

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church



The Front Page March 2019

Transition 1: The vestry met this past Sunday (February 24, 2019) at the rectory with the Rev. Canon Linda Grenz (Linda). Linda and the vestry had a good dialogue. Most members of the vestry have not been involved with the process of selecting a new priest, or if having done so, the occasion was so long ago that time and distance make such an experience almost irrelevant.

The process has changed greatly in recent years! No longer is the term “search committee” employed, but rather “discernment.” The dictionary defines discernment as “keenness in seeing and understanding; good judgment” Thus the first step in the selection process will be to discern the members of the parish who will serve on the committees as the vestry deems appropriate. Hopefully at their retreat at ECC this weekend (March 1 and 2), the vestry will be able to establish several committees which reflect the needs and wants of St. Thomas’ parish, using the discernment guidelines. During this time your prayers are very much needed.

No longer are curricula vitae and glossy 8 x 11 photos used! Instead there is a nationwide database, and the Diocese will act as the repository for collecting information with regard to potential candidates. HOWEVER, it falls to the parish to inform Linda what St. Thomas wants in our future rector, and MORE IMPORTANTLY what we do not want. A list of questions will be given to each of you to seek your opinions, and upon which the discernment process will rely. It is very important that we hear from you so that your opinions are known.

Linda feels strongly that St. Thomas’ is in a good position to find a priest who meets our needs, given our size, our financial stability, and the fact that Rhode Island is an attractive place for a good priest, given Bishop Knisely’s reputation.

Linda has identified both a long term supply priest (March through April) and an Interim Priest thereafter who will serve at St. Thomas’. It is important to note that neither priest will be a candidate for the position of full time Rector. This is an important step in keeping the continuity of our parish community.

So I invite you to pray for us vestry members this coming weekend, AND please let us know what is important to you in the in fulfilling your spiritual journey.

Make haste to be kind.

Rick Kyte, Senior Warden

What's Going On?

Information about what is happening at St. Thomas' as we begin to look for a new Priest.

1. Who will lead worship during this time of transition?
 - a. We expect to have a Supply Priest from the beginning of March until the end of April. By May 1, we expect to have an Interim Priest who will stay with us until we have a new priest. Reverend Linda Grenz is the Bishop's representative, and is charged with helping us during this transition period. She has identified people for each of these positions and is in the process of finalizing their appointments. As soon as these appointments are confirmed, members of the congregation will be notified.
2. How long will it take to find a new priest?
 - a. It currently takes about 9 months but it could take more or less time, depending on the Discernment Committee's willingness and ability to devote time to finding a new Priest.
3. What will the Supply Priest do?
 - a. We expect the Supply Priest will work about half time. The Supply Priest will conduct worship services and do some pastoral work, as time permits.
4. What will the Interim Priest do?
 - a. The Interim Priest will work full time for us and do much the same work as a permanent Priest does. Having an Interim Priest allows the congregation to spend time to find the right person to serve our congregation.
5. Will the worship schedule remain the same? (Saturday evening, 2 services on Sunday, healing services, Celtic worship?)
 - a. It is important for us to maintain our regular schedule of worship services and the Vestry will work very hard to ensure that we are able to do that. We expect the Supply Priest and the Interim Priest will lead worship during the times that we have regularly met in the past.
6. Who will provide pastoral care?
 - a. Our Supply and Interim Priests will provide pastoral care during their time with us. Until they are in place please contact Junior Warden (Jacki Zahn (jmz222@outlook.com; 401-651-6401) and she will contact the Lay Ministry Team or a priest if necessary.

7. What is the process for finding a new priest?

- a. The Vestry will form several committees who will be involved in this process. There will be a Discernment Committee (review applications and interview candidates); a Communication Committee (communicate with members of the congregation); a Prayer Committee (pray for the congregation and this undertaking); a Welcoming Committee (assist the new Priest in getting settled into our parish and community); and there may be others.

Members of these committees will be prayerfully selected by members of the Vestry. Vestry members may be part of these committees but the majority of the members of the committees will be drawn from the congregation.

8. How can I be involved in choosing a new priest?

- a. There is a set of questions regarding a new Priest that the Diocese has prepared for us to consider. You can participate by providing your responses to these questions when they are distributed.
- b. You can pray for all involved in the process of finding a new Priest.
- c. You can ask questions of the Vestry and others. It is quite possible that others may have the same questions as you, so please do not hesitate to ask your questions.
- d. You can let members of Vestry know about your questions and concerns.
- e. You can continue to share your time and talents with all of us at St. Thomas. We need you just as much as we have in the past.

9. When is the church office open?

- a. Joan is currently in the office on Wednesdays from 9:00 to 4:00. When we hire a new administrator, that will change.

