

St. Thomas Episcopal Church



The Front Page

January 2015

Like many other folks, to welcome in the New Year I have a beautiful, brand new 2015 calendar on my kitchen wall. It has a lot of dazzling, empty squares on it that are just begging to be filled in with meetings, appointments and other scheduled events. As I started this week to transfer items from my daily date book onto this calendar, I found myself using both pen and pencil. Appointments I was *sure* of were written in pen. More tentative meetings and plans warranted a pencil, able to be easily erased.

This activity has generated some thoughts on what I might use to enter my spiritual habits on my calendar, if I were to write them down - which I usually do not. The reading, praying, and reflection that I strive for daily are long time habits. But there are those more involved practices that get shunted aside when other things crowd in and steal some of the time I have set aside for these activities. And I wistfully postpone retreats and quiet days more than I like to admit - as life presses in on my schedule. Would that mean that, metaphorically at least, I have only penciled this time into my life? Would that mean that my appointments with God aren't worthy of that more permanent of markings - ink?! Hmmm....

It makes me contemplate whether other people struggle with their scheduling in the same way. Am I alone in putting other things before God on the calendar and to-do list? How do YOU set your priorities? Do you offer God the leftover time on your calendars, when you have a bit of it? Or do you ink in a firm plan for spending time with the God who loves you *so* much, and wants to be in a relationship with you that is meaningful - giving you strength and peace?

Most of you know that I firmly believe in giving to God first fruits - not the bits and pieces that are left over. So I suppose that must also mean the first go-around with my calendar as well. So - pen in hand - I have written in some new spiritual practices on my brand new calendar. And, like my doctor appointments and Vestry meetings and important family events - they are in a lovely shade of blue ink.

Happy New Year! Rev. Susan+



Senior Warden's Corner

The hustle and the bustle of the season are over. Hopefully, each and every one of us had the opportunity and took time to slow down and focus on the true meaning of Advent and Christmas. Hopefully we all recognized the many blessings, great and small, that we receive and give.

I have been blessed, over the last five years, to have served as both junior warden and senior warden here at St. Thomas' Church. I have met a lot of wonderful people here at St. Thomas' Church and I have made a lot of friends.

I would like to invite each and every one of you to prayerfully consider how you can serve your church family. There are lots of opportunities for you to serve your church and your fellow members. I won't go over each and every one of them. Slow down again and listen to that little voice inside you and see what direction you are being steered in. Like many journeys, the hardest part is taking that first step. Don't delay – take that first step today.



Henry Dziadosz

Senior Warden

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2015 Epiphany Pageant

Our annual Epiphany Pageant will take place on Sunday January 4th at 4:00pm in the Church. The pageant features our Sunday school children. It is always a lovely occasion that tells the familiar story in a wonderfully festive way. Parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles are ALWAYS welcome . the more the merrier!

There will be a potluck supper immediately following the pageant, and if you want to contribute to the meal, you are certainly welcome to do so. Just drop your dishes off upstairs in the hall before coming down to church. One of our famous sign-up sheets is posted in the parish hall and will help us plan! We need some help to set up, serve, and clean up . so if you can help out, that would be great! Plan to join us for what promises to be a special evening indeed as we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany . St. Thomasqstyle!

Pageant contact: Kimberly Lusignan 473-4577

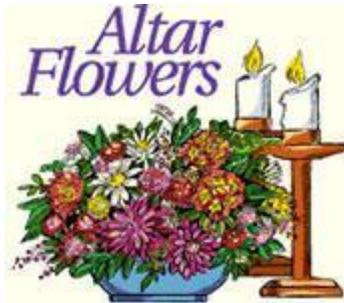
Potluck contact: Barbara Whitman 568-6104

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Individual contributions of personal spiritual experiences are welcomed!

Email: klplamb24@gmail.com



Beautiful fresh flowers grace the sanctuary of St. Thomas' Church each Sunday; they certainly enhance the beauty of our worship space. They also provide joy and comfort to those who receive them after the services on Sunday as a part of our pastoral care. Contributions may be made in honor, memory or thanksgiving of loved ones. The name(s) of your loved one(s) will be printed in the Sunday worship bulletin. The donation for altar flowers is \$35. (Please note: there are *no altar flowers* during the season of Lent.)

The new "Altar Flower Chart" for 2015 is at the bottom of the stairs from the parish hall on the way into the church. Each Sunday is on the chart, and names are listed when they have already been reserved to assist you with picking a date. We only take **two dedications** per Sunday, so it is first come, first served. Only when a check is received in the office is your date reserved. If there are two names on any given date, please pick an alternate date. Altar flower dedication forms are available in the wooden rack in the Narthex or in the Parish Office. We are now accepting requests for 2015 - so get them into the office! If you have any questions, just stop in or call Joan in the office. (949-2260)

St. Thomas' Pledge Envelopes



2015 Pledge envelopes are now available!

You may pick them up in the back of the church.

