

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church



The Front Page

January 2019

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's Christmas message 2018

'Love came down at Christmas, because God so loved the world, that he gave'

In the Third Chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus says at one point, *"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that all who believe in him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

For years, I've often thought that that passage only referred to Jesus giving his life as a sacrifice on the cross. And to be sure, that is part of what it means. But some years ago I was reading a commentary by Raymond Brown, on the Gospel of John, and Professor Brown said that that passage not only speaks of Jesus willingly giving his life on the cross, but it actually speaks of Christmas, of God giving his very self, his very son to the world, not for anything God could get out of it, but for the good and the welfare and the well-being of the world. Of us.

Someone once said, in a Christmas poem, "Love came down at Christmas." That's what love is. To give, and not to count the cost. To give, not for what one can get, but for what the other can receive. That's what love is. God so loved the world, that he gave.

I realized recently how powerful that passage really is, when I saw an old poster from 1938. A poster produced by the Episcopal Church at that time, to encourage Episcopalians and other Christians, and other people of faith and good will, to do whatever they could to help Jewish refugees fleeing tyranny in Europe. To help people from all over Europe seeking refuge in America, this land of freedom. The poster depicts Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus. They're fleeing persecution in Palestine, as Matthew's Gospel says. And the poster depicting Mary, Joseph, and Jesus says in the tag line, "In the name of these refugees, help all refugees."

God so loved the world, that he gave, even to the point of risking his own son. And in the name of those refugees, in the name of that Jesus, help all refugees,

all people who suffer, anyone who's alone, everyone who is in need. That's what love does.

Love came down at Christmas, because God so loved the world, that he gave.

In those days, a decree went out from the Emperor Augustus, that all the world should be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem because he was a descendent from the House of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged, and who was expecting a child. While they were there, she gave birth to her first-born son, and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Meanwhile, in that region, there were shepherds, living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then the angel of the Lord stood above them. And the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were terrified. The angel said unto them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people. To you is born this day, in the City of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign. You will find the child wrapped in bands of cloth, lying in a manger."

And suddenly, there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace to all people on earth."

Have a blessed Christmas. Have a merry Christmas. Have a joyful Christmas. God love you, God bless you, and may God hold us all in those almighty hands of love.

**The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate,
The Episcopal Church**

Parish Ministry Annual Reports for 2018

If you are a leader of a ministry here at St. Thomas', the time is now here for submitting your 2018 report to the office so that it may be included in the Annual Reports booklet of St. Thomas' Church which will be distributed at our parish Annual Meeting.

Submissions should be made electronically and sent to Joan at:
office@stthomasepiscopalri.org





RI Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty

Join Grace and Susan+ and Interfaith clergy from around Rhode Island on Tuesday, January 8, 2019 at 3:00 pm at the Rhode Island State House to pray for our State government leaders and representatives. We gather on the 55th anniversary of President Johnson's War on Poverty to remind our elected officials of their responsibility to those living in poverty.

Working together, we believe that we can improve the lives of all Rhode Islanders and reduce poverty in our state. We have a responsibility to protect and support all Rhode Islanders, whatever our religion, race/ethnicity, immigration status, gender, age, or socioeconomic standing. We believe that all Rhode Islanders deserve food security, affordable housing, decent wages, quality education and accessible healthcare. Grounded in our faith traditions, we are called to educate, empower and advocate. All are welcome to attend!

ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

PO Box 505, Greenville, RI 02828

Telephone: (401) 949-2260

Email: office@stthomasepiscopalri.org

susan@stthomasepiscopalri.org

Website: www.stthomasepiscopalri.org

Rector: The Reverend Susan M. Carpenter

Office Hours: Wed., 9am-4pm, or by appointment



Come and
Join Us!

PROPERTY MEETING

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12TH, 9:00 am TO 11:00 am

PURPOSE: MAINTENANCE OF CHURCH PROPERTY and a review of our plans from March 2018.

You don't have to be "handy" to attend this meeting...Lord knows I'm not! You just have to have an interest in the maintenance of our church property.

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED.

SIGN UP SHEET WILL BE ON THE MINISTRY TABLE or you can email/text/call me to let me know you're coming.

