



The Steeple Bell

Information for the St. Thomas Episcopal Church Family, February 2021



From Pastor Shirley . . .

Dear St. Thomas Family,

Well, this New Year of 2021 seems to be galloping away at break neck speed as we are already in the last week of January. Snow is on the ground outside, and it's rather cold. Brrrrrrh! We have a new President, Joe Biden, and new emphasis and action re getting the Covid virus under control and getting vaccines into people's arms. Yay! Thank you, Jesus!

Some of you at St. Thomas have already reported that you have got your vaccine or have an appointment. That is such good news and makes you feel like the vaccine program is moving along if you actually know folk who have got the shot.

We are now heading towards it being a year since the virus really took a hold here in the U.S. and we all started having to live with restrictions such as keeping social distance, wearing masks, washing hands frequently and not being able to do many things we love to do including coming to worship, in person, on a Sunday or Wednesday. It has all been very hard and getting used to this new norm does not mean any of us like it.

The majority of our St. Thomas congregation has been scattered to the four winds for the best part of a year now. We have been able to see some of you (average of 15-22) during the times we could offer in-person worship. Here in the church office, Cynthia and I have tried our best to keep in touch with you all but the amount of work for two part-timers and all the deadlines some of which are St. Thomas related and others at the Diocesan Office in Detroit has even made this difficult.

*It would be lovely to hear more from all of our members, especially those of you who have not returned to worship when it was allowed. **I would love to hear from you how you and your families are doing and if you have any needs or ideas you would like to share with me and the Bishop's Committee so we can begin to grow numerically, in vitality, and financial stability.** We, especially, need families with younger children here at St. Thomas.

***As hard as the Covid virus experience has been and still is, as a congregation we can't sit still or tread water, only, for a long period of time. We must move forward and find creative ways to continue to be the church reaching out to non-members in our community and world in the here and now.**

Each church is different because of location, number of active members, the age range of members, financial resources, gifts and talents etc. but it was impressive at our Downriver Deanery meeting last week to hear all of the creative things other churches were doing in the throes of this pandemic. One example; at St. Stephen's in Wyandotte they have booked a caterer who will make take-out pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday which is the beginning of Lent. These can be picked up by members and others who place an order. Not something we may choose to do here at St. Thomas, but I believe the collective talent and ability of our members is such that we can do far more than we imagine is possible during this Covid time.

Let us pray as a congregation and ask God to guide us re some new ministry endeavors we might take on that will bring growth in all the ways needed here at St. Thomas. **With God's help we can do all things!** Rev. Shirley +



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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!***





February Birthdays

02 Patricia Hall	12 James Elgin
06 Andrea Vidusic	16 Brian Weston
08 Jacki Klein	25 Thomas Mears
10 Susan Weston	27 Virginia Lickliter
	28 Beth Ann Mace

Next Deanery Meeting

Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at 7:00pm on Zoom.

Next Outreach Meeting

Nothing is scheduled this month.

Next Clericus Meeting

The next Clericus meeting is on Tuesday, February 16th, 2021 via Zoom from 1:30-3:00pm

Next Bishop's Committee Meeting

The next Bishop's Committee Meeting is on Sunday, February 21st, 2021 at 1:00pm on Zoom.

Quote of the Month

"Never let any man drag you so low as to hate him."

Booker T. Washington

We invite you to pray for our country, a beautiful prayer from the 1928 *Book of Common Worship*. It is entitled,

"For Our Country"

Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage; we humbly beseech Thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of Thy favor and glad to do Thy will. Bless our land with honorable ministry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people, the multitude brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endow with Thy spirit of wisdom those whom in Thy name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that through obedience to Thy law, we may show forth Thy praise among the nations of the earth. In time of prosperity fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in Thee to fail; all of which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In a discussion between Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and Russell Moore, executive director of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, the point, he and Curry said, "is not to try and convince other people to see things your way, but to understand more about what life experiences have led them to their conclusions." Curry told of a priest in Utah who, after the 2016 election, brought people in his town together, not to debate political issues, but to tell stories about how they formed their beliefs

Can't sleep?

