

September 2021

The Story

*All are Welcome
No Exceptions!*

St. Thomas Episcopal Church accepts all people and we commit:

Celebrate the Eucharist regularly

Keep a personal and community discipline of prayer and study

Proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ by promoting justice, peace, and love.

Nurture God's people as we grow in Christ

Live with thanksgiving, wonder, and openness to God's love

Adult Education Series Features Four Distinct Topics

From September through December, St. Thomas will present a new series of Adult Education Forums before worship on the second Sunday of each month. Offering a wide variety of topics, the sessions will start at 9:00 a.m. on Sept. 12, Oct. 10, Nov. 14 and Dec. 12 in Halladay Hall. Please join us for any or all of them.

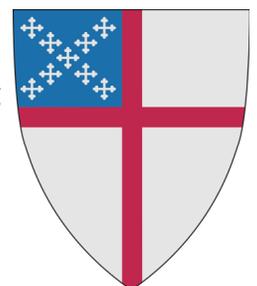
On Sept. 12, the Rev. Dr. Ann Glass will focus on Jesus's identity in connection with that day's gospel lesson from the eighth chapter of Mark. When Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" responses included John the Baptist, Elijah, and one of the prophets. Ann says she plans to ask, "If we were checking Jesus's ID today, what would it be?"

Marikay Kapke, our education liaison on the Vestry, will lead the Oct. 10th discussion. Marikay will offer a personal perspective on overcoming obstacles including injustice, in connection with that day's Old Testament lesson from the fifth chapter of Amos. The lesson includes the command, "Hate evil and love good, and establish justice at the gate."

Parishioner Teresa Voorhees will lead the Nov. 14th session on end-of-life issues. Teresa says she plans to raise this challenging question: "How do we improve the experience of death?" Teresa's presentation, referencing scriptures of comfort, emerged from her career as a clinical social worker at Johnson Memorial Health.

The series will end Dec. 12, with my session on St. Nicholas in popular culture and religious history. Many first hear about St. Nicholas, or Santa Claus, around Christmas as a giver of gifts, especially to kids. But for years, Anglicans have also honored an early bishop known as St. Nicholas. I hope we'll have fun getting to know more about St. Nick.

—Fr. Whitney



St. Thomas Urges Masks for September Worship

For in-person, indoor worship in September, St. Thomas, Franklin, will again recommend wearing masks, regardless of vaccination status. The decision by the parish Regathering Committee is in keeping with the recent spike in daily positive COVID-19 cases in Johnson County and statewide. It also follows recent guidance from Jennifer Phelps, Transition Minister for the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis.



While Johnson County was experiencing only a handful of new daily positive cases, our Regathering Committee moved to mask-optional worship for indoor Sunday services in August. But the committee voted to change course as cases rose dramatically in Johnson County.

In late August, the Associated Press quoted Indiana Health Commissioner Dr. Kristina Box as saying that the state's positivity rate had risen to its worst surge of COVID-19 cases since last winter.

Jennifer Phelps, our Diocesan Transition Minister, said in an email to clergy that, "It looks like Indiana is going to be in for a bumpy ride in the weeks ahead as the outbreak of the delta variant of the COVID virus continues to spread." She said that, to protect our communities, parish regathering teams may want to consider maintaining or implementing interventions including indoor masks regardless of vaccination status, providing robust online worship, maintaining social distance in person, and gathering outside when possible.

--Fr. Whitney Smith

Outdoor Worship 2nd Saturdays of September, October

Weather permitting, St. Thomas will have two short late-afternoon services of Holy Eucharist outdoors at the Shelter House on the second Saturdays of September and October. Services will be at 5:00 p.m. on Sept. 11 and Oct. 9.

At this time, there is no plan to livestream the Saturday worship. Liturgy will be from *Enriching Our Worship 1*, the supplement we've been using indoors along with the Book of Common Prayer since late June. In case of bad weather, services will be moved inside.



Stewardship

2022 Stewardship Campaign: Giving the Perfect Gift

Greetings St. Thomas Parishioners and Friends:

As we transition from summer to fall, the stewardship campaign for 2022 is about to kick off. I want to thank you all for a successful 2021 campaign. Your generosity made it financially viable for St. Thomas to continue our variety of in-house and outreach projects throughout Johnson County. The St. Thomas Vestry and Fr. Whitney are working toward challenging all of us to make 2022 even better.