Jacki Zahn

Jmz222@outlook.com, 401-651-6401

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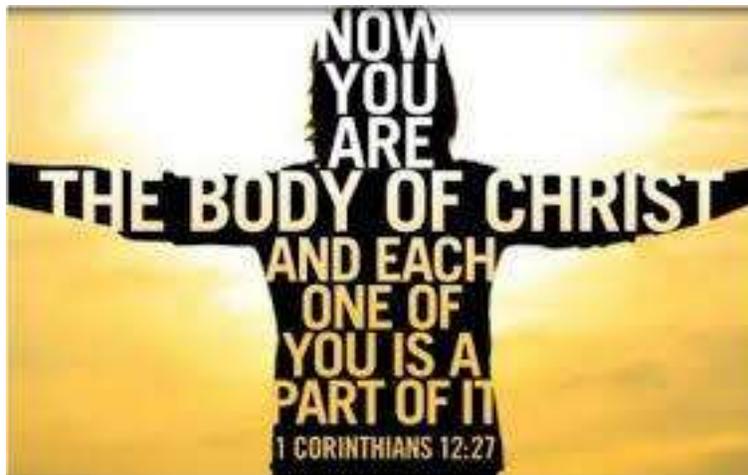


Do you shop at Amazon online or know someone who does? And did you know that by shopping at Amazon you could be helping St. Thomas' Church? Amazon has a program called AmazonSmile which is a website operated by Amazon that lets customers enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping features as on the regular Amazon site. The difference is that when customers shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the charitable organization selected by you! So, if you use Amazon online, please consider using AmazonSmile and select **St. Thomas' Church, Greenville, RI** as your charity. Just sign in through the link below or create a new account if you do not already have one, then follow the step by step directions on screen. <https://smile.amazon.com/>

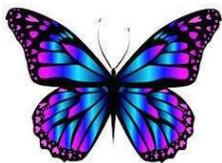
Our 168th

ANNUAL
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING

The 168th Annual Meeting of St. Thomas' will take place on January 20th 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 take a look back, and we also look to the future. 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 20th after the 2nd service! The proposed budget for 2019 will be available to pick up at church services the weekend before the Annual Meeting. Plan on joining us!



WINGS GROUP TO COOK AND PLAN



St. Thomas' women of all ages are invited to attend our next meeting of WINGS (Women in Need of Growing Spiritually), to be held on Monday, January 21st in the Parish Hall from 6 to 8pm. Our evening will begin in the kitchen, where we prepare soup which will be featured at a future Church Beyond the Walls meal. While the soup is cooking, we will enjoy one another's company as we discuss plans for the year ahead. Bring your ideas! We aim to present a program which reflects the interests of all our members and need your input for this goal. Questions? See Carolyn Villanova or Karen Pare.

CHURCH BEYOND THE WALLS-- JANUARY SERVICE DAY



St. Thomas' continues to help deliver scripture, food, and cheer to those in need every other month at Burnside Park in Providence, starting at our diocesan headquarters on North Main Street. Volunteers ages 15 and up are invited on Saturday,

January 26th, to prepare sandwiches at the diocesan kitchen at 11am. You will be welcomed personally by the group's Rector to prepare for the afternoon, and receive support and guidance from staff members. The worship community which meets at the park in the afternoon includes chair-setters, a drummer, and a chorister, as well as security personnel. After the 2:30pm Eucharist you can help serve the fellowship meal or just be part of the group. Your presence alone will make a difference!

We will pray for a warm day, but please dress for the weather-down jacket, gloves, hats, and heavy duty boots. You may help with the morning activities or with the Eucharist and meal in the afternoon, or with both. Meet at St. Thomas' to carpool at 10:30am to carpool, or meet us there. The diocesan office is at the end of Smith St., with parking on-street or in the lot. The kitchen entrance is the last door on the right. Please call us to check on change of plans: 219-9089. Thanks, Tom and Cindy Mulvey.

EPISCOPAL CHARITIES CLARIFICATION



For several years St. Thomas' parishioners have been confused by receiving a letter from the Episcopal Diocesan offices requesting contributions to the Episcopal Charities Fund in January and then by receiving a similar packet at church in February. Why two requests? A call to the EC director has cleared up the confusion! Apparently some churches do not participate in the drive as a church group, but individual members may choose to give on a personal basis. So as not to miss anyone, EC sends mailings to all known Episcopalians in January.

