

## July/August 2023

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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

My Lord, what a year it's been! Last year, when I came back to work, I'd missed y'all and all the cool things we get to do. But I had no idea just how much I'd enjoy being back at it.

I sat down with my calendars to jog the memory and considered doing a big write-up on a year and all it holds, but it might be easier to wrap our heads around it if I just share some highlights. Ok, a lot of highlights. I hope this jogs some memories for you, too!

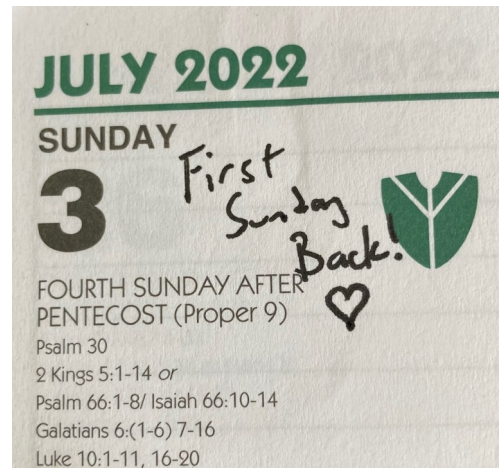
Since I came back at the beginning of last July, we said too many goodbyes, stood at the side of too many graves, said a million thank yous, feasted on deviled eggs, embraced the sabbath life, prioritized the care of our buildings, welcomed refugees and eaten their incredible food (grits, y'all, GRITS!), blessed a house, and blessed a whole slew of critters.

I tried curling, watched tons of hockey, took a lot of naps, survived Daylight Savings Time, watched two friends get elected to become bishops, and conquered several to-do lists longer than my arm!

We celebrated Christmas and Easter together, studied 14 books of the Bible, feted our organist, gave out gallons of free coffee, welcomed Bishop DeDe, ate pancakes, wore ashes, voted on paint colors, made it through tax season, celebrated a long-overdue Gospel Eucharist, and most importantly, loved God, loved each other, and loved our neighbors.

It is truly a joy to spend another year with you, St. Thomas', and I can't wait to see what we get up to this year! But first, I might need another nap.

Brooks+



## Join the Conversation Bible Study

In July and August, we'll continue our study of the Prophet Isaiah.

**Where:** Isaiah is roughly three-fourths of the way through the Old Testament.

**What to Watch For:** The main question concerns guiding a faith community through difficult times in their ongoing development and spiritual practices. The real trick is to read Isaiah in its own context looking towards an unnamed messiah.

**References:** Some familiarity with the concept of prophecy is helpful, but we'll do a refresher.

**Content:** Isaiah is a theological and historical heavyweight, and not everything it has to say is easy to digest.

**Lectionary:** Isaiah gets used all throughout the Lectionary with special attention on and around Christmas. Even so, we only get a little over 20% of Isaiah on Sundays.

—Fr. Brooks

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## Sabbath Book

The Rule of the Society of Saint John the Evangelist is a traditional rule of life written by Episcopalian monks. The rule outlines their attempts to sanctify different aspects of their shared lives and provides plenty of room for reflecting on how to bring God into various areas of our own lives.

—Fr. Brooks

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## Diocesan Foundation Grant

St. Thomas' is delighted to receive a \$10,000 grant from the Foundation Board of the Diocese of Central New York! The grant will go towards the cost of painting the Church and Parish Hall. Thank you, Foundation Board!

—Fr. Brooks

## Nave Gazing

Last year, we decided to try something a little different at St. Thomas'. We started having just one service on a Sunday. We asked the congregation to try it out for a year to see how it felt, and now that a year's up, it's time to revisit the conversation!

First off, thank you for giving this big change a try! It takes a lot of trust to shift things around, and I really am grateful for your patience. When we introduced the idea, we said we'd collect feedback along the way before deciding to make any changes permanent.

We've heard from some folks already, but we'd like to invite the whole congregation to provide feedback. Please follow this link to a five-question survey, and let us know how things are going!

[Click Here for St. Thomas' Worship Schedule Survey](#)

You can also email us at [stchurch@cnyemail.com](mailto:stchurch@cnyemail.com), or call the office at 315-824-1745 to take the survey over the phone.

—Fr. Brooks



## 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.

Thank you.

—Rose Novak & Jana Laxa for the Flower Guild

## Church Attendance

Ever wondered how new folks hear about church? There's a million ways folks can find us, but over and over again, studies across denominations come to the same conclusion: new people come to church because someone asked them!



## Interfaith Summer Food Program

St. Thomas' will be joining the local Catholic, Baptist, and Methodist Churches in a coordinated approach to helping the Hamilton Food Cupboard with increased demands in the summer months. St. Thomas' has been asked to focus on cereal, soup, and hygiene items (body soap, shampoo, toothpaste, etc.). The other churches will provide peanut butter & jelly, tuna, mayo, fruit cups, and granola bars. The program starts in June and goes through August.

