

May 2023

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church
 12 1/2 Madison St.
 Hamilton, NY 13346
 315-824-1745 (for fax also)
 E-Mail: stchurch@cnyemail.com
 Website: StThomasHamilton.org

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday
 9:00 am -1:00 pm

RECTOR:

The Rev. Brooks A. Cato 501-554-1236
 brooks.cato@gmail.com

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:

Dianne Adams McDowell 315-750-6027

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR:

Kirsten Weyerter 315-824-1745

WARDENS

Deb Barker 315-691-6203
 Jane Welsh 315-824-3070

VESTRY MEMBERS:

Heidi Riley '23 352-200-9931
 John Orr '23 610-716-2501
 Emily Hutton-Hughes '23 315-292-0979
 Susan Beattie '24 315-824-0209
 Valerie Morkevicius '24 312-218-1389
 Anne Perring '24 415-280-8943
 Wynn Egginton '25 315-825-5534
 Connie Harsh '25 315-824-2183
 Maureen Ghent '25 315-893-7383

CLERK OF THE VESTRY:

Susan Cerasano 315-824-1037

TREASURER:

John Bowen 315-824-4118

SEXTON:

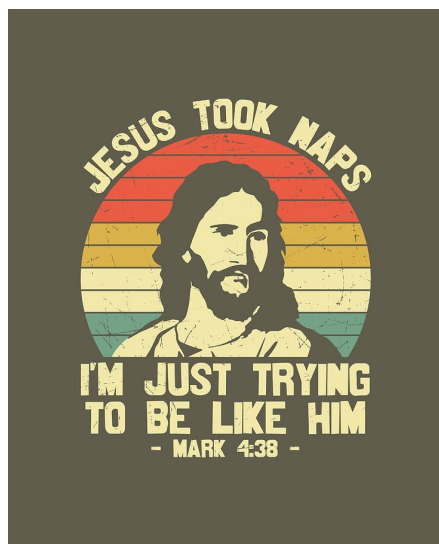
Barbara J. Hicks 607-244-3397

Tidings



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

The Rector's Column



Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

Way back in the late Fall of 2022, we started our work of stepping into Sabbath as a congregation. We decided to put a few things on hold while we got our collective feet back under us, and then the whirlwind hit.

Our timing couldn't have been better with Advent, then Christmas, then a massive celebration, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Week, and an Easter for the ages. I'm getting worn out just thinking about it!

While it's been a lot of work, all of that has very much been in line with the idea of Sabbath, or time set aside in our lives to focus on God. We remembered Christ's birth, his life, his death, and his resurrection, putting the story of God Among Us into prime focus.

Meanwhile, the Buildings Commission and Vestry have been hard at work, too, lining up several large projects for the care of our church building. We're ensuring that even the place we set aside to focus on God is cared for, a sort of sabbath of our physical connection to God.

All that is well and good, but I want to make sure that we don't lose sight of Sabbath as we prepare the necessary things. Keep finding moments to breathe, to pray, to set aside a moment -- or many moments! -- every day for God to still your heart or enliven your feet.

Sabbath can be elusive, especially in a world that defines our value by how busy we are. Perhaps as our Sabbath continues, we ought to be judging it instead by how busy we aren't. Maybe in that space we find ourselves, we find energy, and we find God.

With Sabbath blessings,
 Brooks+

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Nave Gazing

Ever wonder why you rarely see crucifixes in Episcopal Churches?

In many Roman Catholic Churches, you're likely to see a crucifix, that is, a cross with the *corpus* (the body) of Jesus still in place. The theological reasoning is rooted in Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, where he says, "We preach Christ crucified." The emphasis, then, is on the sacrifice that Jesus made.

In the Protestant world, most (but not all!) churches use an empty cross instead. The theology there is also rooted in Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, though a different verse, where he argues that, "if Christ is not raised from the dead, our preaching is useless." The emphasis of an empty cross is on the Resurrection.

