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# Tidings



*St. Thomas' Episcopal Church is an inclusive and worshipping Christian community that accepts the challenge of living the Gospel.*

## The Rector's Column

Hope can sometimes feel like a limited resource. With the many ways our world has changed this year and with the many people affected so drastically by all this change, it's getting harder to imagine the abundant hope scripture promises.

But I want to encourage y'all to keep on working towards hope. I know this may sound like seeking out a sliver of good news in inconsequential places, but the truth is, that's exactly the model Jesus provides.

Jesus convinced his followers he was who he said he was with an especially good day of fishing. The details of that story make it sound momentous, and I'm sure it was, but in the scheme of things, a good catch doesn't mean all that much, unless you were standing hungry on the shoreline.

One time, Paul fell off his horse, sustained a head injury, and couldn't see for a few days. Again, that's not *that* big of a deal until you remember that Paul's fall was a conversion moment that led to the spread of Christianity throughout the Mediterranean world.

Another time, a stranger saw a puddle and asked to have some water sprinkled on his head. A shower of puddle water doesn't just sound insignificant, it sounds just plain gross. But again, the smallness

of the moment doesn't live up to the implication of it. From that moment on, it became abundantly clear that Gentiles could be in the club, too.

This happens all over scripture! Jacob liked stacking rocks. Peter ate other peoples' cooking. Jesus had a drink of water. A fisherman found a ring. A woman opened her home. A friend said he'd be there, no matter what.

None of those things on their own mean all that much on a grand scale, but that's kinda the point. God provides plenty of earth-shattering scenes, but there's something about the way Jesus moved in the world that embraced the small, the local, the personal. Jesus had a way of distilling his unfathomable cosmic grace and mercy onto a single human being in a single interaction.

And that quotidian focus gets echoed in our sacraments, too. We regularly see regular stuff, like bread or water, take on great meaning. Communion isn't just about bread; it's about community. Baptism isn't just about washing; it's, well, it's also about community. In many ways, all the sacraments come back to the simple and incredible claim that, because we follow Christ, the way we interact in community with other people is changed.

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Focusing our desire to help, our search for meaning, our love and kindness and generosity down onto small moments in seemingly insignificant places isn't just what we're supposed to do; it's what Jesus calls us to do.

One of the many places I'm drawing hope from these days is that honed-in, immensely personal model given to us throughout the Bible. This land matters. This church matters. These people matter. Small as we may be in the global view, we have the opportunity to change the world for one person at a time, up close and personal.

With prayers for courage,  
Brooks+

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### Scripture Lesson

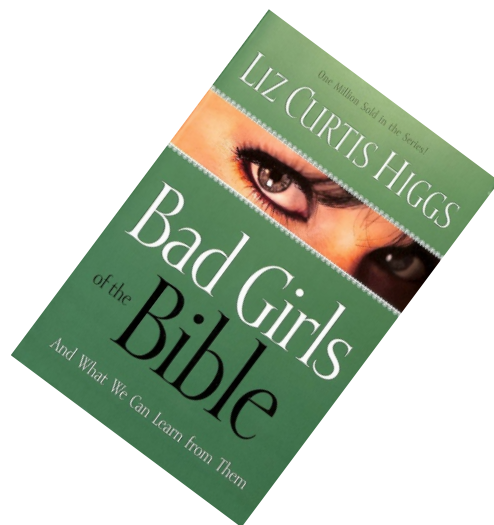
Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out; judge righteously; defend the rights of the poor and needy.

—Proverbs 31:8-9



### Join the Conversation: Bible Study

After 7 years, the Bible Study Class will finish the intensive study of scripture this month, but that doesn't mean Bible Study class is ending! Beginning June 19th, Fr. Steve White will guest teach over the Summer with classes inspired by the delightful book *Bad Girls of the Bible* by Liz Curtis Higgs. No need to read or prepare in advance, just come ready to have a grand ol' time!



### Open House Celebrating the Hamilton Food Cupboard's New Home

Saturday, June 28, 1:00 PM—3:—PM  
4000 Wings Way Extension  
Hamilton, NY

Come tour the new space and help them mark this exciting milestone.

Refreshments will be served

## Pentecost

Spirit of God  
put love in my life.  
Spirit of God  
put joy in my life.  
Spirit of God  
put peace in my life.  
Spirit of God  
make me patient.  
Spirit of God  
make me kind.  
Spirit of God  
make me good.  
Spirit of God  
give me faithfulness.  
Spirit of God  
give me humility.  
Spirit of God  
give me self-control.