10. I used to email or phone Rev. Susan with my questions and concerns. Whom do I contact now?

- a. Until our Interim Priest has joined us, please contact our Senior (Rick Kyte; rkyte1@cox.net; 401-954-2765) or Junior (Jacki Zahn (jmz222@outlook.com; 401-651-6401) Warden.

11. What about Grace? Will she be able to continue on with us?

- a. The Bishop has reminded us that Grace will not be with us forever. We are indeed fortunate however to know that Grace will be with us for the time being and will continue to play an important role in our parish.

12. What about the church staff (Joan, the Parish Administrator, and Eric, the Sexton?)

- a. Joan will be with us until Easter. Eric has not given us a final date. We will certainly miss them! We are in the process of finding people who will be able to fill these important roles.

13. What are the effects of this transition period on our finances?

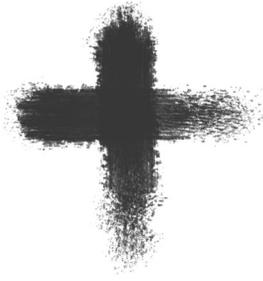
- a. We expect that the Supply Priest (March and April) will be working half time so our salary and associated costs will be slightly reduced. The Interim Priest will work full time so we expect that our salary and associated costs will be approximately the same as they were before Rev. Susan left us.

14. Whom can I contact if I have questions or concerns?

- a. Please contact our Senior (Rick Kyte; rkyte1@cox.net; 401-954-2765) or Junior (Jacki Zahn (jmz222@outlook.com; 401-651-6401) Warden.

Note: Please don't forget how important it is that we communicate and coordinate with one another during this transition period! Continue to notify Joan by Tuesday if you need to put an announcement in the Sunday Bulletin. All requests for special events must be run by the Vestry.





Ash Wednesday

Imposition of Ashes

&

Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, March 6th

Noon & 7 pm*

*Note that the 9 am service is canceled for this day.

What is Lent?

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday, this year April 20th. The word "Lent" comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, which means lengthening or spring. The forty days symbolize the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring temptation and preparing to begin his ministry.

Lent is a time of self-examination and reflection to ready ourselves for the coming of Easter. In the early church, Lent was a time to prepare new converts for baptism. Today Christians often focus on their relationship with God, and sometimes add meaning to the period by additional prayer or service to others, rather than by the former practice of giving something up.

Easter this year falls on Sunday, April 21st.



PANCAKE SUPPER TO MARK SHROVE TUESDAY

St. Thomas' will celebrate Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday which is also known as Mardi Gras, with a traditional pancake supper on Tuesday, March 5. Seatings will be between 5:30 and 7pm. Come join us for a delicious supper of pancakes, sausage, and bacon! Please bring a dessert to share as well. There is no charge for the meal, but a free will offering will be taken up to benefit the St. Thomas' Capital Campaign.

Please sign up on the ministry table to indicate whether you are coming. If you can help in any way with set up, serving, or clean up, there is also a list for you! Many hands make light work, and we look forward to seeing you there!

"WE'RE JUST PEOPLE"

Save the date! On Thursday, March 21st, from 6 to 8pm, a Soup and Salad dinner will be held in the parish hall to introduce "We're Just People", an exciting outreach ministry of feeding the hungry which has been developed by Barbara Flanagan and Rose Preston. Come hear their stories of the "Talegating" experience, as they offer food and friendship from their vehicle to folks in the Woonsocket and Pawtucket areas during the evening. Theirs is truly a person-to-person ministry which reaches out directly to those in need who live in urban areas not always served by other programs. If you are able, please bring a donation of food or other items (socks, toiletries, etc.) which might be useful to members of these communities. This is a wonderful opportunity to "take on" a project as part of your Lenten discipline! See you there!



Don't forget to set your clocks ahead one hour on Saturday night, March 9th, as Daylight Savings Time begins. That way you won't be late for church on Sunday!



EPISCOPAL CHARITIES KICKOFF NEARS

March marks the beginning of the annual Episcopal Charities drive at St. Thomas', with the campaign set to begin on Sunday, March 17th after both services. It will continue for three Sundays, and be headed by Jane McKay-Nesbitt, Shawn Scott, and Jean Marz. Stop by their table in the parish hall to receive your pledge card, along with a muffin or cookie to sweeten your morning! Episcopal Charities is a wonderful organization which issues grants to social service agencies in Rhode Island, serving a number of needy populations-everyone from newborns to the elderly. One of its most attractive features is that all monies donated are used for the grants themselves; administrative costs of the program are covered by an endowment. How many charities can make this claim!

