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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

Many have asked "what can we be doing?" Living in a rural area can make it seem like nothing we do could possibly be big, dramatic, or earth-shattering enough to make changes. The good news is, we don't have to change the world. All we have to do is be faithful in the places we live. We do our work where we are, and we trust other faithful people are working elsewhere, too. There's a lot we can do, but I'm sorry to say, there's no single one-off answer to this one. This is going to take time and a lot of work.

**Pray** - Build off the most basic of Christian ministries: prayer. Pray for the needs of others, for justice, for mercy, for those being harmed and those causing harm. Pray for the strength to meet this moment. Pray for guidance when you're not sure what's next. Prayer matters; and, it's not an impotent or trite response. For some, prayer may be all that is physically possible. That's okay; the world needs your prayers.

**Keep it up** - If you donate to the Food Cupboard, serve food at Friendship Inn, provide rides to medical appointments, or anything like that, keep it up! If there's a group you've always admired, add them to your volunteering work.

**Attend trainings** - I know; this isn't flashy, but if you're going to do justice work, you need to know your rights and the rights of those you're working with. The New York Immigration Coalition has some extremely helpful resources tailor-made for our state:

[nyic.org/resources-training/kyr/#5](http://nyic.org/resources-training/kyr/#5)

**Learn what else is out there** - We don't have to reinvent the wheel. Many groups have done the hard work for us. Plug in with them. The Episcopal Public Policy Network is excellent

([episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/eppn](http://episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/eppn)), and the Diocese of Central New York publishes a weekly newsletter (<https://cnyepiscopal.org/news-events/messenger/>). Mind you, the latter is the regular newsletter for the diocese, so you may need to filter through some regular church stuff to find announcements relevant to this work. In-person, the Hamilton Area Anti-Racism Coalition meets every two weeks on Tuesday evenings. The Refugee Center in Utica and the Workers' Center in Syracuse are also worth following.

**Pester political leaders** - Attend any government meeting you can. Village Board and School Board meetings are good places to begin.

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Call, mail, email, fax, telegram, or -- if you can figure out how -- homing pigeon your opinions to elected officials. The website [5calls.org](http://5calls.org) (there's also a free smartphone app: 5 Calls) provides contact information and scripts to make the process simpler.

**Show up** - Go to protests locally and, if you can, farther afield. Can't find a protest you'd like to see? Organize one! The Human Rights Campaign has a very helpful guide on how to protest safely that you absolutely should familiarize yourself with:

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/tips-for-preparedness-peaceful-protesting>

**Be prepared** - Keep your phone charged in case you witness an event that needs to be filmed. If there are other people filming, stagger who films when so not everyone runs out of battery at the same time. Carry "Know Your Rights" wallet cards to share: <https://www.nyic.org/resources-training/kyr/#4>

**Be honest with yourself** - This work takes a ton of self-reflection and regular discernment. There are some significant questions you need to work through. For example, what are you willing to risk by doing this work? Are any approaches particularly needed, or are they unwanted? Are there other ways you can be involved that are careful, deliberate, nonviolent, and useful?

There are so many ways to get involved that are both constructive and faithful, certainly more than I've listed here. Use these suggestions as a starting point and, of course, if you find other ways, go for it! Remember your scripture while you're at it. As the Letter to the Ephesians has it, God working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine!

Be safe out there, folks,  
Brooks+

## Join the Conversation: Bible Study

We've done a couple of intro classes and are ready to dig into the text of Revelation!

**Where:** Revelation is the last book of the Bible.

**What to Watch for:** Revelation is a prime example of how Ancient Christians tapped into the Ancient Jewish genre called "apocalyptic literature" which is basically the ancient world's version of "Animal Farm." Class discussions will also include a look at what's not in Revelation that pop-theology swears is. We're looking at you, Rapture.

**References:** Revelation requires a grasp of the socio-political world under the Roman Empire, but don't worry, we'll cover that, too!

**Content:** Revelation looks to impending disaster and attempts to make sense of existential threats posed by life under the thumb of empire.

