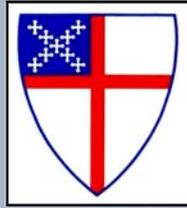


# *The Builder*

## Making Disciples for Jesus Christ

St. Thomas's Episcopal Church  
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### *From the Pastor*

Where does the time go? How can Lent already be here, with Holy Week just around the March corner? Time is a funny thing. Sometimes it seems to stretch and sometimes it seems to compress. Most of the time, during fun things like vacations and holidays, time races by in the blink of an eye. During anxious and tense times like waiting for a loved one's surgery or test results to come in, the clock just seems to crawl and even stop altogether.

People in my Bible study classes often hear me say, "God's watch has no hands, because God doesn't need time; we do. God made us as creaturely beings with beginnings and ends so we need time. But somehow, and I don't profess to know how, God simply *is*, God doesn't have a beginning or end, so God doesn't need time like we do." And yet, time is such a precious thing to us, just ask the mother of a premature baby or the 90 year old man holding the hand of his wife of 70 years as she slips away.

Time is precious because it can heal, it can hurt, it can teach, it can infirm, it can strengthen. Lent is a special time in the life of the church and the Christian believer. Lent is a time of prayer, reflection, self-evaluation, and spiritual growth. It is not a time to survive or merely get through so that we can leap into Easter.

All too often people inadvertently cheapen Lent by making it a time to "give-up something." Giving-up a cherished food or habit is certainly appropriate as a penitential reflection on one's misdeeds or habits. However, penance might be construed as the lowest common denominator of Lent. Instead, Lent provides a time for us to intentionally consider our priorities in life. When choices come in our lives, the monumentally tough ones and the mundane day-to-day ones, Lent provides us the time to reflect on how we have made those choices in the past and how we want to make them in the future.....and above all, always ask ourselves, "Where was God in my choice?"

When I had a choice between church and a college basketball game, what did I choose? When I had the choice to give money to an important community charity or a weekend ski trip, what did I choose? Lent is time; God's special time marked out for us in our calendar to reflect: How will I choose to live my life from now on? How will I make good choices, Christian choices in the future? Years ago, my grandmother offered some wise words about "choices in life"—how we have made them and how we should make them. She said, "People are always very good at justifying the choices that they want to make; so ask yourself this, which choice would Satan choose? Then choose the opposite."

Don't choose to let this Lenten time slip through your fingers.

*Pastor Lin +*

## *For All the Saints...*

March has many memorable “saints of the church,” however, since Lent takes precedence, we often hear little about them during the Season of Lent.

### **Paul Cuffee, *Witness to the Faith among the Shinnecock, 1812* ~ March 4**



Born in 1757, Paul Cuffee was converted to Christianity in his early twenties. He was ordained in the Presbyterian Church becoming a famous preacher and missionary to the native communities around the present-day Mastic Beach, at Hampton Bays, and at Montauk, all on Long Island, New York. Known as “Priest Paul,” Cuffee was instrumental in working for the survival of native tribes. He demonstrated particular gifts in bringing together a strong witness to the Christian faith in dialogue with those who held traditional native beliefs.

Paul Cuffee strengthened the permanent presence of Native Americans in the area by establishing prayer meeting grounds in several locations. These became safe havens for diplomatic talks and places where native people could practice spiritually. He was a faithful advocate for his people and their way of life. Among the fruits of his efforts was the development of many allies of European descent, thus helping to ensure that Native Americans on Long Island could retain what little land they had left. Part of Cuffee’s legacy can still be seen in the ceremonial “June Meeting” for the Shinnecock tribe that includes a Christian worship service, a tradition that continues to this day. Paul Cuffee is remembered for being a “most eloquent speaker” and is mentioned in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, the famous anti-slavery novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Priest Paul is buried on a tiny plot of land at Canoe Place in Hampton Bays, his historic gravesite diminished by development on the Long Island Railroad. His descendants continue mission work in the area that is a direct result of Priest Paul’s efforts. His gravestone reads, “Erected by the New York Missionary Society, in memory of the Rev. Paul Cuffee, an Indian of the Shinnecock tribe, who was employed by the Society for the last thirteen years of his life, on the eastern part of Long Island, where he labored with fidelity and success. Humble, pious and indefatigable in testifying the gospel of the grace of God, he finished his course with joy on the 7th of March, 1812, aged 55 years and 3 days.”

