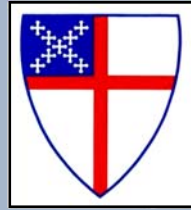


The Builder

Making Disciples for Jesus Christ

St. Thomas's Episcopal Church
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From the Pastor

I don't know about you, but my garden is showing signs of rebirth and renewal from the drear of winter. Crocus and daffodils are blooming, tulip leaves are pushing up from the ground, and various bulbs are slowly sending forth shoots that will eventually ripen into a variety of color. Cherry trees are budding with the promise of their vibrant pink and ethereal blush-white petals. And in the evening, I can hear the robins' distinctive call rippling from the nearby trees. There is no doubt that after the drab, gray-brown of winter, spring is finally upon us, once again bringing a new birth from what had once appeared dead and barren.

It occurs to me that Easter is much like a spring. It is about a return to life. What once was dead, is now alive. So the brutalized and lifeless body of Jesus that was so solemnly laid to rest in a freshly hewn new tomb, in three days, emerges to new life—never to die again, an eternal and everlasting Spring. Easter not only reminds us of this singular and monumental event of some two thousand years ago, but Easter also reminds us of God's eternal promise that a bodily resurrection to new life, never to die again, is available to all who place their trust in God's sacrificial gift to humanity.

People often ask: "What is the difference between Raising Lazarus from the Dead [*John 11:38-44*] or raising the Widow's Son of Nain [*Lk 7:11-18*]? Or, for that matter the raising of a dead boy by Elijah or Elisha [*1 Kgs 17:18-23*; *2 Kgs 4:31-35*] or even St. Paul raising the boy, Eutychus, to life [*Acts 20:9-12*]? Yes, each incident involved raising someone from death back to life; however, that is distinctly different that the Resurrection of Jesus. In simplest terms, each of those other incidents involved what is better termed a "resuscitation." Whether it was Lazarus, Eutychus, the Widow's son, the son of the widow from Zarephath or the Shunamite woman, each was raised back to life—resuscitated—for whatever amount of life that accident, disease, or old age allowed a human body. Regardless, each of those biblical characters would still eventually die.

But in the Resurrection of Jesus, we are not "resuscitated," we are, like Jesus, restored to life—*never to die again*. Metaphorically, we are not tulip bulbs, we are ever-blooming tulips and glorious to behold. So, as you watch the bulbs and flowers emerge and bloom, rejoice in their beauty and give thanks for their seasonally brief glimpse of God's eternal gift of life that will one day be ours. Or, as the anti-Nazi German pastor and theologian so poignantly noted before he was executed, "This may be the end; but, for me, it is the beginning of life."

Thank You, Jesus!

Pastor Lin +

For All the Saints...

Because April is usually the month of Holy Week and Easter many of the saints we recognize in April go unnoticed.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Pastor and Theologian, 1945 ~ April 9

The Rev. Doctor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, was a German Lutheran pastor and theologian executed by the Nazi's in 1945 for treason against the Nazi state. Bonhoeffer was born February 4, 1906 and later studied at the universities of Berlin and Tübingen. From 1933 to 1935 he was the pastor of two small congregations in London, but was nonetheless a leading spokesman for the Confessing Church, the center of Protestant resistance to the Nazis. In 1935 Bonhoeffer was appointed to organize and head a new seminary for the Confessing Church at Finkenwald. He described the community there in *Life Together* and later wrote *The Cost of Discipleship*.



Bonhoeffer was involved in protests against the Nazi regime from the first days of its rise to power in 1933, but he became increasingly involved in the political struggle after 1939, when he was introduced to the group seeking Hitler's overthrow. Bonhoeffer considered refuge in the United States, but he returned to Germany where he was able to continue his resistance. In May 1942 he flew to Sweden to meet Bishop Bell and convey through him to the British government proposals for a negotiated peace. The offer was rejected by the Allies who insisted upon unconditional surrender.

Despite pleas by some of the greatest theologians of the era to depart Germany while he still could, Bonhoeffer insisted on staying with his congregations and his students. Despite being a pacifist, Bonhoeffer became convinced that only Hitler's death could save Germany. As a noted vocal opponent to the Nazi regime, Bonhoeffer was arrested April 5, 1943 and imprisoned in Berlin. After an attempt on Hitler's life failed April 9, 1944, documents were discovered linking Bonhoeffer to the conspiracy and he was imprisoned. Bonhoeffer was held in the Buchenwald concentration camp. Sadly, a year later and only a few days before American forces liberated the Buchenwald camp Bonhoeffer was executed by the Nazi SS. As he finished celebrating the Sunday service in the prison chapel, Bonhoeffer was summoned for hanging. As Bonhoeffer was led to his execution he is quoted as saying to another prisoner, "This may be the end. But, for me, it is the beginning of life."

