



ST. THOMAS
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Messenger

August 2018

As many of you know, I was raised in the Roman Catholic Church. I found my way to the Episcopal Church as a young adult and was received into this tradition in 1994. I became an Episcopalian for many reasons – the welcoming nature of St. James' Church in Greenfield, MA (much like St. Thomas') and an openness to all people were two big reasons for the change.

A third reason, perhaps the most important of all for me, was the beauty of Episcopal liturgy. The rhythms of weekly worship had embedded themselves into my heart, mind, and soul in the Roman Catholic church. After several years of attending non-liturgical churches, I felt like I'd found home from my first moments at St. James'. I continue to love our liturgy deeply. It continues to shape and form my spirituality and leads me ever more deeply into my relationship with God.

In the Episcopal church, our worship goes by many names. Some people call it "Mass" while others call it "Eucharist" or "Communion" and still others call it simply worship or church. The name "Mass" comes from the Latin word *missa* meaning *sending* or *dismissal*. It is most likely derived from the original concluding formula *Ite, missa est*, "Go, the dismissal is made." The word "Eucharist" comes from the Greek word *eucharistia* which means Thanksgiving – and was used to describe what we now call the Eucharistic Prayer as early as the late first or early second century. "Holy Communion" or simply "Communion" has been used by some groups originating in the Protestant Reformation to mean the entire eucharistic rite. "Communion" is derived from Latin *communio*, which means *sharing in common*.

Whatever you call it, our liturgy is beautiful! And, it can also be quite opaque. In my experience, it doesn't matter whether a person has been worshipping in Episcopal churches for his/her whole life or is still new in the church – our liturgy often leaves people with questions. Do you wonder why I wear different clothes to lead worship? Are you curious about why the service is structured in the way it is? I know that there are people who are totally mystified by The Peace and what that's all about, because they tell me so!

It has been my tradition to offer what's commonly called an INSTRUCTED EUCHARIST once per year, in place of the sermon, to help all of us grow in our understanding of our church's liturgy and tradition.

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Lord make me an instrument of
your peace
Where there is hatred let me sow
love
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is darkness, light
And where there is sadness, joy
O divine master grant that I may
not so much seek to be consoled
as to console
to be understood as to
understand
To be loved as to love
For it is in giving that we receive
it is in pardoning that we are
pardoned
And it's in dying that we are born
to eternal life
Amen

~St. Francis of Assisi

This year, we'll actually have an Instructed Eucharist over two Sundays (so that we can cover what we need to without extending the length of the service too much). During the middle two weekends in August, instead of hearing a sermon, you'll hear teaching about the different parts of our liturgy. What's the history behind what we do? Where do these traditions come from? What are all the elements called?

On the first weekend, August 11-12, we'll cover the vestments that priests and servers wear, some background on worship, and the liturgy from the Opening Acclamation (Blessed be God...) through the Nicene Creed. During the second weekend, August 18-19, we'll pick up with the Prayers of the People to the Offertory and Eucharistic Prayer, through the Dismissal.

At each worship service, there will be a pair of narrators who will, using the texts I have written, help us to understand the history and traditions behind our worship. There will be a chance for you to ask any questions that you have. And, you'll have the opportunity after church to get a closer look at the items we use for worship.

I hope that you will join us on the weekends of August 11-12 and 18-19 for our Instructed Eucharist. In the meantime, if you have any questions or topics that you want to see covered, send me an email at fran.gardnersmith@stthomasmcleanva.org and I'll incorporate your question into the Instructed Eucharist.

Blessings,
Rev. Fran



Welcome Joy

Friends,

It is my great joy to share the news with you that we have a new Parish Administrator! Her name is Joy Warburton – and she is able to start working with us right away. In fact, Joy was free to come into the office for a few hours today (Thursday July 26), in order to overlap with Kat and learn a bit about how our office operates. She will begin her regularly scheduled hours on Monday.



You'll find Joy in the office on these days and times:

Monday – Thursday from 9-3

Friday – the office will be closed

Please note: Joy made a commitment for August prior to accepting our job offer – therefore she will not be in the office on August 1, 8 and 15. For those three weeks, she will be in the office on Fridays – August 3, 10 and 17.

You can contact Joy at the main St. Thomas number – or by email – parishadmin@stthomasmclean.org or joy.warburton@stthomasmcleanva.org

Let me share with you a little bit about Joy. She is a native of Sierra Leone, and has lived in the United States for close to thirty years. She is married to Edmund and lives in Woodbridge. Together they have two adult children – Elaine (24) and Cameron (nearly 21). Joy has been a member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Arlington, VA for 27 years. She and Edmund were married there and their children were baptized at Trinity. Joy says that she's a bit of a homebody when she's not working – but that she loves to go on adventures! Joy wants you all to know that she is really looking forward to working with us.