(If you would like a box of pledge envelopes, we must have a 2015 pledge card filed in the office).

The good news is if you have not yet made a pledge to St.

Thomas' it is never too late! Pledge forms are available in the narthex (entryway) of the church.

Simply drop a completed form in the offering plate or mail it to the church office.

COME EXPERIENCE THE EPIPHANY SEASON!

On Saturday, January 10, at 10:00, Rev. Susan and Fr. Don will team up and offer "*The Epiphany Experience*" for all ages. During this "hands on" hour of exploration, participants will explore the joys of the three main themes of the Epiphany Season: baptism - the new us; the light of Christ that WE carry into the world; and the excitement of sharing our God stories with our family, friends, and neighbors. The children will particularly be interested in knowing that the Three Kings will appear with their gold, frankincense, and myrrh, some *very* unique baptisms will happen, they will see the "light" in a fun way, and all will enjoy singing some songs led by Mimi Freeman. This will all be a treat for ALL the senses!



We believe that those who participate in this "experience" will appreciate more fully the season we are about to participate in for the next five weeks. Oh ó and children may feel free to bring along a favorite doll for this interactive workshop!

So plan to be at "*The Epiphany Experience*"_on Saturday the 10th of January between 10:00am and 11:00am



Five Wishes Workshop

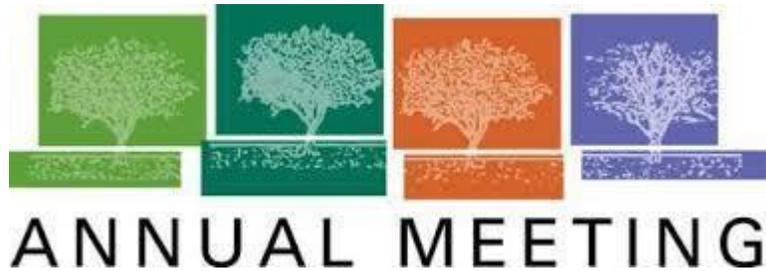
Our Health Ministry Team has been busy planning a very valuable little series for our parish. We want to start the conversation about Advanced Care Planning. Please join Courtney Lamothe, LCSW and Hospice Specialist at Gentiva Hospice on either Wednesday, January 21st or Wednesday, January 28th at 7:00pm as she will be speaking with our St. Thomas Church members about Advanced Care Planning. This will include a presentation on the Five Wishes booklet and educational resources will be available to help with getting healthcare-related documents in place.

And then on February 4th you are invited to come to a workshop session on planning your own funeral. Reverend Susan will take us through some of the decisions that must be made to arrange the kind of service that would be right for you and your family. There will be plenty of time for questions and answers as different issues pop up in our workshop. All of the paperwork will be available to take with you so that you can thoughtfully make some choices that might be meaningful to you ó music, Scripture readings and other personal preferences. You can file your paperwork anytime with Reverend Susan to keep in the office. We look forward to having you attend these sessions to begin these important conversations.

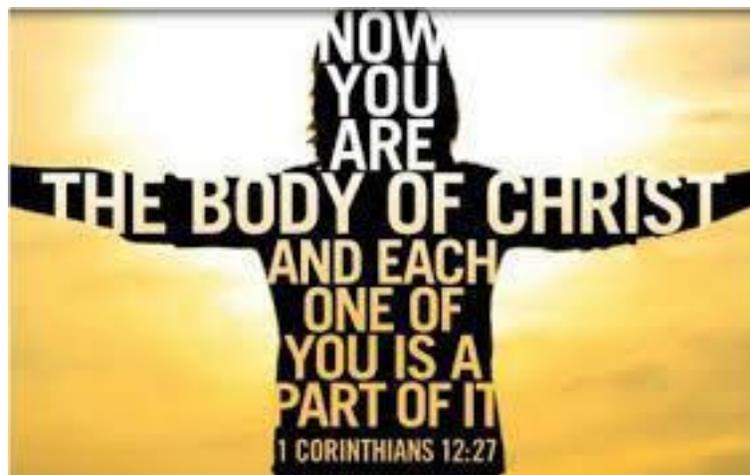


Please sign up in the Parish Hall ó or call the office (949-2260) to register so that Courtney will bring enough booklets with her. AND the Health Ministry Team will provide rides for anyone who doesn't want to drive at night! This is for folks of all ages who want to have some peace of mind and some information to help make informed decisions. As we think about this holiday season - having your affairs together is a priceless gift to your family!

Our 164th



The 164th Annual Meeting of St. Thomas' will take place on January 25th at 11:30am in the parish hall. Who should come to our all parish meeting? Why - everyone! It is a way that we come together as a community to stay on top of matters pertaining to the financial and administrative health of the parish. We elect new members of Vestry and Parish Delegates to Convention. We learn of new initiatives of the Vestry that affect our ministry together and we celebrate our successes. If you have never come to an Annual Meeting - ESPECIALLY if you haven't come to an Annual Meeting - we hope to see you on Sunday, January 25th after the 2nd service!