For us Anglicans, as you might expect, it's complicated. There are certainly examples of crucifixes and other variations of the cross throughout the Anglican Communion and The Episcopal Church. The seminary chapel at Sewanee has a rather large crucifix boldly hung behind the altar. More often than not, though,

There is an important exception: in many English Churches and some older Episcopal Churches: rood screens often bear a crucifixion. The Holy Rood is the Old English word for the wooden instrument Jesus was crucified on, and rood screens were large and often ornate structures that marked the transition in space from the nave (the area for the congregation) to the chancel (the area for the clergy and the altar). Though sometimes a bare cross was used, the norm was to top the screen with a crucifix and other attendant symbols. Much to the delight of anti-clericalists and multiple groups of iconoclasts, many rood screens have not survived the various phases of religious pendulum swings, but it is a real architectural shame that few remain.

With the remaining weeks of Easter ahead, as our processional cross or the cross at the altar catch your eye, it's a good opportunity to consider what the Resurrected Christ means for us as a church community and us as individual members of this body.

—Fr. Brooks

Join the Conversation Bible Study

In May, we'll finish up Paul's Letters to the Corinthians and then turn our attention to the Prophet Isaiah.

Where: I & II Corinthians are near the middle of the New Testament. Isaiah is roughly three-fourths of the way through the Old Testament.

What to Watch For: For both of Paul's Letters to the Corinthians and for Isaiah, the main question concerns guiding a faith community through difficult times in their ongoing development and spiritual practices.

References: As long as you know the basic story of Jesus, you'll have a good foundation for Paul. For Isaiah, some familiarity with the concept of prophecy is helpful, but we'll do a refresher.

Content: Paul's Letter to the Corinthians and Isaiah are theological and historical heavyweights, and not everything they have to say is easy to digest.

Lectionary: Paul's Letters to the Corinthians tend to show up in the two Ordinary Seasons following Epiphany and Pentecost, but even with their frequency of use, we still hear less than half of what Paul has to say (and there are some who say that's more than enough!). Isaiah gets used all throughout the Lectionary with special attention on and around Christmas.

—Fr. Brooks

Sabbath Book

Life Together by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Bonhoeffer is one of the most consequential figures in my own spiritual development, and I am thrilled to share this book with y'all. Read Life Together for reflections, guidelines, and sermonettes on the gifts and pitfalls of living in a faith community, and if his writing spurs on your spiritual life, too, read just about anything else he's written, and you'll be better for it. And we'll all be better for what you glean!

—Fr. Brooks

Land Sale Update

We're moving along! At its January 24th meeting, the Standing Committee of the Diocese voted to approve the sale of the Hill Road property. Now, all we need to complete the sale is the approval of the State Supreme Court of New York.

The funds raised from the sale of the land will go to the capital expenditures planned for this year. While we expect the proceeds to cover quite a bit of the cost of the work we need to do, we may need to turn to the congregation to do some targeted fundraising. Stay tuned!

—Fr. Brooks

A Prayer

Resurrected Lord, thank you that in you there is new life and redemption; thank you that death does not have the final say.

--Sojourners



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, 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.

—Jana Laxa

Sermon for Easter Sunday The Rev. Brooks Cato

Happy Easter!

If the past year has taught me anything, and my God has it taught me more than I ever wanted to learn, if the past year has taught me anything, it's that I love y'all. I know, great way to get an audience on your side, right? But really, I love y'all. Some of you I've known for years now, and some of you I have never met. Or if I have, I apologize, my memory ain't what it used to be. But still, I love you. Some of that love is what I'm kinda used to, the love of friends or family, the kinds of love we talk about a lot. One of you I love like we're in the movies. But I don't think any of that is really what the last year has taught me. I knew I loved my wife, I knew I loved my best friend, I knew I loved my dogs. I knew I enjoyed Hamilton and working here, but it wasn't until all that went away so abruptly that I realized the part of my heart you'd taken. I felt your absence for so long and when I finally got to come back, I couldn't believe my good fortune, the grace that gives me a backstage pass to your lives. I mean, y'all. I get to be on the receiving end of all that you are, and that's wild to me. Just wild that this collar and these robes lead me into your hearts, too. You know, it's a lovely thing being loved and loving, too, but it's a hard ask and not for the reasons you might think. We all know sometimes some people are hard to love. Whatever, that's life. But it's a hard ask to love because every last one of us will suffer because we love. One day, or many, someone we love will die, and because we loved, we will hurt. That's one of the lessons of Holy Week.