—Emily Hutton-Hughes



### Upcoming Events

#### Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup>: Special Coffee Hour

Cha'Gate is a bubble tea business run by two Colgate students, Bill Luo and Vivian Jiang. They aspire to bring Asian culture to the people of Hamilton through bubble tea and eventually other means like Asian pastries. To show their gratitude for using St. Thomas' kitchen, Bill and Vivian will be serving free bubble tea after the service!

**Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM:** St. Thomas' welcomes the Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York for an afternoon concert.

**July 4<sup>th</sup>, 8 AM-2 PM:** St. Thomas' is serving free hotdogs on the lawn this July 4<sup>th</sup>! With hundreds of people walking right by, we're happy to share some hospitality (and fresh grillin' smells) with our neighbors and make some new friends!

**July 6:** No Bible Study

**July 17:** 10 AM Building Commissions Meeting

**July 17:** 5:15 PM Budget & Finance Meeting

### Save the Date

**September 24<sup>th</sup>:** Annual Meeting

**Sermon for the Third Sunday  
after Pentecost: Romans 5:1-8  
& Matthew 9:35-10:8**

**June 18, 2023  
The Rev. Brooks Cato**

One.

Early last week, I made a pilgrimage to the Diocesan Office up in Liverpool. That's a trek I haven't made since before the pandemic. It felt a little like a homecoming, even though it's just a mostly empty suite in a boring office building. I went up there to spend some time in the archives, looking through old records on St. Thomas' and one or two on the history of our diocese. I pulled boxes off of shelves and filtered through dry journals of Diocesan Conventions going back to the 1830s. Some looked like they hadn't been touched since the day they were published, others crumbled at a glance.

Two.

I found some cool stuff in those pages, though. One was so neat that I gasped and hollered for the archivist to come and see. "It's not a mouse is it?" she asked. I suppose that would've been a more likely find than what the treasure turned out to be: a half-dozen Fall leaves pressed in the pages of a 120-year old journal! Hard and leathery and well-preserved delicate gems hidden in a book in a box on a shelf in a rarely-visited room of the most boring building you've ever seen. But I found other interesting things, too. For several years in the early 1900s, St. Thomas' regularly raised money for, somewhat vaguely, "The Jews." After years of uneasy tension, in 1867, St. Thomas' sent \$11 to "The South." I can't imagine either were easy tasks to undertake.

Three.

The Jews were scapegoats for much of their history, and St. Thomas' raising money to support whatever it is they were supporting couldn't have been an easy sell. And The South,

well yes, they were our countrymen, and yes, we wanted them to recover, but also, so much suffering came at their hand. Again, I can't imagine the effort it must've taken to help the people who caused so much brokenness for so many, even all the way up here. Even then, as this morning's collect has it, St. Thomas' proclaimed God's truth with boldness and compassion. We supported unpopular causes because they were right and because they were necessary. Those Diocesan Journals go back a long way, and year over year, St. Thomas' made its love for humanity a priority. Far as I can tell, it had little to do with politics. It had to do with who needed it most right then.

Four.

As delighted as I was to find the pressed leaves and our generosity, in 1861 and 1862, I was disappointed by the bishop's addresses. He referred to the "perils which hang over our country" but stressed that "no political action was needed." His was a message of unity, of setting aside our differences, of everyone just getting along so that the country could come back together. Now, I'm not opposed to unity. But the unity called for then came at the expense of people suffering. The calls for unity put the concept of "unity" above the rights of enslaved people. "Unity" is a beautiful concept, but as members of a Body that emphasizes unity and bemoans brokenness, we gotta be careful here. We do not sacrifice unity for the cause of the day. But we absolutely cannot let calls for unity outweigh calls for human rights.

Five.

I know I've been up on a soapbox lately. Fair warning, I'm gonna stay on it for a little while longer. We're hearing a lot of calls for unity now. "Don't be political, don't let our differences divide us, if you'd just stop screaming for your rights, maybe we'd listen." Do not let that derail your boldness or your compassion, St. Thomas'.

A few days ago, I was talking with a friend who expressed a concern they have with our current political world. They said it's harder now than they can ever remember because their political opponents hold a weird sway. They don't feel comfortable saying what they believe about

anything because A) everything is politicized and B) they're afraid that the other side will get angry, and when they get angry they get dangerous. But they said it's also tough the other way around. Because A) everything is so politicized and B) if the other side starts it, they can't even respond because it gets dangerous again.

Six.