—From Galatians 5:22–23,  
Andrea Skevington




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## New Directory

We're working on a new Directory! Keep your eyes peeled for more information, including when we'll hold our Picture Days!

## Leah Brockway's Baby News

Welcome to St. Thomas', Iris Nancy Brockway!  
She was born healthy and hardy to Leah and Chris Brockway on May 22.

Leah is on maternity leave this summer getting Iris ready for her parish debut. They both plan to be back with us at the end of August.



## Sunday School

Beginning June 15th, there will be no Youth Sunday School classes over the Summer. That said, the Nursery and Godly Play rooms are open for your kids (BYOSupervision) on Sunday mornings.

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## **St. Thomas' Episcopal Church**

### **Vestry Minutes**

### **April 28, 2025**

*Present:* Debbie Barker, Brooks Cato (presiding), Wynn Egginton, Connie Harsh, Kerry Linden, Rose Novak, John Orr, Jane Welsh, Ellie Weyter

*Absent:* Martha Berry, John Bowen

#### *Call to Order*

The meeting began at 11:33 a.m. in the parish hall. Debbie Barker opened the meeting with a prayer.

#### *Clerk's Report*

The minutes of the March 23rd vestry meeting were approved as submitted in final draft. Approval was moved by Jane Welsh; seconded by Debbie Barker.

#### *Treasurer's Report*

John Bowen submitted the following Treasurer's Report to the vestry members:

"There were no major changes or challenges in March. Pledge payments remained ahead. There is a healthy balance in the checking account. Investment accounts followed the general market gyrations and were down for the month.

Utility bills were high.

Budget and Finance will be preparing for this summer's in-house audit in the weeks ahead."

Wynn Egginton moved that the Treasurer's Report be received; Jane Welsh seconded the motion. The vestry voted to receive the Report as submitted.

#### *Rector's Report*

Brooks Cato announced that Maureen Ghent had resigned her vestry position in light of her move to New Jersey. Also, owing to Deborah Knuth Klenck's recent passing the vestry is now reduced by two positions. Brooks said that he had spoken with the wardens about whether it would be advisable to fill those slots now or to wait. They had decided that since we are about to go into the summer months, when business is slow, that it would be appropriate to wait and to fill the slots in September along with any others that need

filling.

Brooks then presented the following two resolutions on behalf of the vestry:

#### **First, a resolution honoring Deborah Knuth-Klenck:**

"Whereas, her membership at St. Thomas' was long-established and delightful;

Whereas, her voice soared from the choir loft and drew our hearts heavenward;

Whereas, her wit kept us laughing and her heart held us close;

Be it resolved that at the regular meeting of this body, the Vestry extends its gratitude for her witness and our grief at her absence. We will miss her dearly and are ever-grateful for the time our lives overlapped with hers.

May she rest in peace and rise again in Glory."

Following this, Debbie Barker moved that the resolution be passed; Wynn Egginton seconded the resolution. The resolution passed unanimously.

#### **Second, a Resolution for Easter Sunday:**

"In appreciation for the incredible work put in by our many volunteers, the Vestry offers its gratitude for a beautiful Holy Week and Easter. While St. Thomas' reliably honors the final days of Christ's life with aplomb, the stretch of days and services from Palm Sunday through Resurrection Sunday and even onto the stunning funeral conducted on the Tuesday in Easter Week were especially affecting. From the Procession into Jerusalem to the Gates of Heaven, we experienced an extraordinary week of deep faith, moving music, friendly welcomes, gorgeous floral arrangements, flawless preparation of the sanctuary, delicious food, faithful service, evocative readings, and spiritual exploration. The staff and volunteers 'set the conditions of possibility' for an exceptionally tender Holy Week. Thank you to all who contributed to this year's observance, thank you to the parishioners who attended and brought guests along with them, and a very special thank you to Mr. Murphy (of Murphy's Law fame) for being on his best behavior."

Following this, Jane Welsh moved that the resolution be accepted; Ellie Weyter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Finally, Brooks informed the vestry members that Kathleen Stahl has agreed to replace Leah Brockway while she is on maternity leave.

Kathleen, who has been our bookkeeper in time past, will also be able to handle those tasks. Brooks stated that he might also welcome a few volunteers who could come into the office for short periods and help with small tasks while he and Kathleen are out of the office.