Please remember to use the pledge envelope you will receive at St. Thomas' rather than the one you receive in the mail from the diocese. Their mailing is intended for folks whose parishes do not participate in an individual drive.

St. Thomas' parishioners have always been generous in their giving--let's continue the trend!

CELTIC WORSHIP CONTINUES

The next Celtic Worship Service will be held on Sunday evening, March 10th, at 5:30pm in the church. The March service will be similar to the one held in March of last year, so the music should be familiar to regular attendees. Come join us for a unique worship experience!

The worship committee is also excited that they have been invited to lead a Celtic service at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Bristol, where Father Don is currently the interim priest. The date for this service is Sunday, March 3rd. See Donna Doris or Kim Murdoch if you are interested in attending



Get ready for a St. Thomas'
St Patrick's Day Feast!

Saturday, March 16th

First Seating: 5:00pm
Second Seating: 6:30pm

**Delicious Corned Beef, Boiled Potatoes, Carrots and
Cabbage**



\$14 adults and under 12s are free
Bake a “Green” Dessert to share!

Are you interested in planning additional fundraiser dinners and events? Then please attend a special meeting on Sunday, March 17th at 9:15 in the parish hall to share your ideas and enthusiasm! These occasions help to keep us connected as parish family beyond the usual Sunday services and Coffee Hours. All are warmly welcome!! The meeting will be co-chaired by Sharon Thompson and Carolyn Villanova--see them with any questions.



EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

SCHOOL FOR DISCIPLESHIP TO HAVE LENTEN FOCUS

Our Lenten School for Discipleship study this year will be the Rob Bell book, "What We Talk About When We Talk About God." The book focuses on our concepts of who God is and how we can have a personal and rewarding relationship with him. Many of us are familiar with Bell's "Nooma" videos and have read his book, "Love Wins." In many ways this book is a sequel to that book and to his movie/lecture "Everything is Spiritual." The dates for the sessions are Wednesday, March 13th from 7 to 8:15pm, to be repeated on Thursday, March 14th from 10 to 11:15am, and the following two weeks on the same days and times. Sign up on the ministry table to receive a copy of the book and save your spot! See Fritz Gorman with questions (349-0321).

ANOTHER LENTEN OPPORTUNITY: DISCERNMENT QUIET DAYS

What is GOD calling you to do? The Episcopal Diocese is sponsoring two half-day sessions during Lent to provide you with the tools to help discern how you may best serve God right where you are! It is intended for lay folks, **not** for those seeking to discern a call to ordained ministry. Take the time to look inward and discover what God has in mind for you! The discussions will be led by Reverends Pam Gregory and Jennifer West. You are invited to attend either session:

Saturday, March 16th at St. Luke's, East Greenwich or

Saturday, April 6th at St. John's, Barrington.

Both will run from 9am to 3pm and include lunch.

Are you interested? There is a sign-up sheet on the ministry table, or see Deacon Grace for more information.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE NOTES

Here are a few updates on current property issues at St. Thomas:



--New cleaning people have been hired and will begin work on March 1. (Brenda and Lisa will usually be cleaning on Fridays unless the hall is being used.) A BIG THANK YOU to Philip Pare, who has kept the bathrooms cleaned in the interim.

--The recent leak in the Narthex is being addressed. A representative from the Architectural Preservation Group has inspected the bell tower and we are awaiting his report on the damage.

Please notify me of any property issues. I can be reached at jmz222@outlook.com, or call/text me at (401) 651-6401. Please leave a message if I don't answer, and I will be in touch.

Jacki Zahn, Junior Warden

WANTED: VOLUNTEER KITCHEN MANAGER

Someone needed to keep track of food in the refrigerator/freezer, make sure sinks are clean, check grease trap, check dishwasher chemicals, and more!

I have a more specific list of items that need to be covered if you can help. If a group of people wish to work as a team, we can divide up the chores or the time responsibility.

Please contact Jacki Zahn at the numbers above.

Church Beyond the Walls: Next service date is Saturday, March 23rd. See Cindy or Tom Mulvey for details. (401) 349-4115



MINISTRY NOTES

--Mother Nature caused the February **WINGS** group to be canceled. However, their agenda for the evening, A Visit with Mr. Rogers and His Neighborhood, will simply be moved to their March meeting. Join us on Monday night, March 18th, from 6 to 8 in the parish hall to enjoy the documentary about Fred Rogers' life and work and to share our memories of him. A special visit from his trolley will be featured! All women of St. Thomas' are cordially invited!



--Marty Brown is collecting used all-occasion and Christmas cards, which the Crafting Group turns into gift cards to sell at the annual **Bazaar** in November. She needs only the front section of the card for this purpose. Please place your cards in the box provided in the parish hall.