There's an old saying that the heart has reason for which reason knows nothing. If it were up to reason, we could weigh out the pros and cons of opening ourselves up and then decide if the impending pain would be worth it. But thank God, love doesn't work like that. We don't choose our

loves. Once we do love, we choose what to do with it, but we don't choose to love in the first place. Actually, I kind of think about faith in the same way. I don't go in for faith because it's a reasonable thing to do. I don't weigh the pros and cons and then decide to believe in God. Which is funny, 'cause so many theological arguments come at it from that angle. Actually, I think like love, faith has reason for which reason knows nothing. I know it's not a *reasonable* thing to believe in God, but I just can't help it.

By the way, I'm not saying there's no place for reason here, not at all. It's just that reason doesn't have the only claim on us. There's dignity to emotions, too, like faith, love and compassion. And they don't always make sense. I've been looking for answers to the whys and hows of humankind for a long time, even cussed at my priest as a teenager too big for my britches. I've lived in a monastery, tried out practices of different world religions, probably mistaken an idea here and there, and almost certainly offended with my cavalier experiments in faith. And I haven't done this because I think it's the rational thing to do. I know it isn't, but just like how I fell in love with my wife, I didn't choose to believe. I just did, or at least, I suspected, and before that, I wondered. And then I chose what to do. I chose to return to the church I liked the most from my childhood. I chose to push beyond the easy answers and assumptions I thought I knew the answers to. I chose to read scripture and try to figure out what made it worthwhile. And eventually I even chose to make some commitments. And what I found was a wealth I had no idea faith was holding onto. There's thousands of years of other people coming at this stuff, brilliant minds tearing apart and reknitting religion. There's some mindless following in there, too, but there's way more examined faith than I ever expected to find. You name it, nearly anything you've heard people say about Christianity or religion or belief at all, I've been there. I've hated the church, I've had the teachings of the church

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held against me, I've been damned and spat on and singled out in sermons for my supposed dangerous ways. Trust me, if I'd had my druthers, I wouldn't be the kind of person to land in a pulpit, and truthfully, it haunts my days knowing that I may someday hurt some already hurting soul just by virtue of representing this ancient institution.

But y'all, if there's nothing else we hear today, let it be this. The Church at its best is love. Fraternal, agape, peace-giving love, yes. But it's more layered, deeper, universal than that, and I'm not sure I have the words for it yet. I'm only just discovering that I have the heart for it. This reason-less love that I'm talking around really only opened up for me over the past week or two. It's a love that embraces far more than I ever imagined I was capable of doing. It's a love that sees a stranger on the sidewalk and cracks a smile like I've found an old friend. It's a love that hears a redwing blackbird and rejoices not just because they signal a change in the season but because, Oh my God, have you ever even seen a blackbird and heard their song?!? It's a love that aches when I break a piece of tall grass or leaps when my shovel dings hard against a rock.

I know, it sounds completely crazy, and I'm guessing a few of you are wondering what I got into before stepping into the pulpit. I heard a couple of really out there traveling preachers when I was growing up that'd gotten into the catnip, and I'm a little worried that I'm sounding the same. But I really do feel this change, and I think there's something about that growing, universal love, that radiating compassion, that connects me and us and all of Creation to each other and to God. And I think there might be something about the nearness of the grave that's cracked this open for me. My heart is raw and open, and while I'm grieving, maybe because I'm grieving, I'm receptive to this whole other frequency of loving. And that makes me wonder. I wonder if Mary Magdalene in her grief, the other Marys, the other disciples, I wonder if their grief broke something open in them, too. A receptivity that laid the foundation for the miraculous Resurrection they'd soon see, soon love, soon pull into their hearts.

The thing is, I also suspect there's something of a limited window for how long that extreme compassion remains accessible, that receptivity stays open. I suspect reason will take the wheel again soon, and I'll go back to grumbling over people and their people-ing and birds and their too-early chirping. Truth be told, I don't know if I have the energy to be this loving all the time. Maybe it's a mercy that this opened window'll close again. But I think this compassion flood, even after it disperses, I think it's going to sustain me for a mighty long time, and maybe by then Easter will swing around again and the window'll fly back open.