**Lectionary:** Revelation rarely appears in the Lectionary, but we will hear it several times in this year's Easter Season.

\*In spite of what you may have heard, the book is Revelation without an s.

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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!

## A Thank You Message

Dear Friends,

I wanted to take a moment to thank all of you for your kind words, thoughts, prayers, and cards which I received prior to my move to Georgia. It has been a blessing to be a part of this fellowship, and I will treasure your friendships always.

Best Regards,  
Nancy Heck

PS if you'd like Nancy's new mailing address, please contact Leah in the Office!

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## Scrabble Club

Scrabble Club meets on the first Tuesday of the month. We'll be slinging tiles from 4:00-6:00 pm in the Unicorn Suite. If you'd like to join, feel free to drop in or reach out to Denise Dixon to be added to the text list for updates and other information at (315) 416-2323.

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## Know Your Rights

**April 12th 1:15-2:45 PM:** Know Your Rights when encountering ICE. Meeting directly following the Poolville Winter Farmers Market at the Poolville Community Center  
7484 Willey Road, Poolville, NY.

## Yard Cleanup

**April 5 10:00 AM:** Grab your gloves and meet us in the Parish Hall for a grounds cleanup! With lots of hands, we'll make quick work of spring cleaning. Picking up sticks and the occasional piece of litter will be the primary work. Please let Lynn Staley know if you have questions! [lstaley@colgate.edu](mailto:lstaley@colgate.edu)

## A Prayer

May we serve the marginalized because in doing so, we are serving you, reflecting your justice and mercy.

—Sojourners

## Upcoming Events

**April 13:** Palm Sunday

**April 17 5:30 PM:** Maundy Thursday

**April 18 5:30 PM:** Good Friday

**April 20:** Easter Service & Egg Hunt!

**April 27 3:00 PM:** Here Comes Treble Concert

Park United Methodist Church

**Singers from St. Thomas' include:**

Emily, Jane, Wynn.



**St. Thomas' Episcopal Church**  
**Vestry Minutes**  
**February 23, 2025**

*Present:* Debbie Barker, Martha Berry, John Bowen, Brooks Cato (presiding), Connie Harsh, Kerry Linden, John Orr, Jane Welsh

*Absent:* Wynn Egginton, Maureen Ghent, Deborah Knuth-Klenck, Rose Novak, Ellie Weyer

*Call to Order*

The meeting began at 11:56 a.m. in the parish hall. Kerry Linden opened the meeting with a prayer.

*Clerk's Report*

The minutes of the January 26<sup>th</sup> vestry meeting were approved as submitted in final draft. Approval was moved by Debbie Barker; seconded by Jane Welsh.

*Treasurer's Report*

John Bowen submitted the following report to the vestry members:

"Finances remain healthy. The treasurer's Report shows pledges well ahead of schedule reflecting many 'front loaded' payments. The bump in Non-Designated income was a correction in our favor from the church land sale last year. The Special Collection income was from the Crop Walk. Expenses remained as planned. Utility bills were high, as expected in winter.

The bulk of the most recent Budget and Finance Meeting was spent on preparing the Parochial Report. The financial reporting format has changed which prompted a lot of extra research and discussion."

Martha Berry moved that the Treasurer's Report be received; Debbie Barker seconded the motion. The vestry voted to receive the Report as submitted.

*Rector's Report*

Brooks Cato shared the bad news that Barb Hicks had fallen and broken a rib. She will be out for a while. Arrangements are being made for others

to take over her duties at St. Thomas' and to help her at home in any ways that she needs. Brooks then commented on the funeral service for David Sturges which, he said, went well and was lovely. Everybody who attended was very impressed by the beauty of the service. Brooks thanked all of those who worked so hard to pull the service together. The vestry offered special commendations to Linda Jenks who, as head of Parish Life, provided an astonishing spread for the reception following the funeral. All agreed that the food had been extraordinary.