### **Charles Henry Brent, *Bishop of the Philippines, and of Western New York, 1929* ~ March 27**

Charles Henry Brent was born in Canada in 1862 and was educated at Trinity College, University of Toronto. Ordained in Canada, he came to the United States where, in 1901, he was elected by the House of Bishops as Missionary Bishop of the Philippines. In the Philippines, he began a crusade against the opium traffic, a campaign he later expanded to the continent of Asia. He became President of the Opium Conference in Shanghai in 1909 and represented the United States on the League of Nations Narcotics Committee. He also established cordial relations with the Philippine Independent Church, which led, ultimately, to intercommunion with that Church.

Bishop Brent served as Senior Chaplain of the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I, and in 1918 he accepted election as Bishop of Western New York, having declined three previous elections in order to remain at his post in the Philippines.



Brent was the outstanding figure of the Episcopal Church on the world scene for two decades. The central focus of his life and ministry was the cause of Christian unity. After attending the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, he led the Episcopal Church in the movement that culminated in the first World Conference on Faith and Order, which was held in Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1927, and over which he presided. He died in 1929.

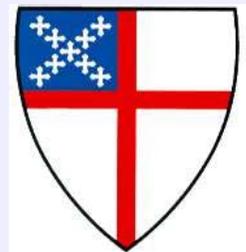
James Thayer Addison, the historian, described Brent as “a saint of disciplined mental vigor, one whom soldiers were proud to salute and whom children were happy to play with, who could dominate a parliament and minister to an invalid, a priest and bishop who gloried in the heritage of his Church, yet who stood among all Christian brothers as one who served ... He was everywhere an ambassador of Christ.”

Brent was also a man of prayer. One of his prayers for the mission of the Church has been included in the Book of Common Prayer: “*Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us with your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name.*”

**MORE, “101 Reasons to be an Episcopalian”—**

Reason # 37: “Our eighth sacrament: Fellowship and Good Food.” *Amada Demers, Diocese of Texas*

Reason # 45: “We celebrate a Christmas Season and not just a Christmas Day.” *The Rt. Rev. Jack M. McKelvey, Diocese of Rochester*



## *Easter Lilies*



**The Church will order Lilies for Easter, to decorate the nave and to support our local businesses.**

**Lilies may be purchased in memory of or in thanksgiving for a loved one (\$18.00 each) and will be available for pick up after Easter week (after April 11<sup>th</sup>).**

**Lily order envelopes will be mailed to our parish members.**

## COVID-19 UPDATE

As of this writing, Orange County remains in the “Orange” COVID warning level, which is anything over 10 daily cases per 100k. The Bishops have approved a return to limited, distanced, in person worship (masks & no singing) when our localities have 10 or fewer daily cases per 100k [i.e., “Yellow” level]. The Bishop also recommends that we remain at the Yellow level (or less) for three weeks before proceeding with in-person worship to prevent a confusing “on again, off again” see-saw. We will be watching the Health Metrics closely and hopefully look forward to in-person gathering by Easter, so get those Easter Lily Orders in!



We are constantly thankful for those who give so generously to the **Rector’s Discretionary Fund [RDF]**. These funds are used to help the most needy and vulnerable of our County. Families who have received assistance from our RDF for their rent, security deposit, water, or power are generally struggling to once again become financially independent and stable. Some lost jobs through COVID downsizing or business lay-offs; some have had serious medical issues that prevented their ability to work and subsequently drained their savings and resources to pay their bills. Thanks to the donations many of you make to the RDF, this past month we have been able to help three such families:

**Mrs. W**, working two jobs needed assistance with her electric bill when she lost one of her jobs due to COVID.

**Ms. L**, working in a customer support job had also experienced a reduction in hours due to COVID. She had managed to cover her rental payments but had fallen behind on her electric bill which was heavier than usual due to the cold weather.

**Ms. S**, needed some rental assistance when she fell behind due to medical layoffs from work and the lack of pay while ill. Thanks to our many generous donors, St. Thomas was there to help her.