I don't know, that's a lot and a long way of getting around to saying that there's a real gift to being in this place with all y'all. I know we all come at church differently. I know a lot of us are hurting. I know a lot of us are asking questions. And I know a lot of us are wondering if it's even worth sitting through another service. I can't answer those questions for you, but I'm so grateful you chose to come here to look for the answers. Whether that was forty years ago or a couple minutes after we got rolling today. As unreasonable as it may sound, I'm so grateful that this window's open at just the right time to love you. I didn't choose it, I suspect you didn't either, it's just there. The love of God interjecting against all the reasons not to. But that's Easter. Unreasonable, raw, and full of love.

--The Rev. Brooks Cato

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's Easter Message

"We are here in a world struggling to find its soul, but the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not, cannot, and will not overcome it," Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop and Primate Michael B. Curry said in his Easter 2023 message. "Jesus lives. He has been raised from the dead. That is the message of Easter, and that is the good news of great tidings."

**St. Thomas' Episcopal Church
Vestry Minutes
March 26, 2023**

Present: Debbie Barker, Brooks Cato (presiding), Maureen Ghent, Emily Hutton-Hughes, Valerie Morkevicius, John Orr, Anne Perring, Heidi Riley, Jane Welsh

Absent: Susan Beattie, Connie Harsh, Wynn Egginton

On Zoom: John Bowen

Call to Order

The meeting began at 11:34 a.m. in the parish hall. Emily Hutton-Hughes led the opening prayer, reading a psalm that she had written.

Clerk's Report

The minutes of the February 26th vestry meeting were approved as submitted. (Moved by Jane Welsh; seconded by Valerie Morkevicius.)

Treasurer's Report

John Bowen submitted the following report to the vestry members:

"The checking account balance remains stable with no unusual expenses or additions over the past month. Investment accounts are stable as well but showing some small losses for the month reflecting the current general market trends.

There is still a software glitch in Church Windows causing an item to show up under 'Liabilities.'

There is no true liability. We have identified the item but need Church Windows Customer Service to repair it.

The Budget and Finance Commission will be starting the annual audit soon. As a reminder, the audit is done internally every year and reviewed periodically by an external accountant. We will be due for external review next year."

The Treasurer's Report was received as submitted. (Moved by Emily Hutton-Hughes; seconded by Debbie Barker.)

Rector's Report

Brooks Cato informed vestry members that the Newcomers' Commission, which had been created just prior to his bout with Covid, was now up and running again. Linda Jenks has kindly

agreed to head up the group; she and Brooks have met twice to discuss the shape and course that the commission might take, as well as the ways in which it will differ from the Lay Pastoral Care Commission (which tends, primarily but not solely, to provide support to persons already established within the parish). On a different, but exciting note, Brooks reported that Bible Study is "going gangbusters." Attendance has been creeping up steadily so that increasing numbers of persons are on board on any particular Thursday morning. Moreover, the group has really taken on a definition and is moving forward with purpose. The Tuesday morning coffee gatherings are likewise becoming popular. Some good ideas are emerging from conversations with those who drop in, and there will be some interaction with Madison Lane in the future. John Orr asked whether written materials would be put together for newcomers. Brooks Cato noted that these had been distributed in the past and new versions would be in the planning for the future. Also, Brooks mentioned that the idea to have prayer request cards available on the table at the back of the church had come out of recent conversations. So ideas are fermenting and action is being taken on them. In pointing to the near future, Brooks noted that Holy Week is just around the corner. He reminded the vestry of the enormous amount of work that the altar guild undertakes during this period. Jane Welsh put in a request for "less smelly" metal polish. Everyone acknowledged their great respect for the members of St. Thomas' altar guild. Finally, the vestry members wanted to send their congratulations to the Rev. Canon Carrie Broadbent-Schofield who has just been elected bishop coadjutor by the Maryland diocese.

Wardens' Report

Debbie Barker had nothing pressing to share at this point in the meeting. Jane Welsh didn't have anything to share at the moment either.

Commission Reports

- Paint Color Vote Results: Brooks Cato repeated the final results of the vote, which were: Brown (54 votes) to White (40 votes). Rich Brown prevailed.