Actually, I've heard this from several unconnected people over the past few weeks. It's a common concern these days. We want to be bold and we want to be compassionate, but doing those things is scary. Not just scary because you might get in an argument. Scary because you might get hurt. A few years back, when the Pride Float went through town in the Fourth of July Parade, there was some hollering from the curbs from folks that didn't like what they saw. It wasn't nice, but it wasn't physical either. Two years later, candy handed out by parade walkers was thrown back in their faces, hard. Y'all know the environment's even more toxic now. Some of you know what it means to be in a pride event. It requires a powerful mixture of pride (of course), self-awareness, insistence on your own value as a human being, boldness, bravery, and unfortunately, thick skin and quick reflexes.

Seven.

The Pride Float will be in the Parade again this year. I'll be driving it, yet again. But I'm telling you, the feeling is different this time around. It's still got an air of celebration, but it's a celebration surrounded by caution and concern. Who will show up, what will they show up with, and who will stand to protect us?

After I preached last week's sermon, someone asked me -- I should be clear here, it wasn't a challenge or an accusation at all, they really wanted to know -- just how bad it actually is for LGBT folks. It's not great. UCLA released a study showing that, compared to cisgender straight people, members of the queer community are roughly 4 times more likely to be victims of every kind of violent crime except robbery. They're more likely to be targeted by people familiar to them and more likely to be targeted by strangers.

Eight.

They're even more likely to be diagnosed with mental health disorders, though the American Psychological Association stresses that this is not because of some innate causation. Instead, the damaging effects of political targeting, religious discrimination, familial exclusion, and countless social factors are more likely at the root. Let me put that a little simpler. If everyone in your family rejects you, you have no friends, your church says you're going to Hell, and your governor says your very existence is illegal, you might get depressed.

I'm sure you're wondering by now why I've been counting throughout this sermon. LGBTQ youth attempt suicide at a much higher rate than their peers. More than four times higher. That translates to roughly one suicide attempt every 45 seconds.

Nine.

We've cycled through 45 seconds about nine times since I stood up here. Nine queer kids feeling alone and broken and abandoned and asking how it's even possible that they could've been born wrong. Nine queer kids that needed someone to tell them they love them for who they are, that God did not make a mistake when they were created, and that maybe those politicians are just idiots.

You know, there's something I missed in last week's Gospel that I really should've said something about. Jesus was sitting there eating dinner with tax collectors and sinners, it said. And the Pharisees asked how someone could possibly do such a thing. Jesus said, "I desire mercy...I have come not for the righteous but for the sinners." Now, I do not think that being queer is a sin. I just don't. But if you do, I want to suggest that if you do think queerness is a sin, based off of Jesus himself, you still have to welcome queer folks into the church. Jesus ate with sinners as a regular practice. Jesus came for sinners. Jesus lived for sinners and Jesus died for sinners. If you think it's a sin, then be like Jesus, and get ready to lay down your life for them anyway.

Ten.

To be clear, I don't think it's a sin to be queer. The sin we're facing now is the brutalization our world commits against queer people. I know it's scary to confront that meanness. But if we don't, we allow the more aggressive voices to dominate. And if they dominate, it's all too easy to think they're in the majority. And if we think they're in the majority, then maybe we begin to question if we were ever in the right.

Folks, Jesus sends us to do a lot of things. One of 'em is casting out demons. It's time we cast out the demons of our society, the demons of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia. It's time we cast out the demons of bigotry and hate. And it's time we cast those demons out with boldness and yes, even with compassion.

Eleven.

As we do this work, never lose sight of the human you face. Love them boldly, administer justice with compassion. You know, I'm gonna reclaim a phrase here. Gay folks have heard this used on them long enough, so maybe it's time to turn it back around. Love the sinner, hate the sin. Love the oppressor because they are human, hate the oppressing that they do.

We've got a long history in this church of doing the hard thing even when it was unpopular. Those boxes up in Liverpool hold the records of our boldness and compassion, treasures crafted in spite of history. They also hold embarrassments of inaction. I know we're writing history now. A hundred years from now, some curious priest is going to pull St. Thomas' off the shelf and see what we got up to.

Twelve.

For the sake of the twelve sent by Christ and for the sake of the twelve kids wondering why the world does what it does, I pray that curious priest a hundred years from now finds treasures of boldness and compassion. I pray they find the Kingdom of Heaven came a little nearer. And I pray they're filled with pride.

## A Prayer

Oh Birther of all radiation and vibration, soften the ground of our being and carve out a space within us where Your Presence can abide.

Fill us with Your creativity so that we may be empowered to bear the fruits of Your Mission.

Let each of our actions bear fruit in accordance with our desire. Endow us with the wisdom to produce and share what each being needs to grow and flourish.

Untie the entangled threads of destiny that bind us as we release others from the entanglement of past mistakes.

Do not let us be seduced by that which would divert us from our true purpose.

But illuminate the opportunities of our present moment.

For You are the Ground and the Fruitful Vision, the Birth, Power and Fulfillment as all is gathered and made whole once again and so it is!

—Translated from the Aramaic

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## On the Lighter Side

That awkward moment at church  
when you go for a handshake...