### *Wardens' Report*

Jane Welsh seconded Brooks Cato's praise for the Easter period services and the lovely funeral service for Deborah Knuth-Klenck in which the music had been extraordinary. She had nothing more to add at this time in the meeting.

### *Commission Reports*

*Rectory Building Project:* John Orr reported that the planning phase for the rectory renovations continues and that progress is being made. Many discussions are taking place at the moment and the planning documents are in fairly good shape. Since the last vestry meeting, Ted Bartlett (from Crawford and Stearns) has met with the Buildings Commission to discuss where we are now. The Commission has seen the first stage of the illustrative drawings. Additionally, they have laid out the breadth of the project and decided upon the four phases of work in which the work will take place, essentially what will be done and when. Refining the latter is taking place now and preliminary drawings showing the actual work (layered atop the structural illustrations we now possess) should be available in mid-May. John passed around to vestry members the first stage (referred to as Part A) of drawings that the work elements will be imposed upon. Part B (to follow) will include a more detailed set of drawings. At that time, the Commission will also receive a bid process for the kinds of work that will occur. Also, the renovations will have to be shared with the village code officials who need to be notified of what will occur during the construction project. Not only will these aspects of the renovation become clear in mid-May, but an estimate of costs for the additional drawings (those prepared separately for purposes of actual construction) will be submitted. With all of this happening, another meeting of the Buildings Commission will take place in mid-May. Brooks Cato rounded off the conversation by informing the vestry that two parishioners have come forward with environmental concerns regarding the project and it was determined that it would be a good idea to form a subcommittee to address this aspect of construction at St. Thomas' in the future.

### *Old Business*

- *Safe Church Training:* Martha Berry has a leader in mind for the program and she is working on scheduling a date.
- *Directory:* Brooks Cato stated that St. Thomas' is now looking into enlisting a different company to do this work. It now looks as if they will schedule the photo shoots later in the summer and in early September. Additionally, Brooks reported that issues concerning the email distribution list continue to be addressed. They are still investigating the reasons as to why the distribution lists are "behaving" the way they are.

### *New Business*

- *Ramshaw Scholarships:* Brooks Cato reconfirmed deadlines for the submission of materials, and for the presentation of the awards with the vestry.
- *Diocesan Convention Delegates:* Brooks Cato requested volunteers to represent St. Thomas' at the annual diocesan convention on October 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>. Debbie Barker and John Orr offered to attend. Jane Welsh moved to accept them as delegates; Wynn Egginton seconded the motion. The vestry approved the motion.

### *Core Priorities: American Flag Behind the Pulpit*

Brooks Cato began the conversation by noting that whether it was appropriate to retain the positioning of the American flag behind the pulpit has been a talking point in various churches around the country for some time. It is not new, and it is not tied to current political circumstances, although recent ties between the flag and Christian Nationalism have made some individuals uncomfortable. The conversation goes back to 70 AD/CE when the Romans occupied Jerusalem, stripped the Temple, and installed a large eagle (the symbol of the Roman Empire) on the altar.

The question that arises centers on what optics are created if the flag is displayed in a sacred context because, in theory, the US claims that there is "a separation of church and state." In fact, on any Sunday morning, St. Thomas' displays three American flags: one in front of

the church building, one inside the church near the altar, and one in front of the parish hall. Jane Welsh wondered why there needs to be three. Brooks Cato responded that the simple answer is that “it has always been that way.” Wynn Egginton said that her first thought was that the flag currently near the pulpit could be moved into the narthex. Rose Novak felt that there was some sense in thinking about “the separation of church and state” further. Ellie Weyter urged caution in consideration of the issue because, she said, the flag reminds us of our many contributions to the United States. Brooks Cato reminded vestry members of the historical connections, of the creation of the United States and how the American Church and the Anglican (English) Church are intricately interwoven. Additionally, we pray for our elected leaders each week in the Prayers of the People. Wynn Egginton asked whether St. Thomas’ is usual or unusual in displaying the flag near the pulpit. Brooks responded that in his first church they actually processed the flag behind the cross. (The rationale there was “because it had always been done.”) Looking back over his personal experience it seemed that having the flag prominently displayed at the front of the church was done as often as it wasn’t, so perhaps half of the time.

