



The Beacon

St. Thomas Episcopal Church



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

September 2025

Volume 26 Issue 8

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- Joe Tulacz, Jr. Warden
- Lucy Barnett
- Susan Christiansen
- Chris King
- Nancy Osborne
- Mark Pezzoni
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From the Rector's Desk

Vision

If we will have the wisdom to survive,
to stand like slow-growing trees
on a ruined place, renewing, enriching it,
if we will make our seasons welcome here,
asking not too much of earth or heaven,
then a long time after we are dead
the lives our lives prepare will live
here, their houses strongly placed
upon the valley sides, fields and gardens
rich in the windows. The river will run
clear, as we never know it,
and over it, birdsong like a canopy.
On the levels of the hills will be
green meadows, stock bells in noon shade.
On the steeps where greed and ignorance cut down
the old forest, an old forest will stand,
its rich leaf-fall drifting on its roots.
The veins of forgotten springs will have opened.
Families will be singing in the fields.
In their voices they will hear a music
risen out of the ground. They will take
nothing from the ground they will not return,
whatever the grief at parting. Memory,
native to this valley, will spread over it
like a grove, and memory will grow
into legend, legend into song, song
into sacrament. The abundance of this place,
the songs of its people and its birds,
will be health and wisdom and indwelling
light. This is no paradisaal dream.
Its hardship is its possibility.

--Wendell Berry



Peace and many blessings,

Ann +

Rev. Ann's Send-off

Rev. Ann presided over a heartwarming service on Sunday, August 24 – her final service as rector of St. Thomas. We have been blessed with her grace inspired leadership, her especially thoughtful and often entertaining sermons, her beautiful soprano voice giving strength to the choir and congregation's vocals, and her loving relationship with each member of our St. Thomas family. It has been an eventful, often challenging, and constructive eight years. As a faith community we have prevailed because of her gracious and dedicated leadership. And she has set the stage for us to move forward in a positive and forward-thinking way as we begin the search for a new rector.

The Vestry hosted a celebratory coffee hour that included a wonderful attendance of St. Thomas faithful. During the gathering the Senior Warden presented Ann with a card signed by all and a generous check representing the contributed gifts of parishioners. Ann also shared her heartfelt parting remarks. She will continue to reside in Eugene and is looking forward to running into parishioners at Safeway or wherever in town.

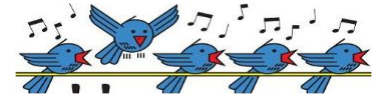
A Joyful Noise



The St. Thomas Choir returned from their summer break just in time for Rev. Ann's final service as rector of our faith community. And they did indeed

make a joyful noise, especially during the communion hymn – a moving and ultimately rousing rendition of Hymn 335, "I Am the Bread of Life." All stood and lifted our voices to sing the chorus with Rev. Ann leading us with arms outstretched – *And I will raise them up, and I will raise them up, and I will raise them up on the last day.*

Grace Notes



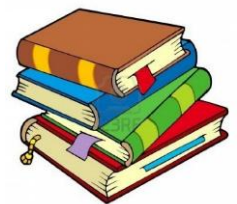
It was a grace inspired occasion to visit with Len Calvert at the Pete Moore Hospice House. Though physically frail, Len was as alert and engaging as ever as we reminisced about our many years at St. Thomas and discussed environmental concerns and community issues. What a treasure Len has been to all with whom he has been associated as a devoted family man, a community educator and volunteer, and for us at St. Thomas a devoted parish leader. Len served many years on the CCC Board, multiple stints as Senior Warden, and was instrumental in spearheading the construction of our Parish Hall. In our worship Len gifted us with his resonant oratory as a Lay Eucharistic Minister and as a Lector. And this former Acolyte director recalls his playful spirit, too. When sitting behind the altar with the acolytes he would encourage them to twirl their cinctures. As Len would say, "Sometimes we just have to have a little fun."

In the early morning hours of Wednesday, August 27 Len passed peacefully while surrounded by his family. Len was truly grace personified, and we can gratefully proclaim, "Well done good and faithful servant."

St. Thomas Book Group

The St. Thomas Ladies Book Group will meet on Thursday, September 25 at 1:30 pm in the Parish Library to engage in a thoughtful discussion of their

their latest read [The Ride of Her Life](#) by Elizabeth Letts. No doubt their book review will digress into some lively conversation and fun fellowship. Interested readers are always welcome to join the discussion.



Endowment News

With the current market surge our Endowment Fund is growing! At this writing the fund is just in excess of \$300,000. However, we still must be prudent in our access to this reserve of financial resources. In keeping with the

state regulations regarding endowment funds, we cannot draw an amount greater than 7% of the fund balance each year. Earlier in the year \$10,000 was withdrawn and placed in a CD in order to secure some of our market gains.

The Endowment Board voted to fund the Young Musicians program for another year, and the Vestry enthusiastically approved of the expenditure of \$2400 of Endowment funds for this cherished program.