... and they go for a hug.

comes;  
thy will,  
will be done,  
on earth  
as much  
as in heaven.

Unexpectedly  
it may seem to some  
in spite  
of all we fear to do  
or do not do.  
By your good grace,  
thy kingdom comes,  
ready or not,  
here it comes,  
within us,  
all around us.  
It comes with  
or without expectation,  
time to wake up.

Now!

—Ron Starbuck – Saint Julian Press © 2016



## **The Impact Project**

Our friends at The Impact Project finally have been approved to work in Madison County!

The Impact Project helps individuals in need by doing rehabilitation and repair work on their homes, helping to stabilize much more than simply their living situation. If you know of someone that could benefit or are interested in volunteering, visit the following website:

<https://theimpactprojectgreene.org>



## **THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT BEING AN EPISCOPALIAN**

There is something  
about  
being an Episcopalian.  
Something that draws me,  
engages me,  
moves me forward,  
makes me think,  
and makes me quake.  
There is something there,  
something that defines me,  
embraces me,  
holds me wholly  
and holy still,  
within, thy stillness.

Something, that rings true  
across and through the mind.  
Something that touches,  
that binds and almost breaks,  
that bends a heart,  
to hear a voice.  
Something that knows a love,  
and feels a joy,  
that sees a mystery  
to which I smile,  
as you smile back.

God in heaven  
we are a community  
that one day soon.

I hope;  
I pray,  
will know no bounds  
or boundaries  
in this world.  
Thy kingdom

## St. Thomas' Episcopal Church Vestry Minutes May 28, 2023

*Present:* Debbie Barker, Susan Beattie, John Bowen, Brooks Cato (presiding), Connie Harsh, Emily Hutton-Hughes, John Orr, Jane Welsh

*Absent:* Maureen Ghent, Valerie Morkevicius, Anne Perring

*On Zoom:* Wynn Egginton

### *Call to Order*

The meeting began at 11:28 a.m. in the parish hall. Wynn Egginton led the opening prayer.

### *Clerk's Report*

The minutes of the April 23<sup>rd</sup> vestry meeting were approved as submitted. (Moved by Debbie Barker; seconded by John Orr.)

### *Treasurer's Report*

John Bowen submitted the following report to the vestry members:

“Investment accounts remain stable. The checking account balance, while currently healthy, is drifting downward. Pledge income stands at 87% YTD budget. The Budget and Finance Commission has started working on the annual audit.”

The Treasurer's Report was received as submitted. (Moved by Jane Welsh; seconded by Debbie Barker.)

### *Rector's Report*

Brooks Cato stated that his remarks would be brief. He commented that he was “comfortable with where we are now.” Attendance is a bit low, but we are slowly increasing and returning to pre-Covid numbers. Clearly, we are still trying to regain some momentum from what we suffered

during the pandemic; however, our numbers are moving in the right direction, which is encouraging.

### *Wardens' Report*

Debbie Barker read a letter that she had crafted, extending our well-wishes and gratitude to Canon Carrie Schofield-Broadbent as she begins this new chapter in her life. There was a motion to approve the letter (Emily Hutton-Hughes) and a second (Connie Harsh), and the vestry voted unanimously to send the letter. Vestry members thanked Debbie for creating such a warm and lovely letter. Jane Welsh echoed Debbie's sentiments, but had no new business to add at this time.

### *Commission Reports*

Reports had been submitted in advance of the meeting by the Newcomers Commission (Linda Jenks) and the Memorial Garden/Landscape Commission (Lynn Staley). The vestry thanked Linda and Lynn for their reports but had no questions regarding them.

- *Buildings I (Roofing):* Brooks Cato explained that the Buildings Commission had received 5-6 quotes for replacing the roof and none had come in for under **\$100,000**. If the replacement were to be done prior to the church painting (which is scheduled to begin on July 31<sup>st</sup>) then some very aggressive fundraising would have to be done, so this doesn't seem to be an option. In the meantime, Brian evaluated the decking beneath the roof material and decided that it is in good shape. (Other roofers corroborated this.) If we clean the roof (at a cost of **\$5,200**), it could buy us 3 more years, during which time the funds for the roof replacement could be raised. Moreover, Ed Page discovered that we have a few replacement shingles in the basement so that when the cleaning takes place perhaps the few damaged shingles can be swapped out without additional cost. While Brooks acknowledged that this is a stop-gap measure, it will carry the parish through the fundraising phase. Additionally, it will give the Buildings Commission more time during which they can explore how water flows off the roof, along with other engineering issues, before making a final choice as to how best to re-roof the church. Not only this, but Brooks was reassured, by several firms, that if our roofer is careful it should not



be as issue to perform the roofing after the painting. John Orr asked for a list of those items that required immediate payments. Brooks listed: the walkway repair (\$24,000), painting the church (\$31,000 + costs for replacement of some old wood), and the cost of transitioning the heating in the rectory to natural gas (which is minimal). Altogether, given the funds raised by the land sale on Hill Road, there still should be more than enough money to pay for the cleaning of the church roof. Susan Beattie moved that \$5200 be spent to clean the church roof; Connie Harsh seconded the motion. Jane Welsh made a friendly amendment to clarify that “this action is being taken to buy time until a more permanent solution can be found.” Susan Beattie accepted the amendment. The vestry voted unanimously to accept the motion, with the friendly amendment included.