Jane Welsh admitted that seeing the flag displayed seemed to be nagging at her now more than in previous times because of the current state of governmental affairs. Connie Harsh asked whether there is a Protestant flag. Brooks described the early historical basis for the Episcopal flag which fuses elements from both England and Scotland in its design. Connie responded that perhaps the solution would be to move both flags. Brooks noted that this had been discussed at a conference he had attended. In fact, both flags are, in some way, symbols of colonialism. If both are moved together it wouldn’t target the American flag alone. Rose Novak asked whether parishioners at St. Thomas’ had brought up the issue to Brooks. Brooks responded that a few had; however, probably as many care deeply about it remaining where it is. Debbie Barker noted that the positioning of the flags is really quite important. There’s something different about having flags on the front of the building, as opposed to having them framing the altar. Wynn Egginton agreed, but she went on further to make the point that she “would not want Christian Nationalists to take our flag from us.” Ellie Weyter agreed, although she

did also agree that what is currently happening to the flag, as a symbol, can be disturbing. John Orr commented that he is very conflicted over the issue. He noted that he displays the flag on his house in the summertime. He doesn’t want to be “reactive” in his decision—ultimately, he would rather be “active.” Debbie Barker stated that it’s unfortunate that people can misuse a symbol such as the American flag; but we shouldn’t give in to this misuse. Brooks related a story about a moment in which he was at a rally and the crowd (mostly liberals) began to sing “God Bless America.” Some nearby conservative counter-protestors got confused because, being conservative, they felt that only they had the right to sing that song. Brooks asked, “Will we get to a point where the symbol of the flag takes on so much negative meaning that we won’t be able to use it?” John Orr responded that when he and his family moved to Hamilton, a small community, they did so because they were seeking a sense of community. The flag can be a symbol of community. The conversation then, having run its allotted time, stopped, and the vestry agreed to think about the issues involved and to take them up again at a later date.

*Announcements:*

- *Announcements:* Announcements were made.
- *Next meeting:* The next vestry meeting is set for June 1<sup>st</sup> because the May meeting would fall on Memorial Day weekend.
- *Prayer Leader:* Kerry Linden will be leading prayer at the opening of the next meeting.

Jane Welsh moved to end the meeting; Debbie Barker seconded the motion. The meeting ended at 12:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Cerasano, Clerk

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## Sermon for the Fourth Sunday of Easter: John 10:22-30

**The Rev. Brooks Cato**

Y'all ever heard the story about the boiling frog? Should you decide to boil a frog, you can't drop the thing straight into boiling water 'cause it'll sense how hot the water is and leap away. But you can put the frog in lukewarm water and slowly increase the temperature until it comes to a boil. The gradual change is imperceptible to the frog, so it stays put with disastrous consequences, and if it ever realizes that the water is boiling, it's already too late. Now, I know this isn't exactly the frog-leg-eatingest crowd, and I'm still not entirely sure why the frog has to be alive during this whole process. Also, as it turns out, the story's of dubious origins but the point remains: it's really hard to get folks to accept big changes all at once. You gotta do it a little at a time. People aren't frogs, but you still gotta ease 'em into big change, especially if it leads them in a direction they don't particularly want to go. People are kinda funny, though. We all have our own boiling points, that point we get led to that just isn't acceptable. Drop us in those waters, and we revolt immediately. Slowly turn up the temperature, and we're eased into compliance with little resistance. I know things are moving fast these days, but the fast-moving nature of all this belies the incremental rise in temperature aiming to boil us all. If you know what your boiling point is, great. Maybe we've already passed it and you're mad as hell. Maybe we haven't yet, but you're watching and ready for when we get there. But if you haven't defined that boiling point, that line you will not cross, if you haven't done that yet, I encourage you to define it, and define it soon. Like, today.

Let me put it this way. Our entire population's sitting in that big pot together, and the temperature's rising. If we get to 211 degrees and someone proposes adding just one more degree, 212 doesn't sound that much worse than 211. It's only one degree after all, and since we've already been led one degree at a time up to 211, we'll be more willing to accept 212 when it's time. After all, what harm could just one more degree do? But define it ahead of time, and when 212 arrives, you'll see it for what it is, the difference between being very hot and sterilizing heat. In other words, what is your line? Is there anything that could happen that would make you stand up? If you've heard people use words like "fascist" or "authoritarian" or "dic-

tatorship" and just don't see it, consider your way of life in this beautiful country and define exactly what, for you, would be a bridge too far, the line you will not cross, the 212-degree boiling point at which you think we're in trouble. I said do this today. I mean today because the temperature in this pot changes every day, sometimes multiple times in one day. And once you've defined that line, hold to it. Propagandists will continue to paint every change as justifiable. It's imperative you know what's beyond justification ahead of time.

