

ST. THOMAS' QUEST - SEPTEMBER 2010

THE VICAR'S CORNER



“And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ *Matthew 25:40*”

“Charity begins at home.” *Popular saying*

There is a lot going on at St. Thomas' this fall! Just check out the calendar printout for the next two months, or look at the list of activities coming up. Living the Good News, Evening Prayer, painting the church, the Fall Festival – we have so much to celebrate and so much to be thankful for. And we are thankful, too – we proclaim our thanks for what God is doing for us in the Holy Eucharist on Sundays and Principal Feasts of the Church. “Eucharist” means “to give thanks,” and that’s exactly what we gather to do on the Lord’s Day.

And yet. Right in the middle of our Eucharistic service, right after we encounter God in Holy Scripture, we do three things to respond to that Word: we reflect on some aspect of it in the sermon, we reaffirm the very grounding of our faith in the Creed – and then we pray. The particular prayer I’m thinking of is the Prayers of the People, and during that time one of our members leads us in praying to God for the needs of ourselves and others. There’s a specific list of things we’re supposed to cover in our prayers, listed right in the BCP on page 359:

Prayer is offered with intercession for

The Universal Church, its members, and its mission

The Nation and all in authority

The welfare of the world

The concerns of the local community

Those who suffer and those in any trouble

The departed (with commemoration of a saint when appropriate)

At St. Thomas we use one of the six suggested forms in the Prayer Book, but we are free to develop our own forms as well. (I think it would be a wonderful ministry for anyone interested to help write the prayers each week.) You can see how each petition or sentence on our prayers corresponds with one of the requirements above. The important thing to note is that prayers of the People are always required in a Eucharist – they are not one of the optional elements. So right in the middle of our celebration of thanksgiving, before we actually get to the Great Thanksgiving itself, we are asked to name before

God those people and situations that weigh on our hearts and minds and for whom we ask God to intercede. And it’s completely appropriate that we do so. It’s not that God necessarily puts us in the hard situations in which we find ourselves, and then expects us to thank him for it. That would be sadistic. Rather, we include a required intercessory prayer in our worship because it’s part of our response to the Good News itself. We renew our connections with those who need us by our prayers, and our prayer itself is efficacious and powerful. Prayer works. It changes hearts and minds and lives. Those who are praying and those being prayed for are equally blessed, but in different ways. Intercessory prayer has been a part of the Eucharistic celebration since at least the 3rd Century. I can tell you I am always humbled and gratified when I hear the phrase “Bob our vicar” during the petition for the clergy and leadership. I know that those who have asked for our prayers, or those we pray for on our own, are equally as uplifted. And that’s why every week we include the Parish, Diocesan, and Anglican Communion Cycles of Prayer in our bulletin.

Sometimes of course the only way to support those who need us is to pray. But I wonder if there are things we can do in addition to praying for them, especially when it comes to members of our own parish family. There are a number of parishioners and their families – too many, unfortunately – who are in need of support in various ways, some more drastic than others. I wonder if there is a way that we cannot only pray for them, but give them the cup of water, the hot meal, the warm coat. We do a lot for those outside the parish. How can give help to those of our own branch of God’s family here in St. Thomas’? Is there a way we can arrange for those who need help to be matched up with those who give help, while respecting the dignity of all in the process? I’ve got to think there is. After all, St. James said, “If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?” (James 2:15-16)

I don’t have any particular answers yet. If you have any thoughts on this, or even just a thought of a thought, please let me know. There’s a lot of need, right in our own parish community. One of the things we give thanks for when we gather is that we have so much already – it’s just a matter of getting from where it is to where it’s needed. Let’s figure out some ways to do that. I welcome your ideas!

Fr. Bob

FROM THE WARDENS

We are constantly growing at St. Thomas with new members coming to worship. It might be useful to publish in our newsletter each month explaining how we as a group run our church operations. For the month of September, perhaps we should begin by how the governing body of St. Thomas, called the Executive Committee, makes financial and property decisions.

First, the financial outline for the year is laid out in the budget, which is considered and approved by the EC at its February planning meeting. This sets the plan for what we think will be spent for the year. Some things, like clergy and personnel expenses, are fairly set, while others, such as maintenance, are more fluid. Once the budget is passed, all expenditures except for payroll go through the following process:

- For emergencies, such as the septic problem we had this summer, the Vicar and Wardens and other members of the parish and EC are consulted, as time allows, to decide who will be called in to do the service.
- For non-emergencies, usually the issue waits until the full Executive Committee meets to decide who to call in, whether and how many bids to get.
- Once the work is done, a bill is presented to the parish and forwarded to the volunteer bookkeeper (Diane Bryan), who records it in the Quickbooks software accounting system we use.
- The bill then goes to the Treasurer, Kathy Moore, who cuts the check and adds the first signature.
- The bill and the check then go to either of the Wardens for signature. All checks require two signatures, one of which should be a Warden.
- The only people authorized to sign checks are the Wardens, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.