- *Buildings II (Condition Report):* Brooks Cato had circulated an agreement for services from Crawford & Stearns Architects and Preservation Planners in advance of the meeting. There was a general discussion of the proposed plan of services. The Buildings Commission and the vestry were impressed by the proposal and decided that retaining the services of Crawford & Stearns would assist in planning for buildings work for years to come. The cost will be \$12,950. Jane Welsh moved that St. Thomas’ retain Crawford & Stearns to prepare a condition report in accordance with the proposal they submitted to the Buildings Commission on May 19, 2023. Susan Beattie seconded the motion. The vestry voted unanimously to approve the motion.

#### Old Business

- *E-mail Votes:* Brooks Cato reviewed the two email votes that the vestry had taken in the period following the April 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. The first (taken May 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>) approved unanimously the closure of the Steffenhagen Account. (In the past St. Thomas’ has been only one church (of several) that has received a bit of money from this account. We have not had control of the account. Recently, NBT Bank called St. Thomas’ and wanted to close the account and distribute the remaining funds over the beneficiaries. The vote verifies that St.

Thomas’ agreed to the action proposed by NBT Bank.)

- The second e-mail vote (taken May 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>) approved unanimously the application for a Diocesan Foundation Grant for \$10,000, to be applied to the cost of painting the church.
- *Signs:* The matter of signs is finally finished. The names of those who are buried in the memorial garden have now been added to the signboard in the narthex. A new sign for the front of the church has been purchased. This will be mounted after the painting has been completed. Instead of putting the service times permanently on this board a system of movable plates will be used so that the service times can be changed when needed.
- *Land Sale:* Jane Welsh reported that the sale is entering the final stage. Martha Berry has stated that the closing is fast coming up and should soon be behind us.
- *Safe Church Training:* Anne Perring was away from the meeting; however, Brooks Cato commented that it seems as if things are ticking along.
- *Contact List:* Brooks Cato stated that work continues on. It will take a while for everything to fall into place.
- *Display Case:* Emily Hutton-Hughes updated vestry members. There have been innumerable delays in the process. Currently, the designer is concerned about the safety of the large lid and how the case will be opened and closed. He is working out a plan to address this issue. Beyond this, there is still a lot of thinking to be done as the design moves forward. Further updates will follow.

#### New Business

- *Resignation of Heidi Riley:* Brooks Cato informed the vestry that Heidi had to resign her vestry position owing to her overwhelming (new) job responsibilities.
- *Lay Delegates to Diocesan Convention:* Debbie Barker and John Orr agreed to represent the parish as lay delegates. There was a motion by Susan Beattie to support their

election; Jane Welsh seconded it. The vestry voted unanimously to approve it.

- *Episcopal Communications Network:* Brooks Cato explained that St. Thomas' is now able to join the ECN, which has certain benefits for us. The expense is minimal (**\$60 for the first year, and \$80/year thereafter**). Leah Schmitt will get certified so that we have someone trained to use the site and its software.
- *Narcan in Parish Hall:* Brooks Cato stated that he had been in conversation with Madison County to see whether we could get certified to stock Narcan in the parish hall. (Because we are listed as a "warm spot" and our parish hall is open as a temporary stopping place for the homeless it seemed to make sense to take this additional step.) Madison County is going to supply the drug to St. Thomas'; they will send someone down to train Brooks, Leah Schmitt, and Barb Hicks to administer it.
- *New Vestry Slate:* Brooks Cato reminded vestry members of the upcoming changes in the vestry membership. Debbie Barker, Emily Hutton-Hughes, and John Orr will end their current terms on the vestry at the end of August. The vestry will need to replace 3, three-year positions. The junior warden will also need to be replaced.
- *Core Priorities Discussion, Part 4 (Fundraising for Gifts, limited to 10 minutes):* Brooks Cato reiterated the conversation from the April meeting. Susan Beattie stated that she couldn't handle the auction for the Fall so John Orr is now managing this event. In thinking further about the auction, and speaking with Sally (Orr), he decided that the best the parish could hope to make would perhaps be in the neighborhood of **\$10,000**; however, he explained, there are other reasons to host such an event. John then outlined some details that are involved in planning an auction. Jane Welsh recalled that there is an anticipated gap of around **\$17,500** in expenses coming up at the end of the year, so any money that flows in from the auction would help to cover that shortfall. John stated further that an auction often works best when it is

combined with a musical event. Brooks Cato thought that perhaps some performers from the Friday Night Lights group could be asked to help out. John further described other kinds of actions that will be required, emphasizing that this can amount to quite a bit of work. He stated that the organization and management will need to be thought out carefully. Some small discussion ensued, during which vestry members expressed their positivity for this idea. Wynn Egginton generously volunteered to join John and Sally in this endeavor.