We at St. Thomas' do have a yearly drive for Episcopal Charities, usually in February. You will receive your pledge card at a church service. So **please do not fill out a form in January, but wait for our drive in February** to contribute! More questions? Please see Jean Marz or Jane McKay-Nesbitt.



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.)

Joan has the new "Altar Flower Chart" for 2019 in the Rectory, and would be happy to check a date for anyone who so wishes. Each Sunday is on the chart, and names are listed on the chart for any particular Sunday when they are finalized. We only take **two dedications** per Sunday, so it is *first come, first served*. Only when a check is received in the office and the date is confirmed with Joan is your date considered reserved. We ask that you choose an alternate date if your first date is already full.

Altar flower dedication forms are available in the wooden rack in the Narthex or in the Parish Office. We are now accepting requests for 2019 - so you may reserve a Sunday in 2019 now. If you have a specific date in mind, we suggest you act sooner rather than later! If you have any questions, just email Joan at: office@stthomasepiscopalri.org or call the office and leave a message, and we'll get back to you. (949-2260)

School of Discipleship

We are taking a little break for much of the month of January – as the snow might swirl and the icy temperatures take our breath away we are aware that going out in this weather is a struggle for many folks. So, we will resume the School of Discipleship at the end of the month on January 27th – Fritz Gorman will be leading a lively discussion after we view the movie: ***"Everything is Spiritual"*** by Rob Bell

Some of us have seen the movie more than once, but this is one of those inspiring movies that you can watch multiple times and come away with exciting new insights. After the movie, which lasts a little over an hour, we will enjoy sharing a discussion of our impressions. So join us after the second service at 11:30 on Sunday, January 27th. Feel free to bring a bag lunch and we will provide the popcorn!



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Wayne Derosier 1

Antonio Dias 2

Madeline Young 5

Caiden Young 5

Sally Hersey 7

Audrey Poliquin 11

Roger Teixeira 11

Diamantino Carrara 12

Debra D'Angelo 15

Lori Kane 18

Nicole Lavallee 18

Linda Gorman 19

Julia Couture 21

Kelly Sarette 23

Harold Hodgins 27

Sandra Leigh 27

Donna Stolasz 28

Robert Fiske 29

Mark Plante 30

JANUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Lonnie and Carol Thurber 21



Coffee Hour



Sunday Coffee Hours are the perfect time to meet new and old friends! We host two coffee hours every Sunday morning: after the 8:00am service and after the 10:00am service. Come to coffee hour and greet newcomers and meet parishioners you may not know very well yet. And you might want to sign up to provide baked goods, fruit or other goodies – just see Deb Farrar, who does a masterful job of making sure we are well taken care of during this lovely time of fellowship and refreshment and schedule an upcoming Sunday morning.

And feel free to bring in your own special mug for our mug rack in the parish hall, - it is part of our stewardship to “go green”. (There are green “St. Thomas” mugs if you haven’t brought in your own mug, and for visitors!)



~ January 2019 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 9:00 HE & Healing service	3	4	5 5:30—HE
6 8:00 HE 10:00 HE 	7	8 6:00-8:00pm Book & Movie Group 6:30pm Vestry	9 9:00 HE & Healing service	10	11	12 9:00am Property Mtg. 4:00pm Caregiver Support Group 5:30—HE
13 8:00 HE 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 HE 5:30 Celtic Service	14	15	16 9:00 HE & Healing service	17	18	19 10:30 am CBW carpool 5:30—HE
20 8:00 HE 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 HE 11:30am Annual Meeting	21  6:00-8:00pm WINGS	22	23 9:00 HE & Healing service	24	25	26 5:30—HE
27 8:00 HE 9:00 Capital Campaign Meeting 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 HE 11:30am "Everything is Spiritual" Movie	28 6:30-8:00 pm Order of St. Luke meeting	29	30 9:00 HE & Healing service	31		

Saint Thomas' Episcopal Church

At Routes 44 and 116
P.O. BOX 505
GREENVILLE, RHODE ISLAND
02828



THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. THOMAS' CHURCH
January 2019

Collect for Epiphany 2

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting, *Amen.*

BCP