A quick example: An acquaintance told me that the current expulsion of immigrants without hearings to a prison no one leaves alive in another country is not the same as Hitler expelling undesirables without trials to death camps in Poland. His reasoning, I kid you not, was that 1) Hitler used trains 2) El Salvador isn't Poland 3) our immigrants aren't the same kind of people as their undesirables were and 4) just because no one ever leaves alive doesn't mean it's a death camp, even though that's literally the definition. I know this guy. Five years ago, shoot, maybe even six months ago, he never would've argued in favor of this, but the temperature's risen just slowly enough for him to get on board. Imagine how differently he might've felt if he'd named his boiling point line months ago.

There's this great quote from Maya Angelou "When people show you who they are, believe them." Especially now, with a political world eat up with doublespeak, it's imperative we pay attention to what we witness, not just what we're told. And yes, that includes this very moment. Don't just trust me. Check this stuff for yourself. Watch the unedited videos. Read publications outside your normal comfort zone. If you're feeling brave, read foreign sources. You've got an entire community of brilliant minds right here in Hamilton, people who specialize in recognizing boiling frogs. Ask what they see. You've also got people living here who fled oppressive regimes. See what they're afraid of. I'll be honest, we crossed my boiling point a long time ago. My line was Jesus, so reframing Christian behavior as Western Civilization's greatest weakness and discarding Jesus as woke was too much for me. I don't know what yours will be. I don't know what it should be, but if your line is Jesus, too, well, we've already crossed it.

Back before Jesus was crucified, the crowds asked “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the messiah, tell us plainly.” I gotta imagine Jesus was a little confused, maybe even frustrated. He did miracle after miracle, preached like a prophet, had God’s voice boom from the heavens calling him God’s son twice, and still people didn’t believe. He said, “I have told you, and you do not believe. The works I do ... testify to me, but you do not believe.” How much more could he possibly show them before they perked up and paid attention? In my lifetime, it’s never been more important to believe Jesus is who he says he is. And who he says he is includes the great collection of humanity who believe in him, regardless of where we come from. We’re all members of this body, nothing new there, that’s about as ancient as our theology gets. And y’all, members of this body are being snatched away, though as of yet, none that sit in our pews. Maybe that’s a line for some of you? Jesus also said, of the sheep who follow him, none will be snatched away from his hand. We are marked as Christ’s own forever, we are parts of this body, and every other part of this body is supposed to help keep it intact. The reality, though, is that most of us just watch as ICE amputates one toe at a time. How many are you willing to lose before you believe?

Name your line now. Name it, and hold it fast. Believe people when they show you who they are. And remember, you are always Christ’s. No matter what’s done to you, no one can take that away. You are Christ’s own forever. They may snatch you away from home, car, or sidewalk, but they can never snatch you away from Jesus. Y’all, the temperature is rising, and our great human body is threatened. So many’ve been snatched away, so many lines crossed, so many lives broken. Believe people when they show you who they are. Watch them, pray for them, challenge them, but please, for the sake of Christ’s body, believe them.

### A Prayer

When everything around us withers and fails, teach us to draw strength from our deepest despair, that we may still rejoice in you and endure with hope.

—Sojourners

### Nave Gazing



Stained glass windows have long held a place of prominence in many churches, historical hiccups along the way notwithstanding. St. Thomas’ has no shortage of beautiful windows tracing the evolution of our parish over the decades. Various artistic styles reflect the timeframe in which each window was installed, and as a result, we have a rich and visible reminder of those who came before us, cared for this place, and prepared this place for us.

Typically, the images in stained glass windows are obvious and easy to recognize. Once in a while, an artist will hide delightful details in the design as well, like the many critters visible on close inspection of our Creation window.

With all that said, however, near the organ console in the window just behind Dianne’s weekly perch, there’s a little mystery. The image is made up of a blue, green, and translucent design. It’s been theorized that this design represents a bell, the empty tomb, a chasuble, the Greek letter *alpha*, an especially exciting wig, bell bottom pants, or even a necktie on a windy day. I’ve asked bishops, priests, deacons, lay people, two canons, a liturgist, and any number of day-to-day visitors what they think it might be, but the mystery remains. Consider this priest good and truly stumped!

