



The Beacon

St. Thomas Episcopal Church



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

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- Lucy Barnett
- Susan Christensen
- Chris King
- Nancy Osborne
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From the Rector's Desk ~

As many of you know, I love the poetry of the late Mary Oliver, and one of my very favorite of her poems is one that I have shared with you before, "The Summer Day." I was thinking of it yesterday, not just because we're in the midst of summer, but also because of its message, which resonates acutely with me at this particular time in my life. So I offer it to you again.

The Summer Day by Mary Oliver

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean--
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down --
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
With your one wild and precious life?

Peace and many blessings,

Ann +



Senior Warden's Message

We are a faith community in transition. As Senior Warden I hear your concerns and feel your anxiety, but I also see your devotion to this parish in all the gracious actions, generous giving, caring concerns, and joyful spirit generated throughout our congregation. No doubt there are questions as to how we will move forward. I want to assure you that your Vestry, supported by the many designated committees that assist with the management of our campus, our wonderful parish administrator, JB, our devoted Deacon Mike, and our ever-reliable priest associate Frank are all engaged in leading our parish forward. We have been blessed with Rev. Ann as our rector for the past eight years, and she has been thoughtful in guiding our way forward.

With Ann's guidance, the Vestry has read Part Time is Plenty by G. Jeffrey MacDonald. This is an engaging read that shares examples of parishes that have navigated a positive way forward with part time clergy. The practical reality for St. Thomas is to call a priest to serve three quarter time. To manage a salary at the recommended level for clergy with five or more years of experience means that the focus for a rector would be to provide worship ministry, Christian education and pastoral care. All the other administrative management duties of the church would be conducted by lay leadership and the paid parish administrator.

Our parish treasurer, Anne VanDerveer, has prepared a three-year budget plan that would present a solid financial picture to candidates being considered for a three quarter time rector of St. Thomas. We have come to rely on our facility use income, but understand that income from that source is always variable. Currently \$100,000 of our budget comes from user fees, and we all need to be ambassadors for that source of funding. A facility brochure has been prepared by the Facilities Oversight committee for distribution. Copies are available on the narthex table, and if you know of potential non-profit users, please take a copy to share.

I invite you to communicate to me or any Vestry member your concerns, your interest in participating with our functioning ministries, and/or your involvement in the rector search process.

Together we will navigate our way forward with God's grace.

Faithfully,

Cindy Jensen, Sr. Warden

Endowment News

This has been a difficult year for investors with sharp increases and decreases happening almost daily. I have both good news and bad news for those who are wondering what is happening with the Endowment Fund.



First the bad which is that the fund has barely increased at all in the past two quarters. The good news is the same thing, that we have had no significant losses, or actually any losses at all this year. We still have money to spend, and with God's grace and guidance, we can help our church proceed successfully into the near future. We will continue to support our Young Musicians and appreciate Keri's continued leadership of that ministry. We also appreciate your gifts.

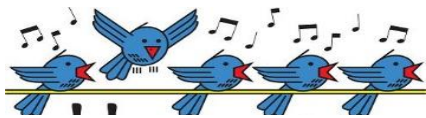
Paul Barnett, Chair

St. Thomas Book Group



The St. Thomas Ladies Book Group is reading The Christie Affair by Nina de Gramont to prepare for their monthly book group conversation and socializing on Thursday, August 28 at 1:30 pm in the Parish Library. If you are looking for a way to while away the hours in the shade of a tree, on the pool deck, or cruising down the river, no doubt this is a good reading suggestion. New readers are always welcome to drop in and engage in some fun book reviewing.

Grace Notes



As our St. Thomas faith community looks ahead to a period of time when we will be in search of a new rector, the need for supply clergy to serve our Sunday worship services demands immediate attention. Diane Landon graciously stepped up to the task of calling through the entire supply clergy list supplied by the Diocese. With her determined efforts Diane was able to fill supply priest assignments through the end of December, with JB finding willing supply clergy for two unassigned Sundays. This is a daunting task, especially in light of the fact that the availability of supply clergy is limited and there is great demand. As we worship together in the coming months, Diane's notes of grace will be faithfully celebrated and appreciated.