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- **Painter Proposals for Church & Parish Hall:** Brooks Cato stated that 4 bids had been sought. Two bids had been dismissed. Of these, one firm couldn't do the painting until 2025; the other didn't seem to have enough credentials to satisfy the commission that they could do the work well. In comparing the remaining two bids the Buildings Commission settled on Birdsall, the firm that painted the woodwork on the Hamilton Baptist Church and did an excellent job. The bid from Birdsall to paint the church comes to **\$34,000**. (It is **\$29,000** if we eliminate the amount to do the roof cleaning.) There will be additional costs for the rental of a lift and the replacement of worn and rotted wood. There was a motion to approve Birdsall as painters for the church (Emily Hutton-Hughes moved; Jane Welsh seconded the motion) and the motion carried.

Yet previous to the painting the commission has decided to replace the roofing. Here, they sought the expertise of Crawford & Stearns Architects and Preservation Planners, PLLC, who recommended that the roof be replaced before painting is attempted and, also, that the roofing not be replaced with new cedar roofing. (The cedar roofing available today is not as durable as the old cedar roofing, amongst other things.) In examining alternatives (asphalt shingles being unaesthetic, and slate being too heavy for the structure) the commission decided finally on a synthetic slate, which offers many advantages. This material has been used on Trinity Church Fayetteville with excellent results, both in terms of creating a water-tight roof, and also, in creating an aesthetically-pleasing look. Moreover, the material has a projected life of 50-70 years. Photos of the roof at Trinity Church were passed around, as well as a sample of the material that would be used which is manufactured in different colors. Vestry members agreed that the shade of lighter grey would look quite lovely against the shade of rich brown agreed upon for the church walls; and also, it would meet the requirements for longevity that the Buildings Commission was hoping, all without compromising the appearance of the church. As of the time of the vestry meeting, no bid had come in as to the cost of the roofing.

Conversation then turned to the third concern, that of drainage issues around the foundation of the church, a problem that has been recognized for some time (around 30 years), but which has not been addressed in any way. Although there is no current crisis, it should not be ignored. Jane Welsh suggested that the preparation of a condition report would help. Brooks Cato suggested that actually a condition report, prepared by Crawford & Stearns, for all three of our buildings would be highly desirable. Vestry members agreed. John Orr moved that St. Thomas' should, in a timely fashion, as a first step, engage an appropriate professional (or professionals) to undertake a comprehensive Condition Report of what is required on all three of our buildings. Debbie Barker seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Brooks Cato stated that he would be in touch with Crawford & Stearns to line up the next visit.

Old Business

- *Land Sale:* Brooks Cato asked Jane Welsh to bring vestry members up to date. Jane, expressing some frustration at the slowness of the process, stated that we are still waiting for the State Supreme Court of NY to offer their approval. Martha Berry was going to check into the situation.
- *Good Neighbor Committee:* The vestry reviewed the "fine-tuning recommendations" to language that had been discussed by various members in conversations that had largely taken place over email. Connie Harsh had proposed that the old language in the Allocation Review Committee Guidelines ("The Vestry will be asked to vote to approve or decline the grant requests presented based on the information provided in the report") be replaced with the new text: "After reading the report and discussing it with the Chair of the Allocation Committee, the Vestry will hold a vote on the recommendations of the committee." Connie thought the revised text would formalize the possibility that the vestry would ask questions of the chair. Also, having a conversation expected at this point in the process would seem valuable (not to mention interesting) for everyone. Brooks Cato reminded members that as the process unfolds there would be more opportunities to provide

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refinements, if necessary. Jane Welsh moved to accept Connie’s recommendation; Debbie Barker seconded the motion. The vestry voted their approval.

- *Safe Church Training:* Anne Perring stated that some things were still in process, but that progress is being made.
- *Contact List:* Brooks Cato informed the vestry that the data collection phase is ending and the process of inputting the data to Church Windows is beginning.