If you have ideas what this symbol could be or if you stumble upon the original receipt proving what it is in those files hidden in your base-





15th Anniversary  
The Syracuse Orchestra Concert  
on the Village Green  
Wednesday, July 2, 7:30 pm



## Ramshaw Scholarship



We are delighted to announce this year's recipients of the Ramshaw Scholarship for graduating high school seniors. Our sincerest congratulations go to Vivi Linden, June Loranty, and Ingrida Morkevicius! Awards will be granted at the Sunday morning service on June 22nd.

Each applicant was asked to answer two questions: "What has St. Thomas' Episcopal Church meant to you?" and "What are your plans for the future?" Their responses are below.

### Vivi Linden

I cannot imagine a place with a stronger sense of community than St. Thomas' Church. Nobody is left to feel their own joys, sorrows, losses, or accomplishments alone. Every illness or injury is accompanied with a rotation of home-cooked meals left on the doorstep. Every time of struggle is met with a prayer in the Sunday service. Every achievement is celebrated, no matter how small. I simply don't know how everyone is so quick to learn everyone else's business. However, this incredible fascination the church congregation seems to have for its members is anything but a flaw. Being a member of this community offers you the opportunity to have a friend wherever you go. I have rarely stepped foot outside my house over the past eighteen years without being interrogated about my age, what grade I'm in, and what sports I play. Never have I stood before the lights on the HCS stage delivering a monologue without seeing a familiar face from St. Thomas' in the crowd. When I overestimated my skills on the ski slope, I found my name in the prayers of the people the following Sunday, (much to my surprise).

I have learned through my time in this congregation that it truly isn't God who is watching over you, it is the people who serve Him. The people who interpret His word as kindness and selflessness and showing up for those in need. As many skeptical children do, I have questioned the existence of God, as no answers ever truly satisfied my theological questions. But what St. Thomas' has shown me is that God is in fact real, and He lives among us. He manifests in the people we meet, the

"saints" who appear seemingly out of nowhere to help us up when we fall, and the faith and bond of a church community. To me, God is not all-powerful, He lives in ordinary people, people who I see in the grocery store, walking in the Village Green, or in the pew right next to me.

Being a member of this congregation has meant finding my faith, and learning the value of a strong community. Thank you St. Thomas' for watching me grow up, and thank you for showing me that God is real.

My plans for the future consist of attending Ithaca College in the fall with a major in "writing for film and emerging media." After that, the future is completely uncertain, but I hope to find out what I want to do along the way!

### June Loranty

For me, St. Thomas' Episcopal Church has meant a community. Specifically, a community of people who care about and for other people. Being a part of St. Thomas' has meant knowing that there are always people who want to do good even when it does not appear that way. Because things are increasingly negative in the world it is very comforting to be around people who care about others at St. Thomas'. From the time my family first started coming to St. Thomas' the church has impressed on me the importance of helping all people, no matter who they are or where they come from, which may be a basic lesson but is an important one nonetheless. Volunteering at Friendship Inn allowed me to take part in our community alongside people who have been a part of it for a long time and who have devoted huge amounts of time and effort to serving others. I am glad to have gotten to be a part of such a caring and compassionate community at St. Thomas'.

I am going to Mount Holyoke College in the fall and I plan to major in Geography or

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## Ingrida Morkevicius

St. Thomas has always been a second home to me. From my best friends that I made in Godly Play, to teen class, we've gotten to grow up together. From whispering in the pews, to singing hymns together, with the friends I've made, I've grown to enjoy going to church. As I've grown up in the church, I've learned to find the beauty in the stained glass windows, and the Easter decorated altar. Most importantly, I've grown to love the people inside the church. From helping Millie with Friendship Inn, to attending pancake dinners, I've grown close with different members of the church. My fondest memory is from the Hamilton Church Youth group, when we played hide and seek in the basement of the Parish Hall. Beyond the people and memories, I find comfort in going to church. Hearing sermons about present events helps me find comfort and peace during troubling times. As I move forward in life, I will reminisce on my time at St. Thomas, and hope to return to services whenever I am home.

### *Addendum from May 29*

Given recent events, I'd like to share a second writing about what the St. Thomas community means to me. Sometimes you just walk into a room and know something is wrong. The air feels heavy, grief covers everyones faces, tears stream and wails echo through the halls. You know something has gone terribly wrong, you just don't know what.