Come join the fun!



PENNY SOCIAL **BASKETS**

Only 47 weeks until the next Bazaar.....

We are going to change the Penny Social up a bit and try to collect a “themed” basket each month, starting in January. We hope to collect a dozen impressive baskets, each with a value of more than \$100.

This month, we are collecting items for a

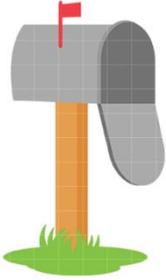
CHRISTMAS BASKET

We are looking for NEW items with a Christmas theme, but please no candy or perishable items!

Gift Cards would be great too!

Just leave in the Parish Hall and mark “Penny Social”.

FROM THE MAILBOX



To our St. Thomas Family,

WOW! We have been blessed by the kindness of our loved ones in recent months, but your generous gifts have unquestionably been the sweetest surprise we have encountered! How could we ever thank you enough!

The glider is set up in the living room awaiting many hours of use with Baby Sam, the Babies R Us gift card is on the ready for diapers, and I have one very happy teenager.

The gentle rock of the glider is a perfect metaphor for how I feel at St. Thomas-surrounded by gentle love and care!
I will forever be grateful for all of you, and we will definitely come visit!!!

With so much love & gratitude,
Meaghan+

(received 11/3/14)

Dear Parishioners,

It was such a joy to watch all the beautifully-wrapped packages arrive in support of our annual Giving Tree. Everyone's generosity was overwhelming! We are truly blessed with such wonderful, giving parishioners. Our friends from Tri-Town really appreciate our help throughout the holiday season!

Thank you,
Sandy Leigh and Deb Farrar+

COOKIE SALE A SUCCESS!

On December 13th our annual community Christmas Cookie Sale was held. Thank you to all who supported this event by baking, buying, or donating your time on the day of the event. Folks were waiting for the doors to open at 9am and we ran out of cookies by 10:30! What a success!! We raised \$414, and with our refurbished kitchen available for group baking next year, we look forward to even more merriment and fellowship in 2015!



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Wayne Derosier 1
JD Deschamps 4
Caiden Young 5
Madeline Young 5
Sally Hersey 7
Shannon Carberry 9

Audrey Poloquin 11
Deb D'Angelo 15
Lori Kane 18
Linda Gorman 19
Kelly McNelis 23
Liam Paquette 25
Ron Hodgins 27

Sandy Leigh 27
Bud Williams 27
Brandon Fournier 28
Donna Stolasz 28
Matthew Alcusky 29
Mark Plante 30

JANUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Alonzo (Lonnie) and Carol Thurber 21



CONDOLENCES

Our Christian sympathy is extended to parishioner Ann Marie Maguire and her family upon the death of her son, Joseph Maguire II on December 26. Reverend Susan conducted his funeral service at St. Thomas on December 31.



Paul Deschenes, dear friend of Gigi Uttley, died on December 20. We extend our sympathy to Gigi and to all of Paul's family members. Reverend Susan conducted a Memorial Service for Paul in Coventry.

A HAPPY
NEW YEAR

January 2015



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 10-noon Pageant dress rehearsal 5:30—HE
4 8:00 HE Youth Sunday 10:00 HE 9:30-11:00 read through 4:00pm Epiphany Pag- eant & Potluck	5 7:00pm Health ministry team	6 6:00-8:00pm Book & Movie Group 7:00—8:30pm Adult Formation	7 9:00 HE & Healing service	8	9	10 10-11am “An Epiphany Experience” 5:30—HE
11 8:00 HE 9:30 Sunday school 10:00 HE	12 7:00pm Men's Group	13 7:00—8:30pm Adult Formation	14 9:00 HE & Healing service	15 6:30pm Vestry	16	17 5:30—HE
18 8:00 HE 9:30 Sunday school 10:00 HE	19 6:00-8:00pm WINGS	20  7:00—8:30pm Adult Formation	21 9:00 HE & Healing service 7:00-8:30 5 Wishes workshop	22	23	24 5:30—HE
25 8:00 HE 9:30 Sunday school 10:00 HE 11:30 Annual Meeting	26 6:30-8:00 pm Order of St. Luke meeting 8:00 Healing Service	27 7:00—8:30pm Adult Formation	28 9:00 HE & Healing service 7:00-8:30 5 Wishes workshop	29 7:00-8:30 Deanery mtg. at St. Thomas	30 	31 5:30—HE

Saint Thomas' Episcopal Church

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The Newsletter of St. Thomas Church January 2015



Prayer is our humble answer to the inconceivable surprise of living. It is all we can offer in return for the mystery by which we live. Who is worthy to be present at the constant unfolding of time? Only one response can maintain us: gratefulness for witnessing the wonder, for the gift of our unearned right to serve, to adore, and to fulfill. It is gratefulness which makes the soul great.+

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel