
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live and be! And with this great blessing of place comes the responsibility of *creation care*. We at St. Thomas are actively tending God's creation with our recycling programs. As we continue those efforts, let us consider ways to thoughtfully and practically advance our creation care efforts. The goal is to live harmoniously with all God's creation.

Celebrate Creation with the Blessing of the Animals



*Bring your beloved critters
(leashed or caged, please) to
St. Thomas Church for a
blessing to commemorate the
Feast of St. Francis.*



*Cats, dogs, snakes, elephants,
parakeets, alligators, emus, lizards,
plush toys, and animals of all stripes
and colors are welcome at a special
service of blessing and prayers
especially for them.*

**Saturday, October 5
10:00 a.m.**

**St. Thomas Episcopal Church
1465 Coburg Road, Eugene
www.st-thomaseugene.net
541-343-5241**

by John Keats

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spare the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of spring? Ay, Where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