St. Thomas is a community I hold close to my heart. In times of grief, we support each other to get through the pain. From silent prayers in the church, to sitting together on the floor, we struggle together. Godly play helped me grow close to God and the St Thomas community. The kids I met I held close, and created friendships with. Even when kids grew up and stopped coming to church, we'd smile at each other in the halls, and think of them in our hearts because this community is forever.

In times like these we wonder, why would God do that, as our hearts are heavy. I know, as I am filled with questions of why; that the community at St. Thomas will support me and help me navigate these questions. As I move forward in life, I will miss the support I feel in the church. The familiar pews and faces, which I will forever hold close to my heart, and in times of need I know I can rely on the St. Thomas community.

I plan to attend the University of Rochester with a double major in History and Russian.

## A Prayer

Teach us that no amount of knowledge or eloquence matters without love, and help us live a faith that is known not by words, but by the way we treat others with compassion and grace.

—Sojourners

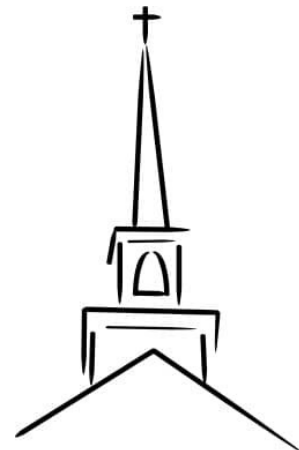
## Some keep the Sabbath going to Church –

Some keep the Sabbath going to Church –  
I keep it, staying at Home –  
With a Bobolink for a Chorister –  
And an Orchard, for a Dome –

Some keep the Sabbath in Surplice –  
I, just wear my Wings –  
And instead of tolling the Bell, for Church.  
Our little Sexton – sings.

God preaches, a noted Clergyman –  
And the sermon is never long,  
So instead of getting to Heaven, at last –  
I'm going, all along.

—Emily Dickinson





## Free Coffee

St. Thomas' has free coffee in the Parish Hall every Tuesday, 9:00-11:00 am. Stay and enjoy a cup or take one to go! Open to the community.



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## Coffee Hour Host

If you would like to host a Sunday Coffee Hour, there is a sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall. Parish Life can make the coffee or teach you how to, and you can bring some goodies! If you have any questions, you can reach out to Linda Jenks.

## Make an Online Donation

You can make a donation to our parish online with the link below. You will receive an email confirmation of your gift, and the Diocese will forward your gift and contact information to our parish for acknowledgment.

<https://cnyepiscopal.org/give/give-to-my-parish/>

When you go to the link above, you will fill out the donation form. In the Parish section, select "Hamilton: St. Thomas' Episcopal Church" and in the "gift note/designation" line be sure to type pledge, deficit appeal, or wherever you'd like your donation to apply.



## Flowers for the Altar

Just a reminder that if you would like to honor or remember a loved one with flowers on the altar, you can do that by making a donation to the Flower Guild (\$35 is recommended). Write a check to St. Thomas' Church and in the memo write Altar Flowers. Envelopes for flower donations are provided at the back of the church. You may either place the envelope in the collection plate during the Sunday morning service or mail or drop off your check in the Parish Office no later than the Wednesday prior to the Sunday you want your loved one honored or remembered so that the name(s) can be included in the bulletin. You can also fill in a date on the flower calendar in the Parish Hall.

Thank you.

—Rose Novak & Jana Laxa for the Flower Guild

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## On the Lighter Side



## AA Meetings in Hamilton

TIME	NAME	LOCATION / GROUP	ADDRESS / PLATFORM	REGION
Monday, 7:00 PM	<u>Hamilton on the Green</u>	<u>Hamilton on the Green</u> First Baptist Church	First Baptist Church 27 Broad Street	Hamilton
Wednesday, 7:00 PM	<u>Colgate University</u>	<u>Shaw Wellness Institute</u>	113 Broad Street	Hamilton
Friday, 7:00 PM	<u>Hamilton on the Green</u>	<u>Hamilton on the Green</u> First Baptist Church	27 Broad Street	Hamilton



## June Thanksgivings

### **Birthdays:**

Philip Michelson (06/05), Drew Brockway (06/05), Morgan (Gunther) Donahue (06/06), Janet O'Flynn (06/10), Sharon Stevens (06/10), Karen Baase (06/13), Peter Balakian (06/13), Maureen Fox (06/16), Susan Cerasano (06/17), Max Michelson (06/17), Mollie Michelson (06/18), Andrew Robertson (06/19), Mattison Gunther (06/22), Jon Speer (06/25), Anne Perry (06/26), Alexander Linden (06/29).