*Wardens' Report*

Martha Berry and Jane Welsh both were both in agreement with Brooks Cato's comments on how lovely the funeral service for David Sturges had been.

*Commission Reports*

*Rectory Building Project:* John Orr reported that HSE had returned to conduct testing on the rectory for asbestos, radon, mold and lead-based paint. They had taken samples from all over the rectory. There were two pieces of good news. The results showed that radon levels were below what the standard should be. There were no asbestos-containing materials in the house either. Mold contamination was limited to two small areas: in the basement under the 1820 section of the house, and in the bilco door entrance to the basement. Both of these problems can be remedied fairly easily. (There are some roof drainage issues that were identified during the process, as well, and different gutter systems were suggested.) What was a more pronounced issue was lead-based paint. This was located on various interior and exterior surfaces. There is apparently quite a bit of this, but, John emphasized, we are only in the initial phase of testing. Now that the test results are in John will speak with Ted Bartlett of Crawford and Stearns about them; Bartlett will be able to offer recommendations for abatement of the mold and lead-based paint. Coming up shortly, the Building Commission will be meeting in early March.

*Old Business*

- *Safe Church Training:* Martha Berry is scheduling a session for St. Thomas'

in March.

- *Directory:* Brooks Cato reported that a volunteer has stepped up to help with the process of getting this together.
- *Thank You Note Party:* Brooks Cato announced that this would be scheduled shortly.

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#### *New Business*

- *Parochial Report:* Brooks Cato presented the Parochial Report, which had been circulated to vestry members in advance. Some useful bullet points emerged from compiling the report. Attendance went up over the past year and membership has remained steady. Owing to our increased number of youngsters the average age of the congregation has gone down. John Bowen, who also was instrumental in putting together the report, noted that thanks to the Good Neighbor Fund the parish actually gave away more money than we took in. Martha Berry moved that the Parochial Report be approved as submitted; Jane Welsh seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### *Core Priorities: Current Events, Part 2*

Brooks Cato stated that he just wanted to “check in with everybody” and to see how they were doing. Many vestry members expressed frustration with actions that the government is currently taking regarding immigrant status and the effect that this is having, or will certainly have in the future. Brooks Cato recounted his recent experience while visiting the refugee center in Utica. There, several persons on the staff have already been affected by government actions. Then while Brooks was in the course of his visit, the center received a “stop work” order regarding any refugees who have been in the country for less than ninety days. This effectively denies refugees access to basic necessities (such as housing, food, clothing) or assistance with legal paperwork. Additionally, Brooks reported that during the previous week the Ukrainian family who have been assisted by St. Thomas’ (and who are members of our parish family) submitted the necessary paperwork for the first step toward citizenship (along with a check for \$2000 to cover their family of 6), only

to learn a few days later that this option was suddenly discontinued. Further, Brooks explained that visitors to the parish hall at St. Thomas’ will now notice that there are two signs (one on the office) that say “Private” as a deterrent to ICE officers. (Designating space as “private” means that they will need a warrant to enter.) Martha Berry shared what the Episcopal Diocese is currently doing and elucidated what information should be in a proper warrant. John Bowen wondered what the real effect is of the recent torrent of executive orders. Can they simply be ignored? Some cursory discussion followed. Connie Harsh mentioned a website identifying “Red Cards” that she had found. It explains what rights all people in the US have under the U.S. Constitution, regardless of immigration status, and allows users to print off a card that can be carried in a wallet or posted on doors or windows (The site is: <https://www.ilrc.org/red-cards-tarjetas-rojas>).

Brooks ended by reminding everyone that the Utica refugee center depends upon government money for support so the consequences for their future could be great, depending upon what measures are taken. At the end of the conversation vestry members asked, “Where do we go from here? The larger question is: what can we do as a church?”