**Thank you to everyone who gives so generously so that others, right here among us, do not become just another statistic.**



### **Orange Elementary School students still need our help with snacks!**

It is easiest for school officials to receive monetary donations from St. Thomas, rather than actual snacks, at this time. This helps minimize the handling of the items while Covid transmission is still such a concern.

Please make your checks payable to St Thomas Episcopal with “outreach in/out” on the memo line.

## How Do You Defend Your Practice of Stewardship?

As a **'ONE TOGETHER'** community, we will demonstrate our commitment to St Thomas Church by turning in our pledge cards. Being **'ONE TOGETHER'** reminds us that: **There is one Body and one Spirit; There is one hope in God's call to us; One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; One God and Father of all.**

What early experiences did you have related to Giving-in-the-Church that you realize formed your mindset - your belief system - regarding Stewardship in your personal life, family and church? How do you defend your practice of Stewardship and support of the church?

One indelible memory of my earliest church life was the weekly offering plate being passed around, at which time my sister and I always had a coin ready to place inside the offering plate. My father always checked to see that we were ready each week, with our offering, before we left our home. Later when I earned money, doing odd jobs like working for my uncle or mowing grass, it was expected that I contribute a portion into the offering that next Sunday - with bills not coins. *This habit of giving from my youth has remained a symbol of my commitment to Jesus's mission through the church as well as a responsibility that I'm glad to bear.* It was in this setting that I first witnessed clothes being collected for needy families. At church suppers (supper = dinner in Louisiana.) plates of food were always wrapped and set aside to be delivered to hungry families in need. Once when a family lost their home due to a fire, the church helped them get back on their feet, for quite a while. I remember my parents saying how our collected offerings over the years had helped this family financially. What an impression it made on me. Clearly, a lesson as to why we should give! We were a **'ONE TOGETHER'** community. BTW, my sister & I still help support this home church annually.

The Vestry and Finance Committee at St Thomas Church are especially grateful for the support given to our church's ministries and operation during this past year. The pandemic and social isolation have made it difficult for some to maintain their level of giving; so we ask you to be especially generous in your giving. Several have increased their pledge and others have given separate, additional gifts. If you have not done so, you may still mail in your pledge -- or your typical "Offering Plate" since we are not gathering for now-- to the church office at 119 Caroline Street, Orange, Virginia 22960.

*Barry Barr, Stewardship Co-Chair*



# March 2021

## St. Thomas Church



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 5 pm Zoom Evening Prayer Lent Program	4	5	6
7 The Third Sunday in Lent	8	9	10 5 pm Zoom Evening Prayer Lent Program	11	12	13
14 The Fourth Sunday in Lent Spring Forward!	15	16	17 5 pm Zoom Evening Prayer Lent Program	18	19	20 Spring begins The First Day Of Spring
21 The Fifth Sunday in Lent	22	23	24 5 pm Zoom Evening Prayer Lent Program	25 Vestry 5 pm Zoom	26	27
28 The Sunday of the Passion—Palm Sunday Palm Sunday	29 Monday in Holy Week	30 Tuesday in Holy Week Holy Week	31 Wednesday in Holy Week	<p>Please get your Easter Lily orders to the church office by March 29th. Thank you!</p>		



~Anniversaries~

Suzanne & Pen Bresee  
Tina & Larry Rosine

~Birthdays~

03/03 Chris Dulin  
03/04 Richard Floyd  
03/08 Karin Merrill  
03/09 Mary Brook Miller  
03/10 Tina Rosine  
03/10 Ann Marie Wood  
03/11 Lynne Baines  
03/11 Will Brockman  
03/12 Bobbye Davies  
03/17 Jonathan Yowell  
03/20 Barry Barr  
03/20 Harriet Moore  
03/24 Shepherd Barfield  
03/25 Carroll Johnson  
03/28 Gillian Likins  
03/31 Diane Acree

*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 **brownie mix, jelly, and body soap**. 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, Bob, & Ted, 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, Meghan,, Pierce, Emily, Melissa, and AJ.

Want to add something to The Builder? Contact Ann Wood at [annwood304@gmail.com](mailto:annwood304@gmail.com) by March 22, 2020 with your information!

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

**March 2021**