Creation Care

For those who control the wealth and resources of nations, that our provident God may give them loving and generous hearts; so that there may be bread for all the children of the earth, and protections and restoration of life endangered by climate change, we pray: Come, Holy Spirit.



As a community of faith we pray this prayer every Sunday in our Prayers of the People. We at St. Thomas are making a concerted effort to do our part with our various Creation Care projects – paper recycling practices; bottle collections for St. John the Divine's assistance programs; the annual electronics collection and delivery of recyclables to Next Step; replacement of all lighting to LEDs; and sunshades in the sanctuary for improved temperature management.

The Diocesan resolution for all churches to achieve a carbon neutral status by the year 2030 is a significant challenge that most churches, including St. Thomas, will be hard pressed to meet. However, we have made a good faith effort. As many are aware our gas stoves and ovens in the kitchen are twenty years old, unreliable and function poorly at best. Currently, the GrassRoots Garden is the only consistent user of these appliances, but other Parish

Hall and Kitchen users including St. Thomas, might be inclined to use these facilities if we had better functioning equipment.

The Facilities Oversight Committee, the Buildings and Grounds Committee and the Vestry have all reviewed and considered the proposal from the GrassRoots Garden to replace the current units with electric stove/oven units. This would require an electrical refit to accommodate the requested appliances. There is money in the maintenance fund specifically allocated for new stoves/ovens but not the refit. Having discussed funding for this project with all committees and individuals in the Parish, it was apparent that opinions were clearly divided in paying for the refit with St. Thomas maintenance funds. However, several individuals who take very seriously our prayerful commitment to creation care have given private funds to be allocated to the refit, and at this time 60% of the necessary funds to complete that portion of the project are available. The project to provide new electrical stove/oven units for the kitchen will not happen until all of the necessary funds for the refit have been made available. Meanwhile, the GrassRoots Garden will continue teaching their classes in food preparation from garden produce using the current appliances.

GrassRoots Garden

Infrastructure Upgrade—A new road into the Garden: Since the beginning of GrassRoots, we've had a woodchip road down into and through the Garden. Over the decades, it's served us well and added an attractive rustic feel to the Garden thanks to the generous periodic donations of woodchips from area arborists and tree trimming companies. In the last few years, likely due to the higher gas prices and increased labor costs, it has become more and more difficult to get the woodchips needed to maintain the drive. Over the last few years, our drive had gradually begun to decompose and became a mud road in the winter causing our vehicles to get stuck and making it difficult to walk or use wheelbarrows. Finally, the time had come to make a transition to a more permanent solution.

This past spring, an anonymous donor offered to provide needed funds to build a rock and gravel road down into the Garden. With expert design,

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planning and assistance from Rich Heil, our resident volunteer engineer, excavation and road construction by Manuel Serna and crew, our contractors, and technical assistance and efforts from Will DeMasse and Greg Dasso, our volunteer builders, in the middle of June we got our new road!

With this wider, more solid and stable access, FOOD for Lane County can now back their big refrigerator box trucks all the way down to the CoolBot on the east end of the north Orchard to pick up our weekly harvests. These regular pickups save garden staff time and effort bringing the harvest to FFLC at the end of long hot days in the back of our pickup truck. Every Tuesday, early in the day, shortly after harvest, our produce is picked up and delivered as fresh as possible for distribution and has higher quality due to the refrigerated transport.



In the process of putting in the road, we took the opportunity to also make some other significant infrastructure improvements. To work with a long-term problematic area during the winter months of standing water in a low spot around the stone water fountain, we added a French drain to pull the excess water down to the swale. Further, to create easier irrigation access, we installed water spigots at the ends of each greenhouse and simplified existing water lines. All these improvements were recorded on computer software for future reference and use. These infrastructure improvements take our garden operations to a higher more efficient level and open up other building opportunities and further advancements to come. We'll keep you posted.

Our deep and sincere thanks to everyone who helped make all of this possible!