#### *Announcements:*

- *Announcements:* Announcements were made. Ash Wednesday is coming up soon on March 5<sup>th</sup> and the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper will take place on Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>.
- *Next meeting:* The next vestry meeting is set for March 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- *Prayer Leader:* Martha Berry 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 12:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Cerasano, Clerk

**Sermon for the  
Second Sunday in Lent  
The Rev. Brooks Cato  
March 16, 2025**

I want to take a minute this morning to talk about politics. I know, this is a big shock. Every so often, I get a touch of feedback about how us preachers need to stay out of politics. Look, I'm not gonna tell y'all which campaign signs to put out. Believe it or not, I'm careful not to cross that line, and as long as being Episcopalian's legal, a lot of daylight remains between what I've said from this pulpit and what I can't. Preachers have always been told to "just stick to the Gospel." Look at Thomas Beckett. And I get that. Jesus' message is the reason we're here, and the Gospel is how we hear that message. The problem is that the Gospel doesn't expect a separation of church and state. There was no separation whether you were Roman, Jewish, or one of those weird new followers of Jesus. Caesar was emperor and a god. The Sanhedrin was the religious governing body, legislative assembly, and judicial arm of the government. Followers of Jesus reassigned titles for the emperor. They told his story intertwined with political figures, Herod the Great, Pontius Pilate, and Herod Antipas to name a few. He was mockingly crucified as the King of the Jews; y'all, that was a political jab. They touted the arrival of the Kingdom of God which would overturn all human governments and replace them with the ideal expression of human existence.

Let's look at some of Jesus' more well-known Gospel moments. Take the Beatitudes. At least a quarter of 'em are political, like this one: "Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth." Not the wealthy, not the powerful, not the politicians, but the meek. After Jesus' arrest by the police and the military, he was taken to Pilate, the Governor, to be tried and executed as a political prisoner. After being tortured, Jesus tells the governor, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given from above." In other words, your cute little political system thinks it's in control, but no matter what you do to me, God's still in

charge. What about "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's"? That's not "pay your taxes," at least not only "pay your taxes"; it's making it clear that there are some things that belong to the rulers of this world but there are also things that don't. Caesar had control over the tax rolls, but he didn't have control over God's Creation, no matter how puffed up he became.

So, the claim that modern preachers ought to stay out of politics by just sticking to the Bible reveals a misapprehension of Jesus' life and message. On top of that, even when religion stays in the so-called appropriate realm, it's been co-opted and stepped on by the political world. There are parts of our country where it's not legal to give food to the homeless. Local governments regularly embrace "hostile architecture" to ensure no one can find a comfortable-enough place to sleep. Caring for children, especially the poor, has turned into massive cuts to school meals, loss of medical care, and even removal from the country all done at the hands of the government. For what it's worth, I'm not talking solely about those in charge right now. This kind of stuff's been happening for a long time, maybe forever, which is exactly why it's incumbent on people of faith to stand up and demand what's ours to care for.

So what is ours to care for? Widows and children regularly make the list. Foreigners, too. Inhibiting abuses by the wealthy, that's ours. Promoting the needs of the expelled, the exiled, refugees, outcasts, oppressed peoples. Feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, visiting the imprisoned. That's all Biblical. Even more, hiding political dissidents (that's the story of Rahab), embracing a rehabilitated killer of an agent of the state (that's Moses), crafting the downfall of a political advisor (that's Esther), assassinating the commander of an oppressive regime's military (that's Jael). There's lots of ways our story shows up in politics and vice versa. I'm not saying y'all need to go out and gather up your murderous tent pegs, but I am saying the line we've got now just wasn't there back then. These are the stories and the demands of our scripture: to follow the Gospel, to preach the Gospel, to live into the Gospel. And that requires each and every one of us looking at every aspect of our world, including the

political realm, and naming what's broken. And if you can name it, you can address it, and if you can address it, you can change it. And if it falls short of the standard set by that same Gospel and you can change it, why would you let a concern like the discomfort of preaching politics stop you?