--**Flower Power** is returning this Spring! We will offer group ordering, so that you don't have to pay individual shipping charges. For each item you order, St. Thomas' receives 50% of the proceeds! And how exciting is it to see those late-summer bulbs bloom in our gardens in August and September! Look for more information in the Newsletter and Sunday bulletins in April.



--**City Camp** dates for this summer will be July 16, July 30, and August 13. Marty Brown writes, "I am thinking ahead to warmer weather and children laughing and playing on our lawn. If you haven't experienced this rewarding outreach ministry, please consider joining us. The children live in the Olneyville area and range in age from 6 to 12. We provide love, lunch, and a bag of healthy snacks for each child to take home. The children are supervised by ECC counselors. As we get closer to summer, watch for more details in the Newsletter and Sunday bulletins."



ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH
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Telephone: (401) 949-2260
Email: office@stthomasepiscopalri.org
Website: www.stthomasepiscopalri.org
Office Hours: Wed., 9am-4pm



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Janice Crouse 1

Paul Del Molino 2

Sharon Thompson 2

J. Ryan McNelis 3

Robert Williams 4

Jacki Zahn 5

Timothy Kane 6

Joan Williams 6

Wendy Grace 8

Paulette Lamontagne 9

Keith Catanzaro 10

Domenic Fiske 11

Donald Packer 12

Valerie Smith 16

Eliza Blais 22

Jennifer Dean 27

Mickayla Herchen 27

Kimberly Murdoch 27

Harold Nelson 28

Thomas Hodgins 29

Zavier McNulty 31

MARCH WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Tom and Cindy Mulvey 19

Jim and Emily Ritter 19



HOLY BAPTISM



At the 5:30 service on Saturday, February 2nd, Reverend Susan administered the Rite of Holy Baptism to Karalynn Corteen McNelis Sarette, infant daughter of Kelly McNelis and Maurice Sarette. Congratulations to Karalynn and her entire family! May she know God's blessing each day of her life!

Newsletter Editor: Karen Pare: klplamb24@gmail.com

Production Manager: Nancy Burton

Individual contributions of personal, spiritual experiences are welcome.



2019 Easter Flower Memorials

You may want to remember a loved one or give in thanksgiving for an occasion or special happening in your life with an Easter plant memorial.

The amount of your donation is up to you. Names of loved ones you honor or remember will be printed on an insert in the Easter bulletin.

Forms are due in the parish office

No later than Sunday, April 7, 2019

To contribute flowers, fill out this form and drop it in the plate on Sunday, or mail it to the parish office with your donation.

Please make the checks payable to **St. Thomas' Episcopal Church** with "Easter Flowers" in the memo line. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

IN MEMORY OF:

IN THANKSGIVING FOR:

Donation by _____ phone _____

Mailing Address: St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, PO Box 505, Greenville, RI 02828

MARCH 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 5:30—HE
3 8:00 HE 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 HE	4	5 5:30-7pm Pancake Dinner	6 9:00 Healing Service 9:30—1:30 Crafting group ASH WED. 12 noon and 7pm	7	8	9 4:00pm Caregiver Support Group 5:30—HE
10 8:00 HE 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 HE 5:30 Celtic Worship	11	12 6-8pm Book Group	13 9:00 Healing Service 9:30—1:30 Crafting group 7:00-8:15pm School of Discipleship	14 10:00-11:15am School of Discipleship 7:00pm Vestry	15	16 9am-3pm Discernment Day, St. Luke's 5:00 and 6:30 St. Pat's Dinner 5:30--HE
8:00 HE 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 HE Episc. Charities 9:15 Dinner planning mtg.	18 6-8pm WINGS	19	20 9:00 Healing Service & HE 9:30—1:30 Crafting group 7:00-8:15pm School of Discipleship	21 10:00-11:15am School of Discipleship 6-8:00pm We're Just People	22	23 11am Carpool, CBW 5:30—HE
24 8:00 HE 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 HE	25 Order of St. Luke Meeting 6:30-8pm	26	27 9:00 Healing Service 9:30—1:30 Crafting group 7:00-8:15pm School of Discipleship	28 10:00-11:15am School of Discipleship	29	30 5:30—HE
8:00 HE 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 HE Episc. Charities	Lent Begins – March 6 – Ash Wednesday WINGS Retreat – March 29-31 at ECC VESTRY RETREAT – March 1-2 SET YOUR CLOCK AHEAD 1 HOUR AT BEDTIME ON MARCH 9th					

Saint Thomas' Episcopal Church

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



THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. THOMAS' CHURCH
March 2019

Collect for Lent

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

BCP, p. 218

