



The Beacon

St. Thomas Episcopal Church



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

October 2025

Volume 26 Issue 9

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From the Senior Warden

October is St. Thomas' season for Stewardship, otherwise known as pledging for Annual Giving. Soon you will be receiving the letter from our Stewardship Co-chairs, Tricia Crisafulli and Joe Tulacz. Later in October as Senior Warden, I will be sending a letter to you along with the Pledge Certificate for 2025. These thoughtful pledges of support of our faith community will be blessed at the altar at the Ingathering of Pledges on All Saints' Sunday, November 2nd.

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.

Faithfully,

Cindy



Search Committee News

Your new Rector Search Committee has hit the ground running! Its members are: Tricia Crisafulli, Maggie Meneghin, Duncan Murray and Tom Whitehead.

Each of us is totally focused and fully committed to our goal – **Finding just the right rector to guide St. Thomas in these challenging times.**

Here's our progress: We've begun working on the required Church Profile. By now you've received a brief, confidential survey designed to discover what you want in a new rector. We need this to be sure that we know what's important to you as we build this profile and start the search process. If you have not already done so, please complete and return the survey promptly so that we understand your personal needs.

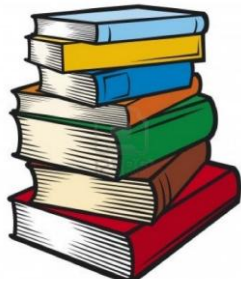
As we proceed, we acknowledge that the rector search process is more complex and time consuming than we would wish. With this in mind we ask you to join us in being patient. As a former Search Committee member wisely noted, "Our timeline is not always God's timeline."

As we proceed down this road please join us in praying for God's blessing as we build on our strong St. Thomas foundation and look forward to an even brighter future.

Faithfully,
Duncan Murray, Chair

St. Thomas Book Group

No doubt the St. Thomas Ladies Book Group can attest to the value of reading. It enriches the mind, feeds the soul and encourages engaging conversation. And lively conversation is what these ladies enjoy at their monthly gatherings. The reading selection for October is The Royal Librarian by Daisy Wood. These dedicated readers will meet on Thursday, October 23 at 1:30 pm in the Parish Library or on Zoom. New members with a passion for reading are welcome to join these engaging sessions. The reading list is posted on the bulletin board in the hallway to the Parish Hall.



Endowment News

Since the last reporting of the Endowment Fund, the stock market has been especially vibrant resulting in some nice gains for our St. Thomas Endowment Fund. The \$305,458 fund total is the highest level since the fund was established



in 2018. On Sunday, September 21 the Endowment Board met to consider fund allocations for the 2026 fiscal year. Understanding that any withdrawals from the fund can never be greater than 7% of the total fund value and cannot go below the \$250,000 threshold, the Endowment Board will continue to be very prudent regarding fund usage. At this time, the board has recommended and the Vestry has approved the expenditure of \$2,400 for the Young Musicians program in 2026. The board has recommended to the Vestry for their approval the amount of \$5,000 of Endowment funds be used to cover the anticipated budget for Outreach in 2026. It was indeed a blessing that the Endowment Fund was established to aide the church in sustaining ministries and meeting its mission to *give thanks and praise to God and share God's love.*

Paul Barnett, Chair

Outreach

The Outreach focus for October is the collection of household items for the Home Starter Kits, a project spearheaded by Church of the Resurrection. The items being



requested for this round are blankets in twin and queen sizes. Items brought to the church can be placed in the bin located under the Narthex table. Tricia Crisafulli will transport them to Resurrection periodically throughout the month. St. Thomas parishioners have been consistently generous in their contributions to this project that assists people gaining access to housing after having been living in shelters or on the streets.

Stewardship

On Sunday, September 28 Tricia Crisafulli and Joe Tulacz were introduced as the 2026 Stewardship Campaign Chairmen. This is a repeat effort for this dynamic duo and we all share gratitude for their enthusiastic efforts. October is traditionally Stewardship season, otherwise known as pledging for Annual Giving, and with the first of October all parishioners are receiving the annual Stewardship letter highlighting the theme of this year's Stewardship effort - **Renewing Our Home: Graciously Loving & Generously Giving.**



Later in the month parishioners will receive a letter of encouragement from the Senior Warden along with the pledge certificate for 2026, which will be blessed at the altar at the Ingathering of Pledges on All Saints' Sunday, November 2nd.

During this time of transition and renewal for St. Thomas, let us be ever mindful of the importance of sustaining this parish, attending to the needs of our church campus, and seeking a rector who best suits the spirit of this faith community.