Bonhoeffer's life reflected a remarkable unity of faith, prayer, writing, and action. The pacifist theologian came to accept the guilt of plotting the death of Hitler because he was convinced that not to do so would be a greater evil. Bonhoeffer knew that often true discipleship was to be had only at great cost. His seminal work, *The Cost of Discipleship*, remains to this day one of the fundamental writings about the dichotomy between "cheap grace" and "costly grace."

Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1109 ~ April 21



Anselm was an Italian monastic who served in the famed Abbey of Bec in Normandy in 1060, during the reign of William, Duke of Normandy who, in 1066 conquered the Anglo-Saxons in England. In 1093, Rome later appointed Anselm to serve as the Archbishop of Canterbury where he was known for his continual conflict with the crown over the rights and freedom of the Church. However, Anselm's greatest talent lay in theology and spiritual direction.

Anselm is considered the pioneer of the "Scholastic Method" of theology and is known for his "ontological argument" for the existence of God ["*God is that which nothing greater can be thought.*"] and for his "Satisfaction Theory of Atonement," in which Anselm understood the work of Christ in terms of the

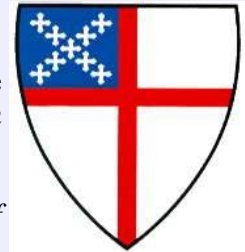
feudal society of his day. If a vassal breaks his bond, he has to atone for this to his Lord; likewise, sin violates a person's bond with God, and atonement or satisfaction must be made. Of ourselves, we are unable to make such atonement, because God is perfect and we are not. Therefore, God himself saved us, becoming perfect man in Christ, so that a perfect life could be offered in satisfaction for sin.

However, undergirding Anselm's theology was profound spiritual piety that is best summarized in the phrase, "faith seeking understanding." He writes, "I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order that I may understand. For this, too, I believe, that unless I first believe, I shall not understand."

MORE, "101 Reasons to be an Episcopalian"—

Reason # 69: "Hooker's Eucharistic theology in 30 seconds: It's about us becoming the Body of Christ, the presence of Christ in the assembled community." *The Rev. Deborah Galante Seles, Diocese of Chicago*

Reason # 81: "Catholic lite. Great rite. Less guilt." *William Barnett-Lewis, Diocese of Milwaukee*



Good Friday



Remember your Good Friday Offerings

The Good Friday Offering is an opportunity throughout the Episcopal Church to support our Anglican sisters and brothers in their ministry to their neighbors to help meet the needs of innocent people caught in the middle of these realities.

In the Middle East, the political instability of neighboring countries faced in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and elsewhere can overshadow all other concerns. Governments in turmoil continue to create conditions that promote poverty, food insecurity and economic instability, which put a desperate strain on refugees and displaced persons, health care, education, and family life, in the best of times.

Please indicate "Good Friday Offering" on your gift.



To you to those who participated in our most unusual 5 p.m. Wednesday Night Lenten Evening Prayer and "God's Story ~ Our Story" Program!

We look forward to rejoining the world of "normal" next year: the Vestry's *Shrove Tuesday & King Cake*, our Community Wednesday noon Lenten Service and soup lunch, our own *Evening Prayer & Potluck Program*, so many things to look forward to next year!

We are not able to schedule our Parish Retreat this year, but Shrine Mont will open and invites you to check out some of their program opportunities.

ShrineMont 2021

PROGRAMS

February 26—28 Winter Digital Photography	September 10 - 12 Arranging for the Joy of It
April 30 - May 2 Spring Yoga Retreat	September 12 - 13 Tee with the Bishop Golf
May 6 - 9 Digital Photography Retreat (3 days, Thursday—Sunday)	September 17 - 19 Fall Yoga
June 4 - 6 Women's Retreat	September 24 - 26 Mindfulness Meditation
June 11 - 13 Arranging for the Joy of It	October 3 - 6 Summer Camp for Grown Ups—Fall Edition
June 11 - 13 Painting Creation	October 5 - 7 The School of Earth and Soul Year 1
July 17 - 20 Summer Camp for Grown Ups	October 8 - 11 Digital Photography (3 days, Friday—Monday)
July 23 - 25 Writing Retreat	October 12 - 14 The School of Earth and Soul Year 2
September 3 - 6 Summer's End Family Reunion	October 15 - 17 The Mountains are Calling

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT SHRINE MONT RESERVATIONS@SHRINEMONT.COM / 540 856-2141
OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE WWW.SHRINEMONT.COM

Stewardship Reflection: How I found St Thomas Church

I was looking for a church to attend after I “retired” from 21 years of full-time work at another local Episcopal Church. I knew it would not be easy, being used to how things were done at one church and letting that go. I must have looked for at least two years. I would attend services and join a church, but then decide it was not for me. I attended a Sunday service at St. Thomas and since no one spoke to me, I figured that was my sign that it was not for me. But God would not let me alone. He urged me to go back to St. Thomas. He had a plan for me. So, I persevered and joined the church. At first, I was not a particularly good church goer. I was waiting for my husband, Doug, to attend services with me. But again, God intervened and urged me to go to church service. I needed it. I have been in faithful attendance since. And I try to greet new people who come to church, since I knew how it felt when no one spoke to me. I feel St. Thomas is a hidden gem – offering outreach, fellowship, and formation. We need to spread the Good News!