I have been mulling over many themes for the 2022 campaign. A theme of “our gifts allow us to share our abundance with others” kept resonating in my thoughts. Then, while sitting at Mass on Sunday, August 29 and listening to Elspeth Mirchandani read our second lesson from the Letter of James, the opening line brought it all together for me:

“Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above...”

-James 1:17

Every gift, large or small, is presented by and with the grace of God. And it is perfect. I look forward to your “perfect gift” that will assist St. Thomas in continuing to stand on solid financial ground, as well as providing a bounty of support for a multitude of charitable entities within our community.

Look for your stewardship letter and pledge form in early October. There will be a collection of pledge forms in late November or early December. The exact date of pledge form collection is yet to be determined. Stay tuned for more details.

--Dave Buchholz, Sr. Warden

Emergency Response Training Coming to St. Thomas Clinic

What is CERT training? It is Certified Emergency Response Training offered by Johnson County's Community Organizations Active in Disaster. This free training will enable individuals to assist emergency responders during a major situation such as a flood or tornado aftermath. Anyone willing and able to assist in helping others in their neighborhood is welcome to attend. Registration is required.



The training will take place over the course of three Saturdays in October. Definite dates are pending but most likely will be the 9th, 16th and 23rd. Lunch will be provided for the first two full Saturday trainings. The final Saturday will be a half day; no lunch will be provided.

Please feel free to contact the St. Thomas Clinic Director for more information by emailing stthomasclinic@aol.com or by leaving a message at 317-535-6057.

--Terresa Branham

Help Wanted: Angel Tree Coordinator

If you are interested in helping out, contact Rachel Allen: Rachel.skibbe@gmail.com or 269-266-2682



Panera Bread Sign-up

St. Thomas resumed our ministry with Panera Bread with a slight change. The end of day bread will be picked up at Panera Bread Sunday night and delivered to the Interchurch Food Pantry of Johnson County Monday morning. Please use the link below for more information and to sign up to help. Questions: contact Steve Wahlberg.

[PaneraBreadSignUp](#)



Ethel Lucille "Lucy" Lukas (1927-2021)

A funeral service for longtime St. Thomas parishioner Ethel Lucille "Lucy" Lukas took place on Sunday, Aug. 29th at Wilson St. Pierre in Greenwood. Mrs. Lukas, 94, passed away Aug. 7th at the Greenwood care facility where she resided. She joined St. Thomas in 2005, though she was unable to attend personally the past few years due to declining health.

In her prime, she was a cross-country skier and square dancer. Her family was of utmost importance to her.

About 40 people attended Lucy's service, among them several St. Thomas parishioners. She will be buried in Endicott, N.Y., with her late husband, Joseph Lukas. The family asked that memorial contributions be made to the American Cancer Society.



"You can't be an usher
because you think offering
plates are Frisbees®."

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Pay Pledges Online

The Bishop's office is continuing to process online gifts on behalf of congregations. If you wish to pay your pledge online, visit [Give Now \(onrealm.org\)](https://onrealm.org) and select Give to a Congregation.

Then select St. Thomas—Franklin.

September Celebrations

Birthdays

5 Jim Lewis & Elspeth Mirchandani
7 Rachel Buchholz
8 Charlie Lewis
10 Molly Blade
11 Brandi Ashlock
12 Danny Bachman
14 Neil Blade
16 Joshua Craft-Rutan & Ann Glass
23 Bonnie Johnson & Marilyn Thompson

Anniversaries

13 Danny and Ashley Bachman
15 Gavin and Maggie Merriman

ST. THOMAS VESTRY

The 25th Vestry of St. Thomas (2021--2023)

2021Robin Kares, Joshua Craft-Rutan, Jan Skopecek
2022Dave Buchholz, Marikay Kapke
2023Rachel Allen, Brandi Ashlock, Cheryl Faust, Steve Wahlberg

The Staff and Officers of St. Thomas

Rector.....Fr. Whitney Smith
Senior Warden Dave Buchholz
Junior WardenSteven Wahlberg
Clerk Karen Smith
TreasurerMarti Ramsey
Organist/Choir DirectorHeather Orvek
Assistant TreasurersRobin Kares, Mike Ramsey, Eric Smith

If you have an article for the next newsletter, please submit it to Father Whitney at whitindy@hotmail.com by the 15th of the month.