I know there're reasons to be careful, but I've yet to encounter a single compelling reason as to why we should abandon the Gospel because it might get political. If a politician makes a claim about anything we believe, does it suddenly become outside of our reach? A politician can quote the Bible, claim Jesus would support their legislation, define themselves as saved by God all while good Christians are expected to demurely uphold our side of the separation of church and state -- it's a double standard. They don't get to define who we are or how we should live into our faith. And I can promise you, they wouldn't like it one bit if we actually "stuck to the Gospel" 'cause that Gospel wouldn't let the political world get away with the abuses they allow and promote. In that respect, maybe we should "just stick to the Gospel." As Paul says, speaking about the gospel, "For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven." This, mind you, after Jesus directly insulted the head of the local government.

It's time to talk about this stuff now especially, because the same amendment that assures us the ability to practice our faith as we see fit's abused on a daily basis. This should matter to church people 'cause the rest of that amendment's our legislative neighbors. The press is being abridged, speech is grounds for arrest, and assembly is met with handcuffs. Y'all've probably heard about the mess at Columbia where two people've been arrested for protesting, one of 'em a green card holder. Or there's the woman I mentioned a couple of weeks back, the citizen that was dragged out of the Town Hall for speaking up. I know, some of y'all might not agree with them, but they have as much right to demonstrate as anyone else. Even the KKK 's allowed to have

demonstrations. Strange, isn't it, that their demonstrations come with police escorts, not police crackdowns? Hmm, strange indeed.

Anyway, there's so much chipping away at these enshrined rights that we can't afford to ignore what's happening, and we can't stand aside and watch while it does. I know the slippery slope's a logical fallacy but every indication we've seen so far points to continued erosion. The abuse or the potential loss of any phrase within that amendment should make us very, very nervous. And it's already happening. Let me put this differently. As a Christian, would you like to keep supporting our Ukrainian friends? The government wants to deport them. As a Christian, would you like to continue feeding the hungry on Monday nights? The USDA just cut a billion dollars from food programs. As a Christian, would you like us to keep on marrying gay people? At least five states want the Supreme Court to take that sacrament away. Tell me again how this isn't any of our business. Tell me again how "just sticking to the Gospel" keeps us separated from the state. Tell me again what Jesus would do when the state of our time treads on our ministries. I can tell you what the Bible and Jesus and the great line of prophets said about the state in their times, but if I do, it might get a little uncomfortable 'cause they weren't worried about getting "too political."

Y'all, I know Sunday mornings are nice when they're kinda chill and the preacher's nice and chill, too. I know some of us come here for solace. I know some of us just want to get away from bad news. I pray we get to that place again, but for now we don't have the luxury of comforting the already comfortable. Until we get to that promised Kingdom of God, our scripture never promises a time when we can sit back and relax and just let the world be for a year or four. This is a comfort-the-afflicted-and-afflict-the-comfortable era. The Gospel demands that of us; Christ's calls for justice demand that, the prophets' calls for mercy demand that, God's calls for standing up to hardened hearts, y'all, it's what we do. But churches have occupied a privileged space for so long that many never had to see the Church stand up and maybe thought that

meant the Church shouldn't stand up. But here's the thing. When the Church stands up, we change the world. And when we don't, well, a hundred years later we apologize for our inaction and complicity. Don't let the fallacy of Christian complacency get in the way of living out our faith. And don't embarrass the Christians of the future with our failure to live as they and Christ would have us.

We answer to God and the Great Cloud of Witnesses. We do God and the white robed martyrs a great disservice when we let the desire for decorum outweigh our scriptural, baptismal, theological, and even liturgical mandates. Jesus wasn't the only one to offer his blood so that we might live. Stone and lion and flame and cross and sword and cannon and gun and bomb obliterated people of many faiths throughout history so that all of us might come to the freedom of this place. But *we* sit firmly in that long line of Christians willing to give up considerably more than polite discourse to serve our God and ensure another generation can serve our God a little longer. It's time to stand up, and it's time to be Christians. Like Abram, a deep and terrifying dark has descended on us, but with a little faith and a lot of work, we still stand a chance of having spiritual descendants to remember us by. So with that in mind, maybe I will, maybe we will take that advice. When it comes to politics, y'all, just stick to the Gospel.