To hire Joy, I asked Chuck Grimes (Sr. Warden), Pat Smith (Treasurer), Scott Johnston (Vestry Shepherd for Administration) and Louise Armitage (Vestry Member) to form a Search Committee with me. We received over fifty applications for the position of Parish Administrator. Joy's application stood out right away. She brings to St. Thomas more than fifteen years of working as a Parish Administrator in Episcopal churches! We greatly enjoyed our interview with her – and when I spoke with her references they were glowing. One of her previous bosses said about Joy, "She sees her work as Parish Administrator as a ministry."

I'm thrilled to welcome Joy on board. She hopes to worship with us soon so that she can meet everyone. Please join me in welcoming Joy to St. Thomas!

Blessings,

Rev. Fran

Until We Meet Again...

When I first answered the ad for a Parish Administrator it was as a temp through Randstad, I thought I would probably be at St. Thomas' for about six months – or at least that is what Fred Young originally told me. While that six months quickly turned into almost two years at St. Thomas, first as a temp then as a St. Thomas employee, there was a lot of chaos in those first months and a few bottles of wine were had at home, and I wouldn't change a thing - well except to tell someone to get with the program on developing transporter technology.

From the moment I let Fran know that I was accepting the offer in Fredericksburg, I have worried about no one being in my position to take care of everyone. As a good friend of mine once said – I'm a grandmother in waiting – I worry and I care. I was happy to find out as I wrote this, that they hired Joy, and all my worries disappeared.

Through all of it, the community of St. Thomas welcomed both myself and my husband when he would lovingly get volen-told to help out with some small item and the Men Eating Breakfast at one grill night or pancake supper jokingly re-named him 'Mr. Kat'. Whenever we attended anything, we were always welcomed with open arms and I can tell you it was a joy for both of us. We will both greatly miss St. Thomas and will always hold all of you in prayer as well as a special place in our hearts. Thank you for your generosity of spirit and love. Until we meet again, I will leave you with one of my favorite Maya Angelou poems below.

With love and blessings,

Kat

kat.sarfati@gmail.com

“The thing to do, it seems to me, is to prepare yourself so you can be a rainbow in somebody else's cloud. Somebody who may not look like you. May not call God the same name you call God - if they call God at all. I may not dance your dances or speak your language. But be a blessing to somebody. That's what I think.”

~Maya Angelou

Youth & Family

Dear Friends in Christ,

While in seminary, no one ever instructed me about how difficult it is to leave a congregation. It's really hard!!! But as I have realized, it is particularly hard when your heart is open to love, which the people of St. Thomas most certainly are. I now understand that the tears I am crying are because you have allowed me to love you and the tears are rich in blessing and shared pain, tears that are filled with memories of laughter, tears of shared burdens. Thank you for allowing me to walk this path with you. It has been a joy.

Each time you extended your hands at the communion rail, you presented a trust in God which edified my own faith. In January of this year, as we pushed our fingers in the leaky dam of our structure both literally and figuratively, you patched parts of my soul that were in doubt. Together we welcomed Rev. Fran and entered into Lenten study. We walked the Stations of the Cross together on Good Friday and on Easter discovered the empty tomb, our nave decorated with bountiful, beautiful, richly colored flowers. We've sent packages to our college kids. We've blessed our Sunday School teachers and our young people.

Whenever there were announcements in the congregation - from ECW or requests for meals for Second Story, when people wore their pumpkin patch hats, or when you freely embraced me after the service, you served a role in building my faith. Often I preached about community — that we're all in this together. We can never fully stand in someone else's shoes. But together, by extending Christ's love to one another openly, graciously, we become the evidence of faith, of things hoped for. (Hebrews 11:1) The congregation of St. Thomas is that evidence to me. You are strong, faithful, resilient people.

The generosity of your gifts to me, both spiritual and material, are gifts of abundance. I am overwhelmed at this expression of love. I will put the purse which you gifted me to good use in Montana and will send photos to you in September.

I'm going to a place where the fish in the Madison River vastly outnumber human residents. I'm going to a place where there's 5 kids that have miraculously appeared in a church filled with graying hair. A place of big sky, of wildness and openness. Like any other place, it is not a place without problems - spiritual and material poverty exist. There's always work to do, love to extend, which will continue to build the Kingdom of God.

I am grateful for the people of St. Thomas who have taught me well about repairing and building the Kingdom. I am grateful for the opportunity to have served beside you, among you. I am grateful for the healing you have extended to me. I am most richly blessed. You will forever be in my heart and my prayers.