Try counting your blessings.



St. Thomas Episcopal Church Bishop's Committee Meeting Minutes on Zoom

January 17, 2021

Opening Prayer/Meditation: The Rev. Shirley McWhorter

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

Minutes:

Finances: December Finances reviewed. Scott moved to accept. Janet seconded. Unanimously approved.

December Minutes: Janet moved to accept minutes as amended. Gary seconded. Unanimously approved.

Ministry and Mission

Rev. Shirley is looking for things to put online for families with children. It would be good to develop things online to make the church more friendly and interesting to young families.

What can we do with the available space in the basement of the church? Any ideas would be appreciated. Are there are groups in the community that needs a meeting place? Could we provide that as a service to the community? Game night? Community game nights?

Correspondence and Thanks

Thanks to Cheryl Koerber for coordinating all the church projects, and getting quotes for everything.

Thanks to Judy, Jean, Barb, Cybil, and Cheryl for cleaning out the basement closets so the mold remediation can be done.

Thanks to Jim Kerns and Peter Boylan for making the video of Sunday services available.

Thanks for all of those going off the Bishop's Committee (Scott A., Sherry F., Cheryl K., Gary S.).

New Business

Sent out second financial commitment cards. If you haven't submitted yours, please send yours in or drop it off at the church office.

Rev. Shirley is coming up on the mandatory retirement age of 72. She has asked/inquired with the Bishop about staying on until we are past the pandemic.

Old Business

Cheryl is working on the mold issue in the basement. The stuff in the closets is cleared out so the remediation work can be done.

Cheryl got estimates for the north doors of the sanctuary. Scott moves that we have the doors replaced. Peter seconds. Unanimously approved. \$2,600 from the MUST fund.

Rev. Shirley will work with Cheryl to get the rectory repairs finished.

Need more quotes for the north church fascia/soffit repair.

Need to repair window glass in the hallway near the chapel. We have an estimate of \$750.

Warden's Corner: Scott sees financial challenges ahead, but he is encouraged by what he sees in the congregation.

Cheryl is thankful and grateful to everyone at St. Thomas.

Our next meeting will be Sunday, February 21st on Zoom.

The Annual Meeting is January 24th

Closed with a prayer.

Submitted by Peter Boylan, Secretary

February, 2021

Helping Schedule

Altar Guild: Susan Eory, Team Leader

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

02/07 10:00am - Celebrant: Rev. Shirley
Birthday Blessing Lector/Prayers: Janet Pounds
5th Sunday after Usher: Gary Sonnenberg
The Epiphany Sound System: Gary McWhorter

02/14 10:00am - W.L.: Janet Pounds
Morning Prayer Lector/Prayers: Mandy Vidusic
Last Sunday after Usher: Nan Morrish
The Epiphany

02/21 10:00am - Celebrant: Rev. Shirley
Anniv Blessings Lector/Prayers: Janet Pounds
1st Sunday in Lent Usher: Gary McWhorter
Sound System: Gary McWhorter

02/28 10:00am - Celebrant: Rev. Shirley
2nd Sunday in Lent Lector/Prayers: Janet Pounds
Usher: Jacki Klein
Sound System: Gary McWhorter

* Due to Covid restrictions there will be no in person church service, but the service will be recorded.

Calendar

Doodle Page

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St. Thomas Episcopal Church
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TO:

Coming Up In February:



All Wednesdays	11:00am - Zoom Bible Study
All Thursdays	5:00pm - Zoom AA Meetings
All Sundays	11:30am-1:30pm Covid Cleaning 12:00 Noon-Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, 7th	10:00am H.E. Service
5th Sunday after The Epiphany	Birthday Blessing
Sunday, 14th	10:00am Morning Prayer
Last Sunday after The Epiphany	
Sunday, 21st	10:00am H.E. Service, Anniv.
1st Sunday in Lent	Blessing, Food Pantry Collection 1:00pm - Zoom BC Meeting
Sunday, 28th	10:00am H.E. Service
2nd Sunday in Lent	

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