At no time has anyone been hired who has not been approved by one, if not both Wardens in emergencies and by the entire EC otherwise. We depend on a great deal of volunteer effort to keep up our properties, and we look for volunteers first, whenever we can, as long as they are qualified. The Executive Committee, its members, including the Vicar, nor those authorized to sign checks make any payment without full authorization.

We strive to keep our finances as open and transparent as possible, so that everyone who chooses can stay informed. Our records are always open for inspection by any member of the parish, and we have an outside auditor, required by the Diocese, look at our books and financial processes every year. His findings are always included in the Annual Report. As your Wardens, we have primary responsibility

for the “temporalities” of the parish – our finances and property.

We hope this information is useful in encouraging new members to seek positions on the EC in the future. Next month, we will explain other offices and responsibilities.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to come to any one of us at any time. We know that the resources we oversee are given in trust, and we always try to ensure that trust is always respected.

Nancy Hansen
Sr. Warden

Dan Kadish
Jr. Warden

TREASURER'S REPORT

Parish Finances as of August 31, 2010

	August	Since Jan.
Offerings Received	\$6,603	\$54,161
Offerings Promised	<u>\$5,788</u>	<u>\$46,308</u>
Difference	\$815	\$7,853
Total Income	\$8,219	\$85,657
Total Expenses	<u>\$12,417</u>	<u>\$102,194</u>
Difference	\$-4,198	-\$16,537

Unrestricted Cash on hand: \$19,576

Thank you to all who have contributed! We greatly depend on your pledges and are grateful for your support.

SEPTEMBER EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The County work crews will begin painting the church on September 15 through October 1. If you can help with snacks for the workers, please drop your food off in the kitchen.

Sunday School begins for the season on Sunday, September 12 at 9:45 AM. Watch for more details!

First Sunday Supper Club: Beginning on Sunday, October 3 at 6 PM, with brief evening worship, a potluck supper, and a discussion on the topics of the day based on Episcopalian/Anglican principles. First topic: “What about the mosque near the Ground Zero zone?” There will be a sign-up in the lobby. Watch for more details!

Sunday Evening worship: In the hustle and bustle of our lives, making time to simply rest a bit can be a challenge. Beginning Sunday, September 12, we will once again offer a quiet and contemplative service of Evening Prayer at 6

PM, beginning with a half-hour of contemplation and rest. If you are interested in helping to provide music for this service, please contact Fr. Bob.

HIGH SEAS ADVENTURE UPDATE!

Well, Chadder, the chipmunk finally made it to the islands to help spread the Word of God!

Our Vacation Bible School was held in the evening from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. A light supper was provided for our "sailors" and great thanks go out to Francine Vince and to Barbara Mohr for providing some suppers. The galley crew of Gale MacPeek, Linda Lazicki and Fr. Bob also were a huge help in feeding those hungry sailors.

The participants had a wonderful voyage each night singing songs, creating art work, fun activities (I think we still are finding balloon pieces!) and watching enraptured to our newest sequel of our HIGH SEAS ADVENTURE with Chadder and a cast of others!

St. Thomas' newest acquisition, the projector, was remarkable and everyone had such a great time singing, dancing, laughing and just plain having fun!

Thanks to all who came on board to help out; Stan and Linda Lazicki, Gale MacPeek, Vickie Fiedler, Doug and Francine Vince, Stephanie and Mike Clouse, Barbara Mohr and Fr. Bob – Nancy Hansen

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Do not just give youth today's Bible learning; teach them how to study the Bible, giving them a solid foundation and practical ways to share their faith in daily life, to grow in faith and show service. Feasting on God's Word for a lifetime! Help youth discover that the Bible has meaning for life today; spiritual formation, discipleship, Christian community and faith knowledge. God is already at work in the lives of our youth. Pilgrimage is not about the destination, but about the journey; let us begin our pilgrimage together.

Welcome to a new season of play and learning! Let's empower all ages to be transformed in Christ as they explore the Bible, worship, service and ministry.

Some questions that we will address this year with our older groups will be; what is that red book and blue book that we use in church? Where did it come from, who wrote it? Why do we use them? What is a Liturgical calendar? Is it the same as our annual calendar? How does "Stewardship" effect us?

Our younger groups will be following the path to faith and Bible awareness through the program, Living the Good News. This curriculum follows the lectionary each week with story and craft.