Rev. Jaime

Flowers? Prayer List? Help! I can't find the sheet?!

With all the construction/demolition and chaos going around with the burst pipe—
you may be confused where the signups went!

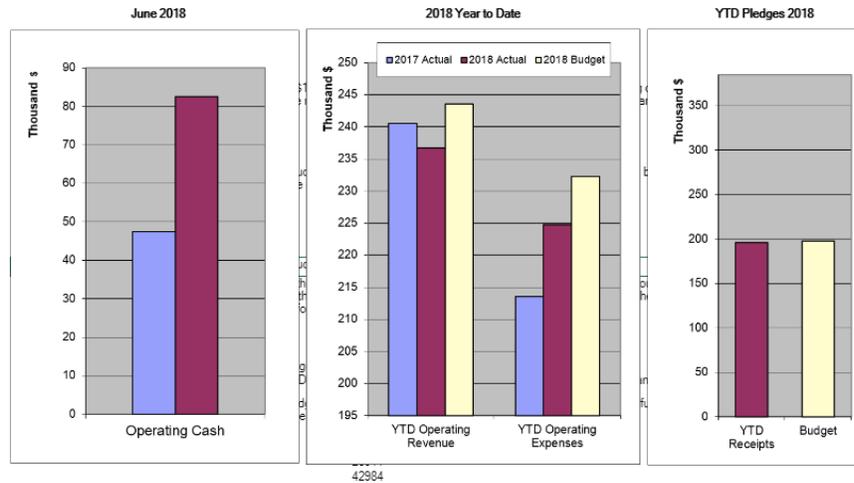
We have you covered!

Signups for flowers and prayer lists are now on the website!

www.stthomasmcleanva.org and you can always call the office.

Parish Financial Report

Parish Financial Report



Notes

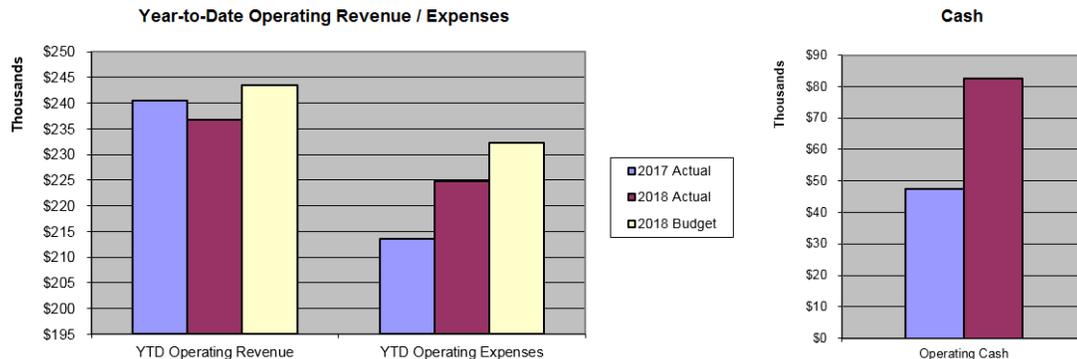
Report:

"Operating Cash" equals

(Cash United Bank + Other Cash + Short Term Investments) - Temporarily Restricted Funds excluding Phase IV Invested Funds

Income Statement:

"Operating Expenses" include all current month expenses except Non-Operating Expenses



Net Operating Revenue:

-Net operating revenue for June is (\$19,073) and year-to-date (YTD) is \$11,900. The year is at risk of going negative, depending upon timing of new hires for Parish Administrator and Family Minister and the medical insurance plan selected. The Rector, Treasurer, Wardens and Vestry are monitoring the finances closely and continually search for ways to improve the financial impact of operations.

Revenue:

- Pledges are 99% of YTD budget.

- Plate collections are \$6,077 below YTD budget. The full year is projected to be \$8,000 rather than the \$20,000 budget, which was set based upon 2017 that had pledge and plate collections mixed up in the early half of the year.

Expenses:

- Church education continues to be lower than YTD budget, but likely will catch up in the fall.

- Communication expenses are \$1,104 lower than YTD budget, primarily in computer services.

- Outreach expenses are higher than YTD budget due to the \$3,840 that was sent to Haiti to feed and transport 96 children, about 35% higher than usual participation. Our VBS team cancelled the trip due to the riots in Haiti and Department of State's increasing the travel category to red, "do not go". VBS donations will be used for Ascension School.

- Other Operating Expenses are \$1,561 higher than YTD budget primarily due to delayed communication between Cetera and St. Thomas' authorized contacts that resulted in the donated stocks losing market value before liquidation.