### **Baptism Anniversaries:**

Jessica Rivington (06/03), Linden Muller (06/09), George Geier III (06/14), Barbara Page (06/17), Paul Schult (06/20), Courtney Trueworthy (06/23), Maxwell Johnson (06/25).

### **Marriage Anniversaries:**

Garry & Tracy Fountain (06/03), George & Susan Geier III (06/03), Rachel & Jeffrey Knapp (06/05), Fay & Harold Cole (06/12), Christine & Jeffrey Tuttle (06/22), Janet & Donnel O'Flynn (06/28), Pamela Novak & Manuel Lopez Zafra (06/28).

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### **A Prayer**

In the face of despair and injustice, fill us with a stubborn hope that clings to your promise of renewed strength, so we may rise, endure, and never grow weary in the work of love.

— Sojourners

## Prayers of the People as of June 1st

### **For those in need:**

Susan Beattie, Danielle Bikowsky, Emily Carroll, Holly Crouch, Aster Dinku, Meredith Ewbank, Joan Fales, Lisa Gee and her children, Kaia Harding, Amanda Harlan, David Hughes, Kathy Hynes, Angela Jones, Barb Kershaw, Cheryl Ludwig, Leah M., Pat Osowski, Joe Rupp, Patricia Tayntor, Paula Tayntor, Ed Vantine, Ken VanWagner, Becky Vinopal, Christine Watkins, Deb Willis, Dana Wratten, Deb, Bill, & their family, the Blum Family, Brigid's family, Jerry & Roseann Fitzgerald, Anthony & Vincent Pacillo, Adam, David, Elizabeth, Jan, Jane, Janice, Kate, Lee, Mary, Meral, Michael, Nichole, Nick, Sarah, Scot, Tara, Dan, and Richard.

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### **Looking for Contributors**

Interested in adding something to our monthly newsletter? We're looking for contributors to spice up *Tidings* and add some variety! Pictures, poems, articles, book reviews, insights -- anything that's brought you closer to God. Please make submissions to the Church Office by the 20th of each month, and we'll consider them for publication.

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# HAMILTON PRIDE

## JUNE



SAT 7<sup>th</sup> **BRUNCH** FOJO'S

TH 12<sup>th</sup> **QUEER  
BEERS** **LOWER  
LAKE**

SAT 14<sup>th</sup> **LUNCH** HWF

TH 19<sup>th</sup> **RAINBOW  
NIGHT** **MOM'S**

SAT 21<sup>st</sup> CNY PRIDE - SYR

TH 26<sup>th</sup> **PRIDE  
PUB  
CRAWL** **RUSCH'S +  
THE  
HOURGLASS**

SAT 28<sup>th</sup> CAZ PRIDE - CAZ

Sat events 10am - ? Th events 5pm -?

bonus **PRIDE**  
event **FLOAT**

**4TH OF JULY  
PARADE**

Look for Pride Specials  
@ these ^ local businesses  
and Good Nature  
Crush Bottle Shop  
Village Clay  
Milford St. Textile Mill  
& MORE!



send us an email: [hamiltonlgbtqi@gmail.com](mailto:hamiltonlgbtqi@gmail.com)

**St. Thomas' Episcopal Church**  
**Scheduled to Serve**  
**June 2025**

DATE	LECTOR	LEM	USHER	ALTAR GUILD	FLOWER GUILD	NEWCOMERS
June 1	1 <sup>st</sup> : Kerry Linden 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Vivi Linden	Debbie Barker	Ed Page	Jane Welsh	Michelle Coluzzi	Linda Jenks
June 8	1 <sup>st</sup> : Emily Hutton-Hughes 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Maureen Fox	Susan Cerasano	Ed Page	Emily Hutton-Hughes	Liz Brackett	Linda Jenks
June 15	Adger Williams	Barbara Bowen	Ed Page	Emily Hutton-Hughes	Sue Geier	Linda Jenks
June 22	John Orr	Amy Jerome	Ed Page	Jane Welsh	Michelle Coluzzi	Linda Jenks
June 29	Lynn Staley	Wynn Egginton	Ed Page	Linda Jenks	Michelle Coluzzi	Linda Jenks



# **Readings**

June 2025

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church  
12 1/2 Madison St.  
Hamilton, NY 13346  
Address Service Requested