- Briefly, Brooks returned the conversation to the hotdog/hamburger cookout that St. Thomas' will be hosting on the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. He asked Susan Beattie, who had previously expressed interest, whether she could help organize and manage this activity. She kindly agreed. A group will soon be forming to plan for the event.
- Connie Harsh observed that, with the upcoming need to begin a capital campaign for the roof, it might be worth thinking carefully before building any expectation for fundraising into next year's operating budget. Brooks replied that fundraising had been built into the current year's budget for reasons specific to this post-COVID moment.
- Final announcements were made regarding upcoming events of interest to the parish.
- *Next meeting:* The next vestry meeting was set for June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 11:30 a.m.
- *Prayer Leader:* Connie Harsh offered to lead prayer at the opening of the next vestry meeting.

Because there was no further business Debbie Barker moved to conclude the meeting; Wynn Egginton seconded. The meeting ended at 12:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Cerasano, Clerk

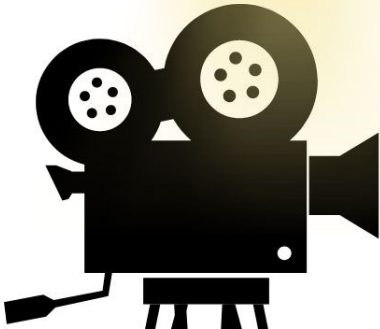
SCHMITT  
SISTERS  
DANCE!



PRESENTING

# THE PREMIERE

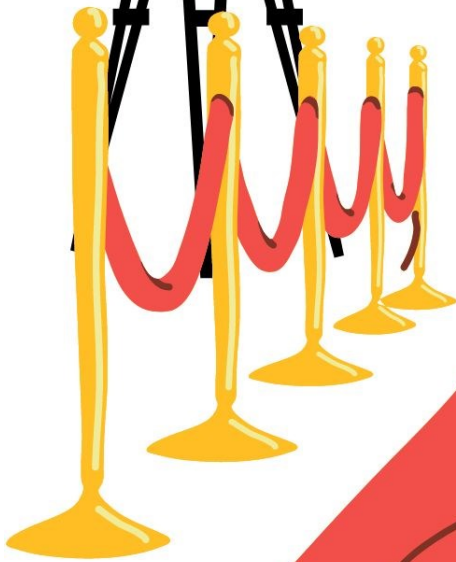
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## **Joyful Association at St. Thomas' An Interview with Janie Welsh**

A perennial motif in Janie Welsh's life is music. She lifts her voice in song each Sunday with the choir at St. Thomas'. Her ties with the church and Hamilton go back to when she met her future husband, John Blackmore, in Brooklyn, in 1978. He was a Colgate graduate and his father, Robert, was a beloved English professor at Colgate. His mother, Lucia, was a member of the St. Thomas' congregation. This was the beginning of Janie's long love affair with Hamilton and St. Thomas'. She and John came up to visit often and also vacationed in the Adirondacks with her family. In 1982, they were married here by Cork Tarplee, as she finished her first year at Brooklyn Law School.

Her road to Hamilton was one of venturing ever northward. She was born in an army hospital in San Antonio, Texas, then moved to Delaware and eventually Maryland, where her father was a curator at the Smithsonian and her mother worked for the telephone company. Her grandmother, the widow of an army surgeon, lived with her family and helped to raise her and her younger brother, Peter. Her formative years in Washington, DC in the 1960s were spent at Stone Ridge, Convent of the Sacred Heart, where her classmates included daughters of the Kennedys, Shrivvers, and Eugene McCarthy. She was very aware of politics as a young person, amid the unrest, protests, and activism of the era. She joined in a couple of peace marches and when Bobby Kennedy was assassinated, it felt to her like the end of idealism. While in high school and into her adult years, she worked with people with disabilities, which brought out her patience for people who are trying to do their best.

When Janie arrived at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, she was unprepared for the rigorous academics, but acclimated quickly and tapped into her competitive nature to graduate Cum Laude, with majors in anthropology and history. During this time, her father remarried to a daughter of an Episcopal priest. It was at an

Easter service at the Episcopal Cathedral of All Saints in Albany that she was taken with the music, particularly the trumpets, and the inclusivity of the Episcopalian tradition. She never looked back.

