



## Team Thomas Tidings

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**October, 2020**

### **From Canon Ernie Bennett:**

In Earnest

I am very proud to be part of the ongoing life of St. Thomas. The leadership of the parish is impressive – not that we have succeeded in every aspect of our common life – but that when faced with adversity, we have been up to the task. Thank you for that!

By now, you may have heard that we are moving back to two Sunday services, 8:00 and 10:30 AM, starting October 4<sup>th</sup>. For the time being we will be using Rite 2 at both services, primarily to conserve on the time required to produce two service leaflets each Sunday. Because of COVID restrictions, we are not able to use Prayer Books and Hymnals, so the service is printed on non-reusable leaflets. (Same is true for the Thursday 10 AM healing service). We'll see how that goes. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

I will also be offering a class in between Sunday services starting each Sunday at 9:15. This time slot will also provide a bit of fellowship. We will not be able to provide food, but we will have coffee. What I am planning is an introduction to bible study and an examination of Luke 15 (one of my favorite chapters in the New Testament).

This schedule will hopefully be a step in the right direction, while also providing for the safety of our parishioners. As we have come to expect in any gathering, we will require social distancing for non-related folks and masks will be required of everyone. Masks have become a new way to express your love for your brothers and sisters – they are more for them than they are for you. It won't be forever!

As we prepare for the fall season, I urge your continuing support, including your financial support. I am only with you for a season as your Vestry is actively involved in a search process for your new Rector. I have every confidence that the call will bring the right person to be your fulltime shepherd. We promise to keep you informed when something significant happens in the search process. We are counting on your communicating concerns, hopes and even fears. You can count on my support and that of the Bishop and Canon Holcombe.

Canon Ernie

### **Senior Warden's Report:**

First, let me thank all of you for your prayers and concerns during and after my recent prostate surgery in the hospital. It seems all old men face this problem sooner or later if you live long enough. I was very impressed with the hospital facility as well as the doctors, robotic equipment used in the surgery and general procedures conducted. The operation was a complete success, and everything is fine at this point. Thank you all very much.

Second, let me make some general comments about our status at St. Thomas. In short, we have a lot going on currently.

1. We are reorganizing the various committees at St. Thomas for more effective and efficient ministries. We will be holding more workshops in the near future to effect the changes needed at our church.
2. After copious amounts of "planning" we are finally starting to implement some action on some of these plans. Executing some of these plans, particularly in the area of buildings and grounds is going to be fairly expensive. This is largely the result of "deferred maintenance" items that were ignored in the past but must be addressed now if we are to continue to have sound buildings and an attractive campus in the future. Be prepared for some aspects of "Mr. Toad's Wild Ride" with regard to the budget as we cure some of our major building and grounds issues.
3. We are working with Canon Scott Holcombe to get an abbreviated search process going to select a new rector for St. Thomas. There will be more information with regard to our search as it develops.

Another item that has come to my attention recently is the attendance at meetings held by various committees at St. Thomas. According to our Canons, ALL meetings, with the exception of personnel meetings are open to ALL members of the church at ALL times. We do not have any secrets or closed meetings in the Episcopal Church.

In closing, let me thank you again for your support during my recent surgery. Even though we had a lot going on right now, I know we are headed in the right direction in rebuilding St. Thomas.

Leon Stricklen  
Senior Warden

### **Messages from our Deacon: Janet Clarke**

A View From The Bridge: Visioning, Envisioning, Looking Forward

#### QUIET DAY

I received an "all clear" to hold this Fall's Quiet Day on Saturday, November 21, from 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. in the parish hall. In order to be in compliance, lunch will be a "BYO" (bring your own). Beverages and dessert, however, will be provided.

The theme is, "Show Me the Way". Meditations will take us on a spiritual journey from where we are today, to our final destination.

There will be two sign-up sheets, one in the church's entryway and one in the parlor off the sanctuary, or, you may call me at home (352-728-0929) or the parish office (352-357-4358) and leave your name.

After months of COVID, come and take a spiritual journey with me on November 21. Faithfully yours,

Deacon Janet Clarke

### **A Message from our Treasury Team:**

Thanks to all of you for your continued support. Please keep those pledges and donations coming in. August was a particularly low revenue month. And, while August is historically a “slow” contribution month, we’ve also had some unusually high expenses, catching up on maintenance issues and resolving unanticipated problems with air conditioning. Our year-to-date net position (revenues less expenses) remains positive, but just *slightly*. We are building a sound financial future for St. Thomas and your backing is crucial. *The Treasury Team*

### **From our church Safety Team**

In order to comply with the **Diocesan COVID-19 Phase III Guidelines**, we need to maintain 6-foot social distance. Please sit behind the blue crosses placed in the pews. Our ushers may assist with seating upon arrival and will be dismissing congregants from the front and rear of the sanctuary at the conclusion of the service. Please exit your pew when instructed and move outside and away from the entrance. Please continue to wear your masks while in the sanctuary and if socializing outside. If you are feeling at all ill, please stay home and join us for worship which is live streamed on Facebook at 10:30, and is available on our website later in the day. These precautions are very important, as we have been instructed to shut down immediately for 2 weeks if there is a positive case of COVID-19 in our congregation in a person who attended in-person worship.