Our youth program, Living the Good News, begins on September 12 at 9:45 A.M. Young people from pre-school to high school are invited to join! Every activity has a purpose in encouraging faith growth for all ages. – Nancy Hansen

"FUN-RAISERS"

The **annual flea market and vendor/craft** fair will be held on Saturday Sept 18th. Mark your calendar! .Our goal is to make more money than last year which was \$1,750.00. Please look around your home for items you can donate. Items can be dropped off in the community room after Sunday, Sept 12th. We will have a Bargain Basement with all the donated items and all vendors will be outside in the yard. We need a lot of help on that day! Parking attendants, cashiers, and of course lots of traffic so the vendors come back year after year so.... bring the family for a day of fun.

On Friday Sept 24, Sat Sept 25, Sunday Sept 26 from 12:00 to 4:00 pm we will be holding a Bag Sale to sell off all the leftover flea market items. This is a great time for your kids to gather up a bag of "new to them" toys for one low price. So come on down and join in the fun. All items left over from the flea market will be available for cheap, cheap, cheap!!!

We are holding a **cell phone-raiser** on a continuous basis all year long. Any kind of cell phone with the batteries plus any brand of inkjet or laser cartridges can be recycled. Help protect the environment and also help St Thomas in its fundraising efforts. Ask for donations from your employers, neighbors & friends. Please help!

Wells Fargo will pay St Thomas \$ 300.00 for any refinance or new mortgage that is obtained through Bob Goldwick, Mortgage Representative. Please pass the word on to friends and family. Last year we received \$600.00 for 2 referrals that mentioned St Thomas. Bob can be reached directly on his cell phone at 973-713-1416 or ask Linda Lazicki for more information. Remember you must mention St Thomas for us to get the check!

We are working on some pretty interesting fun raisers for 2011 that will add lots of excitement and fun, fun, fun. **Thank you to the ECW** for the purchase of a brand new projector that was used every day of our vacation bible school and look forward to movie nights for both adults, teens and youngsters!

Have ideas for fundraisers or social events? Please email Linda at c21lazicki@aol.com. All ideas will be considered. ...

We need a D.J. Does anyone have a friend or relative that can work at a reduced rate?

MEMBER TO MEMBER - By Parishioners, for Parishioners.
To add an item, please call or email the office!

Items Wanted and Items Offered:

Wanted to Sell or Donate:

Help Offered, Help Wanted:

Computer Help Needed! If you can help get my computer back on the Internet, please call me - Dave Mertens 973-209-4320.

DONORS' ROLL

St. Thomas' depends so much on the free gifts of time, talent, and treasure from members and friends as well. Here's what has recently been contributed for the well-being of the parish:

- A box (10 reams of copy paper)
- 2 reams of copy paper
- Food for VBS, the Parish Picnic, and Parish Work Day
- A new wall projector – donated by the St. Thomas' ECW
- Parish Work Day labor and materials
- Ongoing support for the bulletins
- Flowers for the Altar

Thank you to all our donors. If you know of or donated something yourself, please let us know!

FROM THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER:

Prayers Before and After Worship

O Almighty God, who pourest out on all who desire it the spirit of grace and of supplication: Deliver us, when we draw near to thee, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship thee in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP p. 830)

Grant, we beseech *thee*, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may, through *thy* grace, be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honor and praise of *thy* Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP p. 831)

ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Welcome one another, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God - Romans 15:7

The Rev. Robert F. Solon, Jr., Vicar
Mrs. Nancy Hansen, Sr. Warden Mr. Dan Kadish, Jr. Warden
Mrs. Kathy Moore, Treasurer Mrs. Paulette Beer, Clerk

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OUR VISION

We are a growing church family that reaches into and beyond the community. We have a welcoming and supportive environment, steeped in Christian tradition. We value new opportunities to enrich the minds and souls of all who come here.

GOALS

1. Inspire and energize our church community for growth.
2. Continue to develop our inreach and outreach ministries.
3. Enhance our existing Christian education programs.
4. Achieve parish status.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The year next to each name indicates the last full year of elected ministry.

<u>Ministry</u>	<u>Primary Leadership</u>
Chairperson	Fr. Bob
Education	Fr. Bob Nancy Hansen (2010)
Fundraising	Linda Lazicki (2012)
Financial/Administration	Kathy Moore (2012)
Hospitality, Social Events	Karen Scott (2011) Paulette Beer (2012) Linda Lazicki (2012)
Inreach	Debbie Belli (2012)
Outreach	Paulette Beer (2011) Emilie Dupont (2010)
Property	Dan Kadish (2011), John Mohr (2010), Bob Winter (2010)
Stewardship	Nancy Hansen (2010) Tom Brath (2010)
Worship, Pastoral Care, Communications	Fr. Bob

DIOCESAN CONVENTION DELEGATES

Ginny Mohr (2011), Kathy Moore (2012), Francine Vince (2013)

STAFF AND APPOINTMENTS

Music Director	David Christensen
Sexton	Ginny Mohr
Parish Accountant	Diane Bryan
Pledge Accountant	Rich Poplaski
Sunday School Director	Nancy Hansen