<https://www.salon.com/2023/08/07/criminalizing-the-samaritan-why-cities-across-the-us-are-making-it-illegal-to-feed-the-homeless/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/08/nyregion/hostile-architecture-nyc.html>

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<https://www.politico.com/news/2025/03/10/usda-cancels-local-food-purchasing-for-schools-food-banks-00222796>

<https://www.livenowfox.com/news/republican-lawmakers-same-sex-marriage-scotus>

[https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts\\_search.pl](https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_search.pl)

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## Nave Gazing

Did you know the Episcopal Church has saints? Well, we do ... sorta. The Church as a whole has celebrated momentous occasions and figures for a very long time. Long before Jesus, there was already a liturgical calendar marking special moments in the Jewish year. Festivals and days of discipline were laid out in scripture and helped to mark the passage of time as sacred. As we get closer to Holy Week and Easter, Passover should come to mind as one such example.

After Jesus, his followers continued to find great solace and strength in remembering those existing Jewish holidays while also adding in remembrances for the particularly eventful moments of Jesus's life. It took some time for those to get codified into a reliable and broadly shared calendar, but it didn't take long at all for



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the impulse to remember Jesus to take off.

By the time we got to the 300s CE, as great strides in standardizing Christianity were made (for good and for ill), practices converged. The Didache had already given us a sense of how very early Christians practiced the faith, and by the end of the century, a Spanish nun named Egeria recorded a journal of the events of Holy Week in Jerusalem.

Christians also made an effort to remember those who had died professing their belief in Jesus by setting aside the days of their deaths as moments to remember the weightiness of the faith they proclaimed and the very real consequences one might face by living into it. Martyrs aren't always saints, but they did get a special place in the minds of the faithful.

As the Reformation blossomed, there was an enormous amount of variation from one locale to another in terms of which saints and other holy witnesses were remembered and celebrated. On top of that, the calendar was filling up. It seemed almost every day was a holiday, which made holidays a whole lot less special and remembering the events each pointed to was less affecting.

Thomas Cranmer, in the remaking of the Church *in* England to the Church *of* England, wiped the calendar clean leaving only Biblical characters and events in the Life of Christ. So you'd still celebrate Paul's Conversion, Easter, Christmas, and that sort of thing, but the old martyrs and early leaders fell away in the burgeoning Protestant world.

The problem with that nearly clean slate approach is that people need inspiration from tangible and nearby examples. Loving Jesus and the story of God is one thing, but upholding a local spiritual luminary that you could see, hear, and not just imagine but truly remember inspired many. Local churches and the laity especially started adding people to be remembered to the calendar once again.

In The Episcopal Church these days, we do observe special days for special people. The most recent calendar of saints is entitled "A Great Cloud of

Witnesses," and you can find an electronic copy of it here:

[episcopalcommonprayer.org/uploads/1/2/3/0/123026473/lm\\_great\\_cloud\\_of\\_witnesses.pdf](http://episcopalcommonprayer.org/uploads/1/2/3/0/123026473/lm_great_cloud_of_witnesses.pdf)

But what is a saint? It's not a perfect person - that title is reserved for Jesus. There are two meanings to the word "saint" in our church's parlance. The first is "the whole family of God, the living and the dead." (BCP, 862) By that definition, all the Christians who ever were and are (and for some theologians, ever will be) are saints. That's us!

The second definition is harder to pin down in large part because of Protestantism's justifiable hesitance to elevate regular ol' people to god-like positions. These saints are models of lives well-lived in faith. Some are consistently great people, some are normal in all aspects but one, and some just happen to be the right person to respond to a difficult time. Some are Biblical characters, and some are historical figures. They are not saints of this variety because they were exemplary human beings all the time, though some were pretty darn good. They are saints because we can learn from and be inspired by them.

Now, The Episcopal Church being the big tent that it is, you will find some Episcopalians who don't want anything to do with any kind of saintly calendar, and you will always find Episcopalians that carry relics!