New Business

- *Leah Schmitt Return Date* Brooks Cato informed the vestry that Leah’s allowed time for disability leave is moving to a close; however, she is entitled to additional time under the NYS Paid Family Leave. Leah has asked for an extension to April 24th or May 1st, during which time Kirsten Weyter has agreed to stay on in the parish office. Brooks said that he would file the necessary paper work for Leah’s extension. The vestry agreed that this seemed to be a satisfactory arrangement and thanked Kirsten for her willingness to extend her schedule to provide additional coverage.
- *Ramshaw Scholarship Announcement :* Brooks Cato commented that he couldn’t seem to identify any graduating seniors this year. If vestry members could think of students who meet the requirements they should contact him.
- *Core Priorities Discussion (Fundraising for Gifts, limited to 10 minutes):* Brooks Cato reintroduced the conversation from the February meeting. He was pleased to announce that a new group is forming to think about how ideas might be shaped and funneled. Susan Beattie has agreed to head this group. Vestry members engaged in an open-ended discussion concerning the upcoming costs of the work on the church, together with the costs on the church entryway, and where the funds would come from. They probed ways in which the land sale funds would offset costs. They weighed the use of existing funds from some sources within the parish budgets as opposed to spending from endowment funds which, all agreed, is far from preferable. Various external funding

sources were considered and the manner in which the condition reports might assist in applying for external funding. Members of the vestry also discussed the planning of fundraising efforts within the congregation. Finally, they totaled up the expected sources of income that they felt could be tapped. All agreed that these issues would frame the vestry’s ongoing conversation in the months ahead.

Final announcements were made:

- *Holy Week Services:* A diocesan Service, March 22nd, Noon, in-person and on Zoom.
- *Next meeting:* The next vestry meeting was set for April 23th, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. *Prayer Leader:* Anne Perring offered to lead prayer at the opening of the next vestry meeting.

There being no further business, several persons moved to adjourn the meeting; several others seconded the motion. The meeting ended at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Cerasano, Clerk

Scripture Lesson

No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

--John 15:13

Scripture Passage

"I have been hearing, 'you have my thoughts and prayers,' and that is valid for any person who has been told, 'pray without ceasing,' but I also know that there comes a time when action is required."

- US Senate Chaplain Barry C. Black



Prayers of the People

Prayers Requested for: Edith Allen, Gary Barker, Alfred Buck, Frank Cost, Anne Debevoise, Aster Dinku, Allen T. Engle, Joan Fales, Don Fenner, Kathy Fisher, Justin Fitzgerald, Jerry & Roseann Fitzgerald, Barbara Frost, Lisa Gee and her children, Daniel Ghent, Cindy Hackeman, Kaia Harding, Amanda Harlan, Marlene Houck, Mary & Sue Humphrey, Brian Johnson, Danielle Jones, Janna Keser, Kerry Linden, Dianne McDowell, Rob McKinnon, Liam Meyer, Pat Osowski, Anthony & Vincent Pacillo, Joni Resnick, Diane Rich Krause, June Schaupp, Candace Schult, the Shiner Family, Mark Spearing, Carol Strozyk, 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, Christine & Tara

Recently Deceased : Jim Reynolds (4/21/2023)
Rebecca Elgie (4/16/23)

May Thanksgivings

Birthdays: 5/1 Adger Williams, Alessandra Catania 5/2 Lucas Luttman 5/3 Anna Owens 5/6 Kristin Strohmeier 5/7 Travis Stith 5/8 Lucas Morkevicius, Bruce Moseley 5/11 Andrea Gunther 5/12 Kenji Yoshino 5/14 William Strohmeier 5/15 Hal Stevens 5/18 Marlene Houck, Daniel Keller 5/19 Dawn LaFrance 5/21 Leah Schmitt 5/22 Emily Hutton-Hughes 5/27 Powers van der Mandele 5/31 Donald Fenner, Deborah Radford

Baptism Anniversaries: 5/1 Jane Scheinman, Barbara Bowen, John Keller 5/5 Kerri McCue, Adriana, Alessandra and Sicily Catania 5/6 Georgina Godfrey 5/10 Brian Rivington 5/12 Jessica Dakosty 5/14 David Dudrick 5/15 Simon Williams 5/16 Barbara Frost 5/19 Lucy Michelson, Nolan Dye 5/21 Everett Egginton 5/22 Alec Strohmeier 5/24 Gemma Godfrey 5/27 Barbara Hicks 5/28 Kevin Schult 5/30 Marlene Houck



Joyful Association at Saint Thomas'

An Interview with Ed Page

Growing up in White River Jct., Vermont, near Hanover, New Hampshire, home of Dartmouth College, Ed attended Saint Thomas' Episcopal Church, where he served as an acolyte. Recently, he's been wearing a Saint Vincent's Guide medal on a red ribbon, which he received when he was serving as an acolyte. The order of Saint Vincent was founded to teach the concept of a "stairway of lay ministry", which he has certainly taken to heart.