When we can re-gather at St. Thomas it will be a joyous day! I look forward to Friday Movie Night once again. We always have a good time and I have met a lot of new parishioners during this fellowship time!

Cynthia Arnold, Vestry member and Church Staff

From the Sr. Warden

As the Senior Warden of St Thomas, I am honored and humbled to serve the entire congregation. As we enter the 13th month of the pandemic crisis, like many of you, I have spent a lot of time in strengthening my own spiritual being. Many of us find this time with a sense of loneliness as we miss our church family. I am a long standing 8 o'clocker and I always look forward to Adrianna's smile, Bucky's nod, Larry Rosine's firm handshake, Don's soothing voice and Chip and Mary's wave.

Throughout the crisis of this entire period, I think about the words of our Rector as she closes the service by stating, "*Life is short and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who we travel with. So, be swift to love and make haste to be kind*". I look forward to hearing those words each week as I strive to always find more ways to be kind. We have faced unprecedented chaos and loss over this period which reinforces those words so much more for me and probably for many of you.

I reflect on a particular passage from Colossians 3:12-15 where it reads, "12 As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. 13 Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful."

As we enter into what I hope to be a closing of this pandemic and other chaos in the world, I pray that we all find new ways to build upon that kindness. I hope that we can continue and build upon our outreach within the community by spreading the word of our great St Thomas family. Hopefully, by expanding that outreach, we can grow as a church and welcome new members to join our family as we all have so much kindness to offer one another.

Dr. Graham E. Barton, Jr.

African Team Ministries

In May, in advance of Mother's Day, we normally have a display set up in the Prish Hall offering for sale craft items from African Team Ministries, a Christian ministry working with African churches to provide funding for orphan and refugee relief missions and evangelism in East Africa.

This year, we are asking you to consider supporting their work through the purchase of handmade items from their website store: <https://africanteamstore.square.site/>



April 2021

St. Thomas Church



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>After this challenging year of pandemic, we are FINALLY returning to Sunday Worship (masked and distanced). We are blessed to have this correspond to the celebration of Easter but remind everyone that we follow the guidance of our bishops following the best scientific and medical guidelines.</p>				<p>1</p> <p>MAUNDY Thursday</p>	<p>2 Good Friday</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>4 The Sunday of the Resurrection: EASTER SUNDAY</p> <p>5</p> <p>8:00 am Holy Communion Rite I 10:15 am Holy Communion Rite II</p>	<p>The church office will be closed Easter Monday and will have limited hours for the rest of Easter week.</p>			<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11 The Second Sunday of Easter</p> <p>8:00 am Holy Communion Rite I 10:15 am Holy Communion Rite II</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>
				<p>If you purchased Easter Lilies they can be picked up this week.</p>		
<p>18 The Third Sunday of Easter</p> <p>8:00 am Holy Communion Rite I 10:15 am Holy Communion Rite II</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 Newsletter items due</p>
<p>25 The Fourth Sunday of Easter</p> <p>8:00 am Holy Communion Rite I 10:15 am Holy Communion Rite II</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Vestry Meeting</p>	<p>30</p>	



~Anniversaries~
Paige & Ansley Higgenbotham

~Birthdays~

- 04/07 Lexie Rogers
- 04/08 Claire Yowell
- 04/17 Jamieson Floyd
- 04/17 Raymond Palmer
- 04/20 John Taylor
- 04/21 Karen Matthews
- 04/21 Jeannette Walls
- 04/22 Tristan Torrico
- 04/23 Susie Simko
- 04/30 Elliot Robinson

*The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine upon you and be
gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you and give
you peace.*



Food Pantry

Special request for February is **toilet paper, shampoo, and peanut butter**. All food items and cash gifts are always welcome and appreciated. You can drop off donations at the Love Outreach Food Pantry each Tuesday from 9:00-10:30 and on Wednesday from 8:30-12:00. Their mailing address is: Love Outreach Food Pantry, Inc., P.O. Box 788, Orange, 22960. You may also bring any donations to the church to be delivered.



Prayer List

We pray especially for our church's leadership:

Michael, Presiding Bishop; Susan, Jennifer, & Porter, bishops for this diocese

Please pray for our President, Joe, our Vice President, Kamala, and for the leaders of all the nations of the world that they may lead their respective countries with dignity and respect for all peoples.

Please pray for our Governor, Ralph, and all members of our Virginia Assembly as they seek to navigate this pandemic in our midst.

Please pray for those we love and hold dear: Margaret, Harriet, Anne, Shirley, Barbara, Ellen, Liz, Susie, Cindy, William, Gordon, Pierce, and David

Want to add something to The Builder? Contact Ann Wood at annwood304@gmail.com by April 24, 2021 with your information!

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
119 Caroline Street
Orange, VA 22960

April 2021