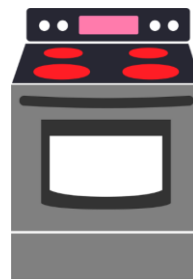
Beacon contributors needed!

We may be a church in transition, but there is still so much going on at St. Thomas. Please consider sharing your perspective or a special story about the lay ministry in which you may be involved. Articles for publication in the Beacon are to be submitted to the editor (lajotkdk@aol.com) by the 25th of the month to be included in the next month's edition.

Buildings and Grounds

After considerable deliberation and with the gracious gifts provided by anonymous donors, two new stove/oven units have been installed in the kitchen to replace the outdated and inefficient units that had been installed when the Parish Hall was built over twenty years ago. In order to purchase the improved and preferred electrical units, it was necessary to increase our electrical capacity for the Parish Hall. The anonymous donations were designated for this part of the project, but with the judicious research and bidding investigation by the Building and Grounds committee, the total project cost for the appliances and the electrical refit came in significantly under the original estimate. The anonymous donations covered the total project with money to spare. Those funds will be applied to the Buildings and Grounds budget.

These new stoves and ovens are being used by the GrassRoots Garden and Master Food Preservers in their classes to teach food preparation and preservation to the food insecure individuals who benefit from the garden produce. With reliable working appliances, we expect more users including our St. Thomas parishioners to use the kitchen more effectively. And the added bonus of these new

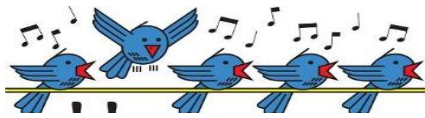


appliances is that they are another example of our creation care efforts as we work to reduce our carbon footprint and comply with the Diocesan resolution to become carbon neutral.

Following the Sunday, September 21 service, our supply clergy, Rev. Doug Dornhecker, gathered parishioners in the kitchen for an uplifting blessing of the new stoves and ovens.



Grace Notes



During announcements in August, the Senior Warden outlined the design of our parish going forward as we look to call a three-quarter time priest supported by strong and well defined lay leadership. To enhance our committee structure, the request was made to strengthen our Finance and Budget committee with one additional member; expand our Facilities Oversight Committee from three to four members; secure a new CCC board member; create a team of parishioners to greet our supply clergy each Sunday; designate a team to create the quarterly LEM/Lector schedule; and solidify our Search Committee. It was a tall order, but true to the grace that prevails at St. Thomas, the response to serve has been especially gratifying. Here is a listing of the committees with the new participants in bold.

Buildings & Grounds – Joe Konieczka, Andy Laird,
Linda Whitehead, Mark Pezzoni, Larry Wilson

Finance and Budget – Anne VanDerveer, Holly
Spruance, Cindy Jensen, **Tom Whitehead**

Facilities Oversight – Beverly Jackson, Adeline
Hoover, Cindy Jensen, **Ed Johnson**

CCC Board Member – **John Spruance**

Supply Clergy Greeters – **Tom and Linda**
Whitehead, Mike Watkins, Susan
Christensen

LEM/Lector Schedulers – **Holly and John**
Spruance

Search Committee – **Duncan Murray, Tom Whitehead**
Tricia Crisafulli, Maggie Meneghin

Young Musicians Program

Where are they now?

From time to time, it will be a treat to learn of what our former Young Musicians are doing now.



Since performing at St. Thomas as March 2022's Young Musician's Scholarship recipient, Elizabeth Perez moved to Los Angeles to study acting for film and then moved back to Oregon the summer of 2023. Upon her return she started dancing with Xcape Dance Academy's *Company*, a performance based dance team.

Elizabeth also began working with local photographers to pursue modeling, which was a complete accident! She got into modeling when she started meeting photographers on set or through local acting and modeling groups.

Her passion is still acting so she's been working towards that. Elizabeth has done commercial shoots and some short films, but she is hoping to do bigger projects in the future.

She's very grateful to St. Thomas for giving her the opportunity to perform and launch her into new adventures!

Our Dynamic Faith Community

St. Thomas: A Gloriously Complex Web of Ministry

In the four years I have known Sean I have never seen him not smiling. This doesn't mean he is always happy. Sean's efforts to hold his family together means that he occasionally comes to St. Thomas in need of financial assistance. We also provide him with a sympathetic ear. Throughout the frustration of working with public agencies to gain some measure of independence, Sean has remained steadfast in his commitment to his recovery from alcohol and drug addiction. About a month ago he realized that his efforts to meet the incredibly strict requirements for disability status were going nowhere. With an exasperated smile he told me he was looking for work but being an ex-con, he was not optimistic of his chances.