After graduating high school, Ed served three years in the Army, eventually with the Signal Corps doing communication duties, based in France, where he got to travel in Europe. He then studied electrical technology at SUNY Morrisville. This is where he met Barbara Martin from Cortland who he eventually married in 1965. After Morrisville, he worked for a cable TV company followed by an independent telephone company. In his

work, he says, "I have been blessed. Some doors have closed, but many more have opened." They moved fourteen times over his career. In late December 1989, Ed and Barbara moved from Amsterdam, NY to Hamilton, when his work took him to the telephone toll center at the corner of Montgomery and Eaton Streets, which is now Colgate arts studios. He spent 45 years in all with the phone company, which changed hands several times and eventually became Frontier. In his "retirement" he worked part time on call for four and half years for Bruce and Nancy Rivington, rising at 3 a.m., driving the Kriemhild creamery refrigerated truck, delivering totes of cream and butter products by the pallet throughout much of the northeast, including New York City.

About 2012, Dave McKay, head of Buildings and Grounds, invited Ed to do a "walk around" study of the St. Thomas' property, along with several other gentlemen. In time, Ed became more involved. Then the day came that Dave passed his key onto him, which he still carries.

While Ed likes to keep out of the spotlight, he is often the first person you see when you walk into church. On a typical Sunday, he arrives before the 10 a.m. service to set out the flags. He then makes the Zoom connection. With Barbara as his remote test attendee, he checks the cameras and sound quality. He hands out programs and rings the bell for service to begin. In this, he carries on a family tradition, as his grandfather was also an usher and rang the bell for a church in southern Vermont in his days.

He takes the collection and ushers for Communion, and counts in-person and virtual attendees, which is reported to Brooks for the registry. After the service, he shuts down the Zoom connection, makes a report of the collection, and brings in the flags. He collects any paper left in the pews. He confesses that he is a "fusspot", so he also arranges the books on the back of every pew, so that the *Book of Common Prayer* is on the right, the hymnal is in the middle, and the *Wonder, Love and Praise* hymnal is on the left. When he turns off the lights, the newly re-wired "prayer light" in the transept crossing stays lit 24/7.

The rest of the week, Ed provides regular maintenance for Saint Thomas' where and when needed, on call to advise on special buildings projects, such as converting the furnaces to natural gas, especially enjoying working with Martin (Marty) Bonsie, who maintains the church's heating systems. Ed also maintains and assists with fire system annual inspections.

His present favorite project is working with electrician Kevin Shaw. They thrilled Millie with new and improved lighting in the parish hall kitchen. The current project is installing track lighting in the back of the church for the choir, along with changing the church entrance inside and outside lights, allowing the outside light to be on from dusk to dawn.

As Ed Page tells it, he has a list of interests that is longer than his arm. You may know him as our faithful usher and talented and dependable behind-the-scenes technician, but he is also a licensed amateur radio operator, photographer, and even a one-time beekeeper. With his wife, Barbara, he also pursues genealogy. He caught the genealogy bug from his mother. Ed's hobbies cross over to his work at Saint Thomas'. His interest in photography is in his blood, as his maternal grandparents had a photography business in the early 1900's. He has taken many of the photographs for Jim Ford's local history books and volunteers for FindAGrave.com, answering requests for memorial photos in nearby local cemeteries. Ed and Barbara have visited all 50 US states, parts of Canada, and several European countries.

As time went on, Ed observed a number of needs that called on his past experiences, namely tree work, fencing, computer maintenance, the fire prevention system, telephone equipment, electrical, and multiple memorial garden chores. He is a member of ONE on the Saint Thomas' Burial Commission. He has cut the sod, dug, and interred the ashes. He has taken measurements of the memorial garden, so he can make a detailed drawing and record. All around the church, he keeps meticulous records and drawings and labels everything he can.