After graduating from law school, Janie practiced at prestigious firms in New York City, concentrating on real property law: commercial development, acquisition, sales, and lending. It was a rat race, but also a time of believing that she could have it all: a high-powered career and the responsibilities of family. Her daughter, Carrie, was born in 1986 in Park Slope and then they moved to Pelham, New York in Southern Westchester County, where she attended the local Episcopal Church, sang in the choir and sent Carrie and her younger brother, Rob, to church school.

John was diagnosed with lymphoma in 2002. Later that year, his father passed away. After much deliberation, Janie convinced John to move to Hamilton to be closer to family. His mother, who lived on University Ave. for more than 50 years, needed more care. In 2006, the couple purchased a home on McCormick Road, four miles from the Village center, amid 40 acres of woodland. Rob entered Hamilton Central School as a sophomore, while Carrie was a sophomore at Colgate, studying history and German, and leading outdoor education adventures. After graduation, Carrie founded Good Nature Brewing. Rob, a gifted musician, following in his mother's footsteps, now lives in Ithaca. Throughout her life, Janie has sung in church, in oratorios, and chorales, where she made wonderful connections and kept an upbeat outlook. She sang in the St. Thomas' choir as a guest, with Debbie Knuth Klenck, whenever she and John visited Hamilton.

She is involved in other singing groups and not-for-profit boards. She has been on the Board of Madison Lane Apartments for a number of years and now serves as the Board Chair. She is also on the Board of Lifelong Learning, where she helps plan educational programs. Janie celebrated her 70th birthday last November and keeps in shape with strength training at the gym and a devoted yoga practice.

John died in 2011. Janie had relied on John for her social life. Now, however, she has his friends as well as her own, plus her children and grandchildren. She loves being a grandma to Johnny, eight, and Ollie, eighteen months. Johnny, who is finishing up second grade, speaks like an adult and is reading *The Hobbit*. Ollie, who was born during the pandemic, is very physical and loves his big brother. Getting through COVID was easier with Carrie and her grandsons. She shares her home with two cats inherited from Carrie, one a beloved Maine Coon. The two felines don't get along, so they live in different parts of the house.

She met Colleen McNerny at the Crop Walk just before COVID and helped introduce her to St. Thomas'. She put off getting confirmed while her father, a devout Catholic, was alive, and eventually was confirmed by Brooks and Bishop DeDe. At St. Thomas', she cherishes her friendships. She appreciates that Brooks has a sense of humor and that the church is inclusive and non-judgmental, and that no one takes themselves too seriously. She is currently Junior Warden and feels privileged to be part of the parish decision-making process. She finds her fellow Vestry members respectful and imaginative and looks forward to being Senior Warden next year. She is excited to be working with others to improve the physical condition of the buildings, particularly the exterior painting, roof, and new windows for the parish hall. Here at St. Thomas's we are blessed to benefit from Janie's time, talent, and devotion and to enjoy her gift of song throughout the year.

—Kerry Linden

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### **A Prayer**

Lord, teach us how to care for ourselves and care for our neighbors. May we not see the two in competition.

—Sojourners



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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.

## Happening in the Area: AA Meetings in Hamilton

TIME	NAME	LOCATION / GROUP	ADDRESS / PLATFORM	REGION
Sunday,	<u>Morrisville Serenity</u>	<u>Morrisville Serenity</u>	100 Eaton Street	Hamilton
Monday, 8:00 PM	<u>Hamilton On The Green</u>	<u>Hamilton On The Green</u>	27 Broad Street	Hamilton
Friday, 8:00 PM	<u>Hamilton On The Green</u>	<u>Hamilton On The Green</u>	27 Broad Street	Hamilton

### On the Lighter Side



### A Prayer

Lord, may we not see asking for help as weakness but as strength. Remind us that we are worthy of support.

—Sojourners

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### A Prayer

Lord, may your people be known by our care for all those around us, especially those whom society would overlook and pass by.

—Sojourners

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### Scripture Lesson

If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

—Romans 12:18

## Prayers of the People

As of June 29th

**For those in need:** Leslie Andersen, Edith Allen, Irene Brown, Alfred Buck, Frank Cost, Aster Dinku, Joan Fales, Don Fenner, Kathy Fisher, Justin Fitzgerald, Jerry & Roseann Fitzgerald, Barbara Frost, Lisa Gee and her children, Daniel Ghent, Kristen Gregory, Cindy Hackeman, Kaia Harding, Amanda Harlan, Marlene Houck, Mary & Sue Humphrey, Brian Johnson, Janna Keser, Kerry Linden, Dianne McDowell, Patrick McGraw, Liam Meyer, Pat Osowski, Anthony & Vincent Pacillo, Diane Rich Krause, Joe Rupp, June Schaupp, Candace Schult, Mark Spearing, Patricia Tayntor, Deb Willis, Joan Winkler, Christopher, David, Glen, Hailey, Jane, Janice, Lance, Lee Anne, Nancy, Nick, Rebecca, Scot, Thomas, Vicky, Grace, Amber, Crystal, Brittani, Shasta, Justin, Chad, Gert, Paul, Christine and Tara.