- Pastoral Care expenses are \$1,185 lower than YTD budget primarily due to Shrinemont deposits not yet offset by expenses.

- Property expenses for the Rectory are \$1,542 above YTD budget due to the termite inspection not having been budgeted, and the insurance deductible related to roof repair and replacement of appliances that were required due to strong storms.

- YTD compensation costs are \$6,646 lower than YTD budget because the rector's Haiti costs (airfare for the cancelled VBS is not refundable) are not reflected, and the reconciliation of pension won't be reflected until July.

Bible Study

An Invitation to Study the Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation is greatly misunderstood. Some view it as a detailed description of end time events along with a free pass for Christians to rapture out of the fray. Others see it as a book about an angry God taking revenge on a rebellious creation. Add the wild imagery of Revelation and it's little wonder that it seldom appears in the lectionary and few want to study it. But avoiding Revelation is a tragedy for the church. Perhaps now more than ever.

What is the Book of Revelation? It is, first of all, a type of literary genre called "apocalypse." The word, "apocalypse," is simply the transliteration of the Greek word, *apokalypsis*. It occurs in the very first verse: "A revelation (Greek: *apokalypsis*) of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:1). In future posts, I'll identify the characteristics of this unique genre.

Second, to understand the Book of Revelation, we need to understand the purpose of this apocalypse in its historical context. The Book of Revelation is built on the foundation of the many Jewish apocalypses written primarily in the three centuries before Revelation was written. Anthea E. Portier-Young has written a remarkable book exploring the purpose of these writings. In her book, *Apocalypse Against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism* she writes that these Jewish apocalyptic texts "unthink the logic of empire and assert in its place an alternative vision of reality. . . . They counter imperial hegemony by exposing it, making visible the hidden logic and structures of domination in order to enable full-fledged resistance in mind, spirit, and body."

That's what the Book of Revelation sets out to do: to empower us to see through and stand against the propaganda and violence of empire. What could be more important for our world?

But there's more. Portier-Young writes, "These (Jewish apocalyptic) texts also reveal the hidden power and providence of God, relocating ultimate power from earth to heaven and asserting the conditional, finite, and partial nature of temporal rule. This revealed knowledge provides the necessary basis for the resistant action they advocate."

We need this, if you will, revelation. We need this vision that empowers us to see and stand with the God of justice and compassion before whom all governments are accountable.

Join us for our study on Sunday mornings at 9 am in Hudson Hall. We'll begin on September 9.

The Rev. Dr. David Smith



Life
@
St. Thomas

August 2018

29 9AM Endowment Committee Meeting—Parlor	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Instructed Eucharist Part 1 All Services
12 Instructed Eucharist Part 1 All Services	13	14	15 12:15 PM Tysons Interfaith	16	17	18 Instructed Eucharist Part 2 All Services
19 Instructed Eucharist Part 2 All Services 11:30 Outreach Committee	20	21	22	23	24	25 Blessing of the Backpacks 
26 Blessing of the Backpacks 	27	28  School Starts Fairfax County	29	30	31	

A Recipe for Happiness

Ingredients:

- 4 cups of love
- 2 cups of loyalty
- 2 cups of friendship
- 1 cup of kind words
- 1 barrel of laughter
- 1 can of smiles
- A pinch of personality
- A dash of well-meaning humor

Instructions:

Mix love, loyalty and friendship together in a bowl. Next, stir in kind words, personality and humor. Add smiles, then sprinkle with a bit of laughter. Pour into a pan and bake with sunshine. Serve daily and share with those around you.

Live
Laugh
Love

Blessing of the Backpacks



As we prepare for the new school year, please bring your backpacks /bookbags in for a special blessing on Saturday August 25th & Sunday, August 26th at all services.

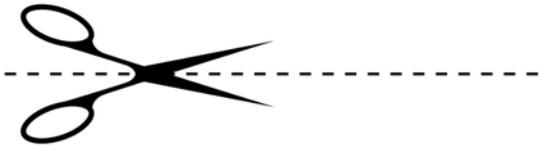


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Going Shopping?



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SHARE of McLean could use a few things for their pantry too...

- Breakfast cereal
- Ground coffee
- All types of canned vegetables
- All types of canned fruit
- Jam and jelly
- 100% juice
- Ketchup
- Baby wipes
- Diapers (Size 4, especially)
- Laundry soap
- White sugar
- White rice
- Dried beans
- Vegetable oil
- Toothpaste
- Single toothbrushes
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Mac and cheese
- Granola bars, crackers, nuts, dried fruit
- Canned tomato sauce