In April, saints in our calendar span from 304 AD (George) all the way up to 1968 (Martin Luther King, Jr.). If you follow the calendar, you'll encounter soldiers, martyrs, preachers, nuns, scientists, lepers, environmentalists, poets, and even editors!

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## Consider This

Lent reminds us that we don't have to fear or hide from our weaknesses and vulnerabilities. We can find our strength in and through them.

—Adam Russell Taylor,  
"This Year Is Dark, But We Still Need Lent"

## 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, and you can just bring some goodies! If you have any questions, you can reach out to Leah in the office.

## Remembering the Hope of the Cross

Father, we praise You for sending Your Son to abide with us and be with us. Life can feel lonely, but the fact is, we are never alone. That is a truth we can cling to during the ugliest breakdowns. Thank you for giving us the grace to release our failed efforts and bottled-up emotions to You, free of judgment and full of healing love.

Forgive us for walking through life without the joy that Jesus died to fill our hearts with. Help us to find You in the hard moments of life and remember the comfort and truth of Your promises during seasons of suffering.

Jesus, You never leave us, and always guide us. Who we are becoming is no secret to You, You who formed us in our mother's womb. You came down to earth to save us, love us, and show us how to live. May we chase after You all of our days, and experience the rich and irreplaceable peace that allows us to overcome, to walk victorious, and to hold on to hope. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

—Meg Bucher

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## A Prayer

Creator, help us see your light in others and reflect your love in all we do.

—Sojourners

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## Worth Repeating

I recognize that faith is always a risk. No matter what we believe, there's always a chance we might be wrong. But the story of Jesus is just the story I'm willing to risk being wrong about.

—Rachel Held Evans



## 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

## 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
Sunday, 3:00 PM	<u>12 ½ Group of AA</u>	<u>St. Thomas’ Parish House,</u> First door on the right	12 ½ Madison Street	Hamilton

## April Thanksgivings

### Birthdays:

Brendon Fountain (04/01), Virginia Sakal (04/03), Andrew Fountain (04/03), Leigh Yardley (04/05), Jaxon Keller (04/05), Everett Egginton (04/06), Michael Keller (04/06), John Keller (04/08), Karen Marriam (04/09), Elizabeth Dromgold Bouk (04/10), Sophia Balakian (04/15), Nora Dakosty (04/15), Kate Foss (04/17), Kevin Schult (04/18), Barbara Bowen (04/21), Jeffrey Monty (04/21), Sam Williams (04/21), Martin Michelson (04/22).

### Baptism Anniversaries:

Loxie Davie (04/—), Donnel O'Flynn (04/03), Janice Frutiger (04/04), Lucas Luttmann (04/04), Matthew Tarbell (04/04), Constance Harsh (04/09), Julie Dudrick (04/11), Max Conti Porta (04/12), Rose Conti Porta (04/12), Dylan Lopez (04/12), Isadora Catania (04/12), John Catania (04/12), Juliana Catania (04/12), Nicolas Catania (04/12), Sally Brackett (04/13), Rose Novak (04/14), Sarah Wider (04/14), Mea Martineau (04/19), Anne Perry (04/20), Barbara Baltusnik (04/21), Sam Williams (04/21), Jeffrey Monty (04/22), Liz Brackett (04/29).

### Marriage Anniversaries:

Kristin & William Strohmeyer (04/01), Barbara & John Bowen (04/04), Maureen & Chuck Fox (04/14).

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### A Prayer

God of might, strengthen us to endure hardship and fight for justice, knowing you are with us until the end.

