



The Steeple Bell

Information for the St. Thomas Episcopal Church Family, December, 2020



From the Pastor . . .

Dear Family of God at St. Thomas & Supporters,

I pray this December article in our monthly Steeple Bell newsletter finds you and your family healthy and staying safe re the Covid virus. Well, I can hardly believe we are almost in the

month of December and in about five weeks we will be celebrating the New Year of 2021. **Where did the year go?**

Meantime, we celebrate Thanksgiving tomorrow (this past week by the time you read this) and though we will all do our best to enjoy a festive meal of turkey with all the trimmings or another favorite meal either in our own home or away and will do our best to be thankful people, **we can't deny or forget that the shadow of the Covid virus is present with us causing us to feel anxious and uneasy at times.**

Sunday, November 29th, is the first Sunday in Advent and the beginning of a new church year. **Advent is a season of endings, of waiting, of hope and expectation** as we await the birth and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into the manger of our hearts at Christmas.

A major theme of Advent, too, is preparing our hearts and lives for the Holy One of Israel, the Messiah, the Redeemer, our Savior and Lord to come among us and take hold of us in the midst of all the uncertainties we are living with, currently, on a daily basis. **What a wonderful image to imagine God just scooping us up into His arms** so the light and warmth of His presence just melts away all else so we feel loved and safe.

In this current year of 2020, a predominant theme in our lives has been waiting. Daily we listen and wait for news of the virus hoping against hope that the number of Covid cases and lives lost because of it will have gone down. But, we hope against hope because so many people are finding the restrictions too hard to do over the long haul.

We have waited all year, though we know it's way too soon, for a safe vaccine to be discovered and manufactured. **But, by the end of this current year our impatient waiting may bear fruit by the grace of God and the first vaccines be available** for those persons putting their own lives in danger by caring for and serving the rest of us. Thanks be to our God for the knowledge and skills He has imparted to our people of science who have been working hard and diligently on discovering a vaccine. We pray that they and the fruits of their labor be blessed.

Now, it is more than time to set aside all the upheaval of our lives during this year of 2020, **so I invite us all to turn our hearts to the hopeful waiting but certain coming of our Lord Jesus Christ at Christmas.** Let us set aside anxiety, uncertainty and lives turned upside down and anticipate with joy the coming birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Let us all decorate our homes inside and out with the light of candles, Christmas lights, nativity sets and with symbols of our faith that express and proclaim that though we are a people that wait, **we wait with joyful expectation and trust that God in Jesus will come as God is always faithful to His promises.**

Let us not forget to prepare the manger of our hearts, too, that they be ready; clean and swept and fitting for the Christ child to come and be born in our hearts anew. **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**

Rev. Shirley, Gary & family +



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A monthly publication
of

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

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The head of the Church, Jesus Christ!

The Rev. Dr. Bonnie Perry,
Bishop of the Diocese of Michigan
& Rector of St. Thomas Church,
The Rev. Shirley McWhorter-Vicar
Cynthia Tise-Secretary
Carol Hoggard-Bookkeeper
Barbara Conroy-Music Director
Gerald Eory-Custodian

Bishop's Committee

Term expires Jan-2021

Term expires Jan-2023

Scott Abernathy (Warden)

Peter Boylan

Gary Sonnenberg

Janet Pounds

Cheryl Koerber

Sherry Fegreus

Secretary to the Bishop's Committee: Peter Boylan

Treasurer: Bishop's Committee

Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 9am-1pm

Tuesday & Thursday, 9:00am-2:00pm

Worship Services:

Sundays at 10:00am Holy Eucharist

Morning Prayer Services will be on the
2nd and 5th Sundays of each month at 10:00am

Wednesday, 10:00am Holy Eucharist (Sept-May)
and Seasonally as Announced

Christian Education

Adults-Wed 11:00am via Zoom (Sept-May) and
Seasonally as Announced

Ways to Participate Beyond Worship:

If you have an idea for a ministry or a group that
you would like the church to be involved in, please
speak to Rev. Shirley, and we'll see what we can do
to make it happen.

- Invite someone to worship or Bible study with
you, and offer to pick them up.
- If you haven't seen someone in worship lately,
give them a call or send a card.
- Invite a neighbor for coffee and offer to pray
with them.
- Volunteer for a committee.

Help generate some content for our church's
social media platforms:

- **Facebook:** [St. Thomas Episcopal Church Group](#)
- **Website:** stthomastrenton.org

****Financial and Time & Talent cards*** Please
bring them, mail them or put in the outside
mail slot to the right of the Church double
doors. Be sure to put your name on your
cards! Thank you!





December Birthdays

03 Nicholas Abernathy	22 Ronald Puchalski
07 Joan Sonnenberg	27 Marjorie Kienbaum
08 Jack Morrish	28 Gerald Eory
11 Mary Ellen Knaggs	28 Jason Meade
15 Ronald McHenry	29 Katherine Zook
20 Keith Beverly	

Next Deanery Meeting

The next Deanery Meeting is January, 2021.

Next Outreach Meeting

To be determined.

Next Clericus Meeting

The next Clericus meeting is on Tuesday, December 15th, 2020 via Zoom from 1:30-3:00pm

Next Bishop's Committee Meeting

The next Bishop's Committee Meeting is on Sunday, December 20th, at 1:00pm on Zoom.

Reverse Advent Calendar Project

During the 24 days of Advent this year, parish members of St. Thomas will have the opportunity to provide much needed food to St. Philip Lutheran Church food pantry.

The idea is to purchase 24 food items (soups, vegetables, cereal, fruit, etc.), place them in a grocery bag and deliver to

the pantry.