Compost Tea Under the Microscope: August 16, 10am-11am, GrassRoots Garden, 1465 Coburg Rd. We are pleased to announce the GrassRoots Garden's *Compost Tea Team* 2nd event in a series of workshops. This next segment will present the fascinating world of Compost Tea under the microscope! Join us for an exciting view of a realm we cannot necessarily see, yet is certainly there with real-time views of the microbiology alive and full of life. We will also have compost tea available to take home for your plants, so feel free to bring up to a gallon container. Led by Michael Alms of Growing Solutions and Rodney Bloom of Turning Earth. Participation is limited to 20 people, so register today: <https://mobilize.us/s/2zuVNV> or at the link below.

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.

Church Gatherings

For several months now representatives from the five Eugene/Springfield churches have been meeting with Chris Craun, Canon to the Ordinary, in an effort to become better acquainted with our parishes, our shared concerns, as well as our specific circumstances. Three of the churches are in transition – St. Thomas, St. Matthew's and St. John

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the Divine. We have enjoyed lively discussions as we look ahead to search for new rectors, sustaining and growing church membership, and discovering ways we can encourage each parish.



On June 29 we enjoyed a full house at St. Thomas as members of St. Matthew's and St. John's joined us at St. Thomas for worship and coffee and conversation with Chris Craun. We will have the opportunity to further our engagement with these parishes on August 31. On that Sunday our St. Thomas worship service will be held at St. John the Divine, located at 2537 Game Farm Road. Parking is limited there, so carpooling is recommended. We can begin loading cars at 9:15 am in the St. Thomas parking lot. Willing drivers with vehicles with passenger space will be appreciated. Let us graciously honor the congregation of St. John's with a good attendance of St. Thomas parishioners.

Outreach

The Outreach committee has expressed their great appreciation for the wonderful contributions from our St. Thomas congregation to support the peanut butter drive, which really extended well beyond the designated "Peanut Butter Sunday." The generous quantity of peanut butter will be delivered to the food pantry at St. John the Divine.



It is "back to school" time and the Outreach Committee in collaboration with One Hope is once again encouraging St. Thomas volunteers to participate in the annual project to sort shoes and

socks to benefit underserved youth in Lane County who need assistance with their back to school preparations. Volunteers will gather at Willamette Christian Center on the corner of Hilyard and 18th at 9:00 am on Wednesday, August 20. There are manageable tasks for all ability levels. Those who need to sit can unbox and sort pairs of shoes by size, or sort, match and size socks. Those who are able will run shoes to designated size locations in the large gym. In past years the floor has been covered with neatly arranged shoes ready for the children and older youth to find their size, and style to make a selection. It is a fun and efficient operation that makes a positive difference for youth in our community.

Young Musicians Program



On the Sunday, June 29 our worship service was enhanced by Willow Kelty, the latest Young Musician to share her talents with St. Thomas congregants. Willow has been singing for three years and has performed in shows such as *Oliver*, *Finding Nemo Jr.*, and *The Fantasticks*. She has also participated in the Shedd's *E.Y. Harburg Musical Theater Revue*. She will continue to showcase her talents in future performance opportunities. Willow will be a junior at Bridge Charter Academy in Lowell.

Reflections



And God said, “let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” Genesis 1:3

Our son shared this photo, which he took on a recent backpacking trip through Utah and Colorado. It has captivated me from the moment I saw it. God’s glory on full display. Enjoy!

Schedule for August 2025

Tues. August 5 – Buildings & Grounds, 11:00 am

Thurs. August 7 – Finance Committee, 10:00 am

Wed. August 20 – Project Hope Outreach
Activity, Willamette Christian Ctr., 9:00 am

Sunday, August 24 – **Rev. Ann’s Last Service**
Coffee Hour Thank you celebration

Sunday, August 31 – Joint Service at St. John the
Divine; gather at St. Thomas at 9:15 for
Carpooling to St. John’s

Sunday Morning Worship:

10:00 am In-person Worship and Eucharist
Or access the live streamed service at
<https://www.facebook.com/st.thomas.eugene/>.

See the attached calendar for a complete
schedule of activities, meetings, and events.



August Birthdays

14	Len Calvert
16	Judy Wilson
19	Dan Paulson
23	Katrina Jensen