—Sojourners

## Prayers of the People as of March 28

### For those in need:

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

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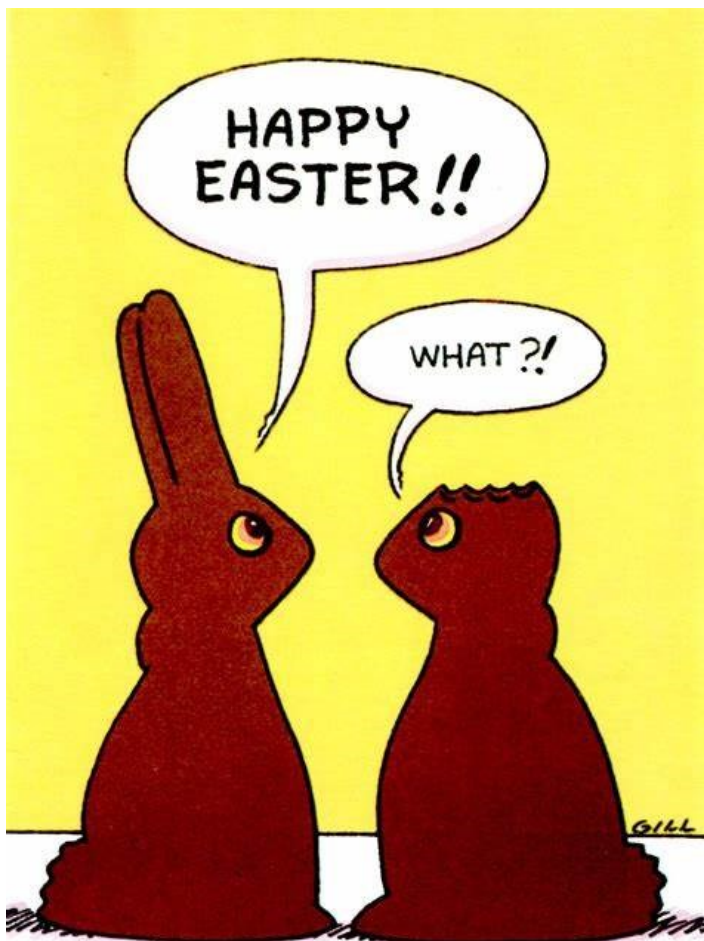
### A Prayer

Even in the darkest valleys and amid life's sorrows, help us to trust in your presence and find peace in your comforting guidance, knowing that, with you by our side, it is well with our souls.

—Sojourners



## On the Lighter Side



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## A Prayer

Creator may we trust that our lives are in your hands and you will sustain us, whatever comes our way.

—Sojourners

## Adult Dance Opportunities

### ADULT LINE DANCE NIGHT

April 11 6:00-7:30 PM, \$10

No experience or boots required. Come as you are and be ready to learn some fun routines! We take you step-by-step through each dance. These routines are low-impact. You are welcome to bring a drink of choice, plus water is recommended to stay hydrated!

### Upcoming dates:

April 25, May 9

### CONTACT US FOR DETAILS:

SchmittDance@gmail.com

Facebook.com/SchmittDance

12 E Main St., Earlville, NY



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

DATE	LECTOR	LEM	USHER	ALTAR GUILD	FLOWER GUILD	NEWCOMERS
April 6	1 <sup>st</sup> : Debbie Barker 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Rose Novak	Amy Jerome	Ed Page	Jane Welsh	Sally Orr	Linda Jenks
April 13 <i>Palm Sunday</i> <i>(Rite Two)</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> : Martha Berry 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Wynn Egginton	Susan Cerasano	Ed Page	Jane Welsh	The Flower Guild	Linda Jenks
April 17 5:30 PM <i>Maundy Thursday</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> : John Orr 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Jane Welsh	Wynn Egginton	Ed Page	Emily HH	The Flower Guild	N/A
April 18 5:30 PM <i>Good Friday</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> : Lynn Staley 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Joan Ford	Susan Cerasano	Ed Page	Emily HH	The Flower Guild	N/A
April 20 <i>Easter</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> : Adger Williams 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Maureen Fox	Debbie Barker	Ed Page	Linda Jenks	The Flower Guild	Colleen McNerney & Linda Jenks
April 27	1 <sup>st</sup> : Kerry Linden 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Vivi Linden	Amy Jerome	Ed Page	Linda Jenks	Sally Orr	Linda Jenks



**Qidings**  
April 2025

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