Paul Barnett, Chair



Buildings and Grounds

Charged with the task of maintaining our church campus facilities, the old adage – *there's always something* – holds true.



But what also holds true for St. Thomas is the ever-reliable cadre of volunteers who willingly give of their time and talents to assist with repairs. The siding on the west face of the Education Building was showing some concerning dry rot. Larry Wilson was able to get the necessary supplies at a reasonable cost to the church, and then Larry donated his time and skills to make the necessary repairs.



Judy Wilson and Bree Jones provided capable assistance with the project and Anne VanDerveer stepped up to add her painting expertise to the Education Building repairs.

Grassroot Garden



Zucchini Whistles!! It's that time of year again! At GrassRoots, we teach many life skills. One example is how to make Zucchini Whistles, one of the important things in life! *Continued on page 4*

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1. Begin by cutting off the zucchini leaf stem right at the base of the plant.
2. Using the back of your knife, scrape the prickles off the stem. Be thorough! Or your whistle may poke your lips and you may regret it for a couple of days.
3. Next, holding the leaf up to the light, and looking at the stem where it connects to the leaf, you'll see one area is dark, because it is solid. Further down on the stem will be lighter, because it is hollow. Holding the stem, cut off the leaf above the solid part. Staying close to the leaf, making sure you're above the solid area, make the cut, being careful not to cut into the hollow part of the stem.
4. If you look at the end where you just cut, you'll see the shape of a heart. At the top of the heart, there is a large main vein. With control, and precision, cut a one-inch slit (beginning below the solid top) from the top of the main vein downward. Draw your knife back up, making sure to go all the way to the solid part without cutting through.
5. Placing the bottom of the heart on your tongue, and making sure your lips completely cover up the slit you just cut, blow from your diaphragm.
6. Now, in order to make notes, use a sawing motion (back and forth), cut out half a circle (a semi-circle). Then reverse the stem, and cut out the other half of that circle, which creates the first note hole. The pad of your finger should be able to completely cover the hole. It's important to note the difference between a curved circle and an angular notch. You don't want to cut a notch, because you can't properly cover a notch with your finger. Notches also make corners, and weaken the integrity of your whistle, making it more likely to break.
7. Spacing holes one inch apart, you can add more notes. Five or less is ideal.

Zucchini whistle sound will improve over the first 15 minutes of playing. These whistles don't last forever, but will last longer if submerged in cold water. Zucchini whistles are a garden art. Many people don't even know how to grow zucchini, let alone knowing how to make and play zucchini whistles. If we don't practice and pass it on, this garden art may be lost and forgotten. Now that I've taught you, you must practice and pass it on. Happy whistling!

To see this process demonstrated, check out this YouTube link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4eyFz-gnP_I

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

Outreach

The Outreach Committee's focus for August – One Hope shoe sorting for back to school assistance for underserved youth – was well represented with participation from nearly two dozen St. Thomas faithful. On August 20 enthusiastic volunteers gathered at Willamette Christian to assist with unpacking, sorting and organizing thousands of pairs of shoes ranging in sizes for kindergarteners to high school youth. Suffice it to say the volunteers got their steps in.



Looking ahead, the Outreach committee has allocated funding to serve these entities with their special projects:

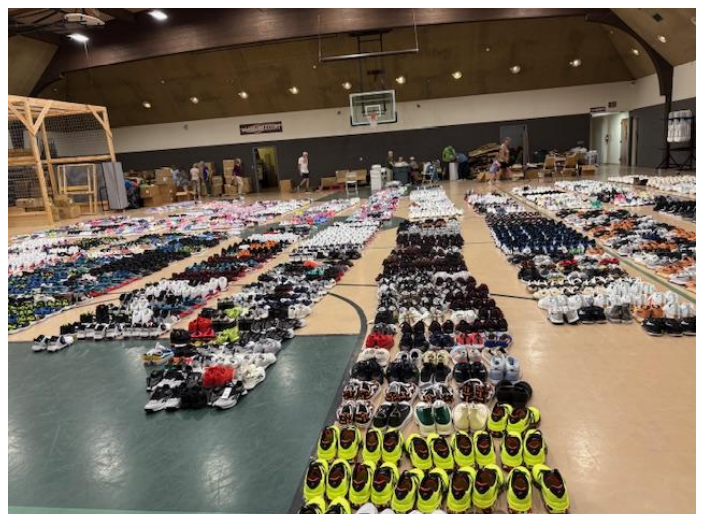
- \$1000 to One Hope in support of Project Hope and Thanksgiving Boxes
- \$500 to the Interfaith Food Hub
- \$500 to St. John's in support of their outreach projects
- \$500 to St. Matthews in support of their pantry project

The annual effort to provide Christmas gifts for the children of the St. Thomas Head Start program is underway with committee members engaged in shopping for sweatsuits according to requested sizes, age appropriate toys and packing supplies. An all-parish gift packing event will be coordinated for the Sunday prior to distribution.