**For the Departed:** Carole Strozyk and The Rev. Jim Heidt.

We pray this month for the clergy transitions at St. Mary's Catholic Church and Park United Methodist Church, holding Bryant, Jason, John, Edie, and both congregations in our hearts.

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### Ponder This

“Ancient Egyptians believed that upon death they would be asked two questions and their answers would determine whether they could continue their journey in the afterlife. The first question was, 'Did you bring joy?' The second was, 'Did you find joy?’”

— Leo Buscaglia, American Author

## July & August Thanksgivings

**Birthdays:** Vivian Phoenix (07/01), Marieke Kuiper (07/01), Elinor Wilson (07/05), Linden Colucci (07/05), Amy Jerome (07/06), Caitlyn Frost (07/06), Chris Brockway (07/08), Rocco Catania (07/11), Deborah Klenck (07/12), Valerie Morkevicius (07/13), Matthew Keller (07/19), Helen Kababian (07/23), Elizabeth Brackett (07/24), Terry Monty (07/24), James McDowell (07/26), Irene Brown (07/27), Daniel Schult (07/27), George Weaver (07/28), Jake Knapp (07/28), Barbara Frost (07/29), Ed Vantine (07/29), Patricia Tayntor (07/30), Catherine Shenkel (07/31), John Bowen (08/01), Nancy Rivington (08/01), Sierra Barker (08/01), Sheila Catania (08/03), Constance Harsh (08/05), Evelyn Hart (08/07), Jamie Rivington (08/08), Adriana Catania (08/10), Jeff Knapp (08/14), Erik Geier (08/16), John Novak (08/17), Joan Fales (08/18), Melissa Davies (08/19), Tom Brackett (08/20), Martha Berry (08/21), Stanley Dakosty (08/27), Rose Novak (08/28), Kerry Linden (08/30).

**Baptism Anniversaries:** Anna-Marie Kuiper, Maureen Fox (07/02), George Geier IV (07/18), Janet O’Flynn (08/01), Steven Martin (08/01), Erik Geier (08/04), Kennedy Gilgan (08/04), Catherine Shenkel (08/09), James Balakian (08/13), Charles Wickert (08/19), Nancy Rivington (08/28).

**Marriage Anniversaries:** Linda & Douglas Jenks (07/01), Jessica & Stanley Dakosty (07/09), Elizabeth & Ed Vantine (07/12), Evelyn Hart & Adger Wililams (07/13), Jane & James Hughes (07/14), Maureen & Daniel Ghent (07/22), Becca & Brooks Cato (07/24), Joan & James Ford (07/26), Kathleen & Lucien Catania (08/11), Nancy & Daniel Schult (08/13), Thomas & Elizabeth Brackett (08/31).

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# St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

## Scheduled to Serve

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

Telephone/Fax: 315-824-1745  
 E-Mail: stchurch@cnymail.com

DATE	LECTOR	LEM	USHER	ALTAR GUILD	FLOWER GUILD
July 2	OT Maureen Ghent NT Emily Hutton-Hughes	Wynn Egginton	Ed Page	Wynn Egginton	Diane Rich Krause  *In Loving Memory of Carole J. Strozyk
July 9 <i>Rite One</i>	OT Linda Jenks NT	Debbie Barker	Ed page	Jane Welsh	Diane Rich Krause
July 16	OT Jane Welsh NT Adger Williams	Maureen Ghent	Ed Page	Jane Welsh	Diane Rich Krause
July 23	OT Rose Novak NT John Orr	Barbara Bowen	Ed Page	Emily Hutton-Hughes	Diane Rich Krause
July 30	OT Lynn Staley NT Emily Hutton-Hughes	Amy Jerome	Ed Page	Emily Hutton-Hughes	Diane Rich Krause

**St. Thomas' Episcopal Church**  
**Scheduled to Serve**  
**August 2023**

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 12 1/2 Madison St.  
 Hamilton, NY 13346

Telephone/Fax: 315-824-1745  
 E-Mail: stchurch@cnymail.com

DATE	LECTOR	LEM	USHER	ALTAR GUILD	FLOWER GUILD
August 6	OT Jane Welsh NT Ellie Weyer	Debbie Barker	Ed Page	Linda Jenks	Rose Novak
August 13 <i>Rite One</i>	OT Adger Williams NT Debbie Barker	Susan Cerasano	Ed page	Linda Jenks	Rose Novak
August 20	OT Martha Berry NT Barbara Bowen	Barbara Bowen	Ed Page	Ellie Weyer	Rose Novak
August 27	OT Maureen Fox NT Kristen Strohmeier	Amy Jerome	Ed Page	Ellie Weyer	Rose Novak



July/August 2023

# Qidings

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