### **Other News:**

**Two Sunday Services coming October 4<sup>th</sup>!** Barring unforeseen circumstances, we will be returning to two Sunday Services beginning on Sunday October 4<sup>th</sup>. Rite II will be celebrated at 8:00 am and 10:30 am. Masks, sign-in, and social distancing are still required. The sanctuary will be sanitized between the services. We appreciate your patience in following these guidelines as we begin our return to the new normal.

**Church Office Renovation is ongoing.** Please note that the Church Office will be closed from Thursday, October 1 through Monday, October 5. Mr. Goodbrush of Mt. Dora will be painting ceilings, walls and trim and laying new flooring. This is a much-needed update after twenty-two years! We will be back open on Tuesday, October 6th.

**Mark your calendars for the St. Thomas Yard Sale!** Tell your friends and neighbors! St. Thomas will be hosting a huge Yard Sale on Saturday, November 14th from 9:00 to 2:00 to raise monies for our general fund. Yard Sale spaces rent for \$25 in the church parking lot. Parishioners get first choice. The church will have its extra furnishings for bargain prices. The Thrift Shop & Boutique will be open and has lots of clothing and unused items. If you wish to rent a space and sell some of your treasures, call Sally Hartenstein or Mary Shriner who are the coordinators for this event. There will be some great bargains, so come and shop.

**Help Wanted:** We are looking for parishioners to serve on the Memorial Garden Committee. It would involve working on the guidelines and plans for upkeep and upgrading. Please contact Diane Mullen if you are interested.

**Sunday, November 1 is All Saints Day.** This is when we honor those who have died in the past year. If you would like someone listed, please email or call Margaret Emerson at the church office by October 20th. Please use our new email address: office@stthomas.com.

**Vestry News:** The second Vestry Workshop has been rescheduled for Saturday, October 17th from 9:00am to 1:00 pm in the Parish Hall. With the assistance of a facilitator, the vestry is working on getting organized and setting up standard operating procedures for each committee. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please contact one of your vestry members.

The Vestry holds its regular meeting on the third Sunday of each month. The October 18th meeting will be held in the Parish Hall at 11:45 am.

The Vestry is also holding special meetings to discuss and plan for the calling of a new rector. These meetings are usually held on Thursday evenings and with Canon Scott Holcombe. If you have ideas or suggestions about calling a new rector, contact one of your vestry members.

**Businesses we would like to give thanks and recognition to for the month of October are:**

Michael at **Aegis Imaging** for keeping our office copiers up and running. Printing three bulletins a week keeps them busy working on our copiers.

Kent Wiseman of **RKW Lawns**, Inc. for improving the looks of our lawn.

**Bob's AC** of Umatilla for being there for us when we need quick fixes for one of our many ac units. Lately, it seems like they have had to visit us weekly.

**George Pawliczak & Son** for their work on repairing rotting windowsills and replacing doors and door frames in the office. George is also working to put our cross back on the sanctuary roof once it is repaired.

**Dates to Note in October:**

**We wish a very happy birthday to:**

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 01 Edward Squire  | 15 Louise Dixon |
| 02 Bette Dufour   | 18 Kelly Ortiz  |
| 03 Sue Kiefer     | 25 James Lehman |
| 05 Richard Dufour | 27 Dick Lubud   |
| 10 Jack Carter    |                 |

**We wish a very happy anniversary to:**

- |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 01 Dick and Ellen Judd      | 31 George and Ruth Pawliczak |
| 12 John and Margie Prentice |                              |

**Upcoming Dates for Vestry Meetings:**

Saturday, October 17, 2020 from 9am-1pm in the Parish Hall (workshop)

Sunday, October 18, 2020 at 10:15am (regular meeting)

**PRAYER LISTS:** We continue to update our prayer list each week. Please call or email Margaret in the church office to place someone on the list in the bulletin.

For immediate prayers for those who are ill or in need, please email Nancy Conley at [nancyjohn90@centurylink.net](mailto:nancyjohn90@centurylink.net) or call her at 352-350-4184 to be placed on the **PRAYER CHAIN**.

**Facebook** Please be sure to like our St. Thomas Facebook page. You can watch our live services here each week at 10:30 am in the month of October. Watching on Facebook live every Sunday helps to keep us in our Sunday routine and will keep each of us connected to our St. Thomas Family. Announcements and notices are on this page. We would love for you to share photos to our Facebook page as well.

Our current **OFFICE HOURS** are 10:00am to 2:00pm Monday through Thursday. The Office phone number is 352-357-4358. Please leave a message if the office is closed.

In case of an **emergency, contact:**

Deacon Janet Clark for **pastoral concerns** (352-728-0929)

Bill Kieran for **buildings and grounds concerns** (804-370-9897)

**FOOD DONATIONS:** We have many needy families in our community, especially now, so please bring in non-perishable food items and place them in the receptacle in the entryway. Jack Geeslin will be taking our donations to the St. Mary's Food Distribution Center every two weeks.

The **THRIFT SHOP**

Remember the Thrift Store now opened. You must wear a mask! Thrift store hours are Thursday and Friday 9am-3am and Saturday 9am to noon.

**The Lord bless and keep you all.**

**Vestry Members:**

Leon Stricklen, Sr. Warden, Diane Mullen, Jr. Warden, Matthew Robinson, Treasurer, Nancy Conley (Asst. Treasurer), Gail Carlson, Bill Kieran, Cynthia Lenninger, George Pawliczak, Monika Potter.