John is the owner of the Jani-King franchise that cleans St. Thomas. Since St. Thomas is the one account John does personally, I see him nearly every week. When I told John about Sean he immediately scheduled an appointment and offered him paying work on the spot.

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After one day on the job Sean called me. He was distraught. He awoke to find that his partner of 28 years was gone. Sean's momentary success had brought on her crisis. His next call was to John to tell him he couldn't work. This was unacceptable. John told him he was going to fulfill his responsibilities. Digging deep, Sean found the inner resources to do his job.

A month later I marvel at the transformation. John raves about Sean's dependability and work ethic. Sean is finding his footing. For the first time in his life, he is making it on his own.

This is but one example of the synergistic ministry that goes on at St. Thomas. GrassRoots garden works with HeadStart kids. All Ears works with members of our congregation. And these are just some of those we know about. How fortunate I feel to be part of the St. Thomas congregation which gives its time and energy and treasure to maintaining and developing the physical and managerial infrastructure that makes this kind of synergistic ministry between all of our various official and unofficial partners possible.

The next time you drop by St. Thomas the unknown smiling face you see might be Sean's or another's ready to be changed by someone at St. Thomas. That someone might be you!

JB Hoover, Parish Administrator

GrassRoots Garden



Autumn has arrived at GrassRoots, the plants are slowing down and harvest is in full swing. As we begin getting the Garden ready for winter this year, we are experimenting with some techniques to

improve our soil health. One of these techniques is using compost tea to help boost our soil biology.

Last winter we received a generous donation of a 25-gallon compost tea brewer, which, in addition to the 25-gallon brewer we already had, brings us up to a hefty 50-gallon compost tea brewing capacity! Michael Alms, founder and CEO of Growing Solutions (a world leader in compost tea systems), has been working with us to help guide us while we try and refine our strategy for integrating compost tea into our growing system. We have done several trials of compost tea in various crops throughout the summer, and have seen some promising results.

Throughout the summer we have hosted a series of compost tea workshops with Michael to educate the community on the benefits and uses of compost tea. The first workshop focused on the basics of compost tea, how to make it and the various ways of applying it. The second workshop focused on the biology of the compost tea, and we observed the different microorganisms in the tea under the microscope as they moved about. The third workshop is coming up and will be focused on fall applications of compost tea.

Of the many benefits for applying *Compost Tea* to the garden, the fall season is certainly not exempt! While we may think dormancy looms ahead for the winter, there is actually much activity on the soil surface and in the world below during the autumn months. Michael has observed many benefits for late season applications of *Compost Tea* including the following:

- Saturating leaf material that has fallen to the soil surface throughout the season will begin to accelerate the breakdown of this valuable organic matter resource into the soil. This serves as a nutrient bank, water reservoir and fabulous home for the micro life.
- Applying beneficial micro life via *Compost Tea* to the soil surface and fallen organic matter can aid in protection with disease spores that may be present in these areas. The natural competition is important for the new spring growth and vigor.

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- Drenching soil surfaces enough to surround and saturate the plant root zone (*Rhizosphere*) with *Compost Tea* can assist in important fall root growth to set a strong foundation for healthier plants in the upcoming season.

Please join us for our third (3rd) in a series of *Compost Tea* workshops at GrassRoots Garden on Saturday, 1 November 2025, 10:00am!

October 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 at 458-221-0652 or merrybradley@foodforlanecounty.org.



October Celebrations



October 6 Katrina Jensen & Russ Duer

An important reminder ~

St. Thomas is a welcoming faith community, and of course, we want to put our “best face forward” as we greet and show appreciation for the supply clergy who grace our services.

It is especially helpful for these visiting rectors when we remember to wear our name badges. We encourage them to attend our coffee hour and with this welcoming engagement, the word gets out that St. Thomas is indeed a faith-filled and welcoming place to worship.

Reflections



This time of year has always been special to me. The days are cooler and nights are crisp. Vibrant colors radiate from the deciduous trees that are framed by the lush greens of the fir trees. And eventually the blessed rains return. I am especially mindful of this changing of the seasons, as we at St. Thomas are entering a new season of our own – a season of transition and renewal. What is especially noticed and appreciated is the engagement of our faith-filled parishioners. People are stepping up to facilitate church operations; showing up in our church services; enjoying our coffee hour traditions; participating in the parish survey; and willing to wear a hat, or two and in some cases more. Grace personified in each and every St. Thomas parishioner.