Kathy Zook will pick up the food if you are unable to deliver your donation. Food can be delivered on Wednesdays between 9:00am and 1:00pm at St. Philip Lutheran, 1790 Fort St., Trenton, MI. When you deliver your food please mention that you are from St. Thomas.

Any questions call Kathy at 734-785-8554 or cell 734-250-5124. Please leave a message.

Thrift Shop Update

Having been open for 20 years, the St. Thomas Thrift Shop closed permanently this fall. Outreach Committee members (and other elves) have been working for the past 3 months to disburse our wares/inventory. 35 bags of warm clothing, blankets, etc., were taken to Crossroads in Detroit. Clothing was also donated to Downriver Foster Closet, Detroiters Helping Each Other and ChristNet. In addition, we blessed Faith Methodist Church with racks for their clothing closet, First Methodist Church with books for their book sale, S.T.E.P. and Salvation Army with housewares, etc. After taking a break over the holidays, the committee will begin to unpack the spring/summer clothing for disbursal.

We thank all who have donated time and/or items to the Thrift Shop over the years. We will miss this wonderful Outreach project and the fellowship of our co-workers and customers.

December, 2020

Helping Schedule

Altar Guild: Susan Eory, Team Leader

Kimberly Abernathy, Jean Fox Lalaëff, Jean Pendell,
Nancy Sutherland, Mandy Vidusic & Kathy Zook

12/06	10:00am - Celebrant: Rev. Shirley
Birthday Blessing	Lector/Prayers: Janet Pounds
2nd Advent	Usher: Nan Morrish
	Sound System: Gary McWhorter
12/13	10:00am - W.L.: Janet Pounds
Morning Prayer	Lector/Prayers: Jack Morrish
3rd Advent	Usher: Jack Morrish
12/20	10:00am - Celebrant: Rev. Shirley
Anniversary	Lector/Prayers: Gary McWhorter
4th Advent	Sound System: Gary McWhorter
12/24	Celebrant: Rev. Shirley
Christmas Eve *	Lector/Prayers: Mandy Vidusic
	Usher: TBD
	Sound System: Gary McWhorter
12/27	10:00am - W.L.: Janet Pounds
1st Sunday after	Lector/Prayers: Mandy Vidusic
Christmas	Usher: Jacki Klein

* Due to Covid restrictions there will be no in person Christmas service, but the service will be recorded in time for members to watch the service during Christmas Eve evening.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

Bishop's Committee Meeting's Minutes

November 15th, 2020

Opening Prayer/Meditation: The Rev. Shirley McWhorter

Attendance: Rev. Shirley McWhorter, Janet Pounds, Sherry Fegreus, Gary Sonnenberg, Scott Abernathy, Peter Boylan, Carol Hoggard.

- **Finances:** September Finances reviewed. Scott moved to accept. Janet seconded. Unanimously approved.
- Janet moved to approve October financial report. Gary seconded. Unanimously approved.
- Scrip: Nan Morrish, Sue Eory and Gary McWhorter have helped in the past. We are looking for someone to run the scrip program.
- Need to talk with the Outreach Committee about what to do with the Thrift Shop account.
- Pledges are coming in slowly. We need to get everyone's pledge so we can make a budget
- Proposed budget tabled until December when more data will be available.

October Minutes: Scott moved to accept minutes as amended. Sherry seconded. Unanimously approved.

Ministry and Mission: Peter will look into the St. Luke's online activity

Correspondence and Thanks

Apportionment pledge received by the Diocese. Thank you note received from Diocese.

Thanks to Ron Puchalski for painting the doors in the church and for taking care of the leaves around the church.

Thanks to Steve Chapman for fixing the valve in the church and stopping the leak.

Thanks to Rob Sherry and Scott Abernathy for their generous gift of the Windows Online upgrade.

New Business

- Rev. Shirley is working on her health insurance application. Scott moves we continue with the top tier of insurance for Rev. Shirley. Peter seconded. Unanimously approved.
- January 24th proposed for annual meeting. We are going to plan to hold the meeting in the church for social distancing. If circumstances change, we will be prepared to hold the meeting on Zoom.
- Capacity of the Church for Christmas Eve Service: We will ask people to make reservations for the service so we can plan our social. Can Helping Hands or Outreach help with calling members to get reservations for Christmas Eve. Proposal is to have the service Christmas Eve in the afternoon before it gets dark to make it safe for everyone who avoids driving at night.
- We need 4 new Bishop's Committee members. Scott, Cheryl, Sherry and Gary are coming off the Committee. There will be 3 three-year seats and 1 two-year term.

Old Business

- Holbrook's provided an estimate for the fascia. We need another bid. Napier's and MGM is recommended as well. We will get 2 more estimates.
- Need to follow-up on church insurance survey

Our next meeting will be Sunday, December 20th at 1:00 on Zoom.

Closed with a prayer.

Submitted by
Peter Boylan
Secretary to the Bishop's Committee of St. Thomas Episcopal Church

Hope



Love

Peace

Joy



The Steeple Bell

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TO:

Coming Up In December:



All Mon. & Sat.	7:00pm - Zoom AA Meetings
All Wednesdays	11:00am - Zoom Bible Study
All Thursdays	5:00pm - Zoom AA Meetings
All Sundays	11:30am-1:30pm Covid Cleaning
Sunday, 6th	10:00am H.E. Service
Second Advent	Birthday Blessing
Sunday, 13th	10:00am Morning Prayer
Third Advent	
Sunday, 20th	10:00am H.E. Service., Anniv.
Fourth Advent	Blessing, Food Pantry Collection
	1:00pm - Zoom BC Meeting
	3:00pm - Zoom Coffee
Thursday, 24th	Christmas Eve Service
Sunday, 27th	10:00am H.E. Service
First Sunday	
After Christmas	

Morning Prayer Services will be on the 2nd and 5th
Sundays of this month.