Enjoy the pictures on the following page!



St. Thomas Volunteers: Lori, Eli and Lucy Fisher, Anne VanDerveer, Joi Konieczka, Sue Colvin, Lucy and Paul Barnett, JB and Adeline Hoover, Linda Whitehead, Mark and Debbie Pezzoni, Diane Lambert, Holly and John Spruance, Dale Bixler, Joe Tulacz and Tricia Crisafulli, Cindy Jensen and Lucy Duer with her best friend Emelia.



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Young Musicians Program



On Sunday, August 17 the congregation was treated to a performance of the prelude and anthem by our own Breanna Jones, known to us as Bree, our faithful nursery attendant and choir member. Bree graduated in 2024 from Springfield High School and was a member of its Intermediate Orchestra. She picked up violin at the end of her Junior year and was placed in first chair for her last performance of her Senior year. Bree has performed locally with the Kelly Butte Trio at block parties, Toast Masters, and the City of Springfield Art Show. Her goal is to get into Lane Community College in hopes of pursuing a career in firefighting. She is in the process of applying as a student for LCC's EMT course.

Senior Warden's Message

On Sunday, August. 10, as Senior Warden I had the opportunity to speak to the congregation. For the benefit of those who were not in attendance, the following is an excerpt from my remarks.

It is fitting that our newsletter bears the moniker of *The Beacon*. Just as the light beams from those shoreline columns provide guidance and reassurance for navigators, St. Thomas church prevails as a reassuring *beacon* of spiritual sustenance, hope and healing. And our Companions in Ministry enhance our efforts to serve the greater community. This year, as we search for a new rector, will be my sixth rector search and period of transition for St. Thomas, and I can assure you that we have always prevailed.

Yes, times are different today than they were during prior searches in 1982, and 1986, and 1999, and 2008, and 2015 and even more so today in 2025. Let me reassure you that your church leadership is actively engaged in communications with the four other Episcopal parishes in the Eugene/Springfield area to improve our relationships. The Rev. Chris Craun, Canon to the Ordinary, has been leading our conversations with lay leadership. These communications have been ongoing, thoughtful, and forward thinking.

After thoughtful consideration your Vestry has determined that our best course of action is to call a three-quarter time rector to serve St. Thomas. Our dedicated Parish treasurer, Anne VanDerveer has prepared a budget forecast for three years. Based on our income from pledges, plate offerings, user fees and operating expenses, St. Thomas can present to a candidate a sound budget for a three-quarter time rector to be compensated at the expected SHU (stipend, housing, utilities charge) level for salary and benefits. A three quarter time rector would have the option to serve another parish part time to fill that fourth quarter. Or, the rector might enjoy pursuing personal interests or another business endeavor to fill the remaining time. The expectation for a part time priest is to lead worship services, attend to pastoral care and Christian education for the parish.

A three-quarter time rector arrangement necessitates that the remaining duties of the management of the church and our very busy campus falls to the Parish Administrator and Lay leadership.

- Our wonderful Parish Administrator, JB Hoover, has specifically defined duties and responsibilities which are restricted to 18 hours per week.
- But there is so much more to do that will involve lay leadership. Additional assistance is needed on the important church committees: Finance and Budget, Personnel, and Facilities Oversight. It is gratifying that individuals have stepped up to be greeters to supply clergy, as well as managing the scheduling of LEMs and Lectors.
- As Senior Warden it is my responsibility to form a search committee. A committee of six would be ideal and at this time, four members have committed to this service.

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- After reviewing the last Parish Profile from 2015 it is clear that this document needs to be updated. To accomplish this, all parishioners will have the opportunity to complete the necessary questionnaire during September.

While we all may be feeling some anxiety about the way forward for St. Thomas, there is one thing that we can rely on and that is the faithful spirit and vitality of our congregation. Yes, there is work to be done, but no matter our age or our capabilities, we can each have a role in sustaining our church home and assuring that St. Thomas continues to be a *beacon* of faith and hope for our family of faith and the greater community.

Celebrations

September Birthdays



2	Lucy Duer
4	Steven Payne
12	Linda Whitehead Charlotte Heltman
17	Jean Payne Harlen Rohde
29	Gail Morgan
30	Tilda Rohde

September Anniversaries



7	Joe and Anne Konieczka
15	Mark and Debbie Pezzoni

Note from the editor ~

In lieu of a Reflections message, consider the *blessings of Jesus* offered by Rev. Ann.

The Blessings of Jesus

Blessed are those who know their need,
For theirs is the grace of heaven.

Blessed are the humble,
For they are close to the sacred earth.

Blessed are those who weep,
For their tears will be wiped away.

Blessed are the forgiving,
For they are free.

Blessed are those who hunger for earth's oneness,
For they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the clear in heart,
For they see the Living Presence.

Blessed are those who suffer for what is right,
For theirs is the strength of heaven.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
For they are born of God.

From "Sounds of the Eternal" by John Philip Newell