Ed and Barbara's daughter, Beth MacKinnon, works at Colgate. Their son Steven, lives in the Syracuse area where he is a solar systems installer. They have two grown grandchildren. Since 2001, Ed and Barbara have lived on Rambling Brook Road, off Bonney Hill Road. This is the longest they have ever spent in one house.

Ed will be 83 in October and while he doesn't have a view to retiring as our buildings technician, he would welcome assistance. His most pressing need at this time is for a backup usher and he would surely be a patient teacher and mentor in this, or in the work of the memorial garden. We are blessed to have him greet us each Sunday, while he also takes such care with the vital work behind the scenes. Ed literally keeps our prayer light burning at Saint Thomas'.

– Kerry Linden



Ponder This

“Embodiment of the past in religious rituals doesn't happen simply for the sake of it, but rather in order to make a difference in the present.”

--The Rev. Dr. Joshua Samuel

Save the Date
June 4th
Gospel Eucharist



Ramshaw Scholarship

Every year, St. Thomas' invites applications from high school seniors connected to our church as they prepare for what lies ahead. The Ramshaw Scholarship awards a one-time gift of \$750, and applicants need answer the following questions:

1. What has St. Thomas' meant to you?
2. What are your plans for the future?

Applications are due back to the church office by June 16, 2023.



Where dance is for everyone!

DANCE SEASON 9

Classes are on break starting on February 6th.
Classes will resume on April 10th.

SCHMITTFIT

This class is an upbeat fusion of dance & exercise for the adults! High & low-impact movements are incorporated, along with Wellness dancing & stretching. No experience required.

Monday's 6:30-7 PM
(class will resume April 10th)
\$10 drop in, or \$25/month.

CONTACT US

SchmittSistersDance@gmail.com
315-750-6040
Facebook.com/SchmittSistersDance
122 North Main St. Sherburne, NY

Consider This

“If the death of innocent children does not shake us from our slumber, there is only one way to describe the future we are building for ourselves: horrific and incomprehensible. We have become numb to the violence all around us. We are failing our children and each other. May God have mercy on their families and may God have mercy on us all.”

- The Very Rev. Randy Hollerith,
Dean of Washington National Cathedral

The Bible establishes a precedent (with Abram, Sarai, Jacob, Hagar, Saul, and others) that name changes can be either an uncovering of who God has always seen a person to be, or as the recognition of a new identity and a new beginning. These are important principles at play for many transgender and non-binary people in being able to affirm their gender identities with themselves, with their communities and ultimately with God.

- Austen Hartke & Myles Markham

On The Lighter Side



St. Thomas' Episcopal Church
Scheduled to Serve
May 2023

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

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

DATE	LECTOR	LEM	USHER	ALTAR GUILD	FLOWER GUILD
May 7	OT Kerry Linden NT Hannah McClellenn	Wynn Egginton	Ed Page	Linda Jenks	Jana Laxa
May 14 <i>Rite I</i>	OT Lee Anne Miller NT Rose Novak	Susan Cerasano	Ed Page	Linda Jenks	Rose Novak
May 21	OT John Orr NT Adger Williams	Maureen Ghent	Ed Page	Ellie Weyter	Rose Novak
May 28	OT Lynn Staley NT Kristin Strohmeier	Debbie Barker	Ed Page	Ellie Weyter	Michelle Landstrom

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 Website: stchurchonline.org

DATE	LECTOR	LEM	USHER	ALTAR GUILD	FLOWER GUILD
June 4	OT Jane Welsh NT Ellie Weyer	Amy Jerome	Ed Page	Susan Beattie	Michelle Landstrom
June 11 <i>Rite I</i>	OT Debbie Barker NT Barbara Bowen	Susan Cerasano	Ed Page	Susan Beattie	Michelle Landstrom
June 18	OT Martha Berry NT Everett Egginton	Barbara Bowen	Ed Page	Wynn Egginton	Michelle Landstrom
June 25	OT Wynn Egginton NT Maureen Fox	Wynn Egginton	Ed Page	Wynn Egginton	Michelle Landstrom



Qidings
May 2023

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