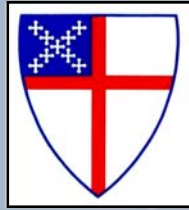


The Builder

Making Disciples for Jesus Christ

St. Thomas's Episcopal Church
(540) 672-3761
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From the Pastor

As this article goes to print, we find our nation embroiled in a bitter Presidential campaign between two diametrically opposed candidates and platforms. Regardless the actual winner, bitter feelings will likely persist from those most personally committed to their particular candidate. I have never known our nation to be so polarized, even the highly divisive Vietnam War with its passionate adherents and opponents pales in comparison.

However, one of the things I love so much about our St. Thomas congregation is our respectful diversity. For me, our diversity and our willingness to respect each other's different political positions reflects some of the finest Christian virtues: tolerance and an abiding respect for the image of Christ that dwells in one another. Whether your personal Presidential candidate wins or loses, I pray that you will continue to seek Christ's image in whoever occupies the White House. It is during these tumultuous times that the Bible reminds us that our lives are meant to be lived in the moment. The apostle James writes, "*How do you know what will happen tomorrow? For your life is like the morning fog-- it's here a little while, then it's gone.*" [James 4:13-14]

None of us knows the future and what will happen—none of us really knows what today holds or what tomorrow will bring. James brings to our attention the shortness of life. Weeks fly by and life seems to go by in a blur. James observes that we make tremendous plans for our life and yet we really do not know what will even happen tomorrow, because life is totally and continuously unpredictable. James wants us to realize that our lives are like a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. We count our lives in years, but God tells us in Psalm 90:12 to number our days.

This does not mean we that we make no plans, rather that we do not plan without consulting God. James wants us to consider the will of God for every "season" of our lives. The key is to get a grip on the reality of life—and not let all the hype overtake us. We are called to be "God-driven," called to enjoy each day for the beauty and gift that that day offers. With this in mind, I leave with you the words of a popular Christian song from a few years ago:

One day at a time sweet Jesus; That's all I'm asking from you;
Just give me the strength to do everyday, what I have to do;
Yesterday is gone sweet Jesus; And tomorrow may never be mine;
Lord help me today, show me the way; One day at a time!

[Marijohn Wilkin and Kris Kristofferson]

Enjoy your Thanksgiving for the special day that it is—give thanks for the moment and seek Christ in all people, whomever they may be!

God Bless,

Pastor Lin +

For All the Saints...

Cecilia, Martyr at Rome, c. 280 ~ November 22

Cecilia is the patron saint of singers, organ builders, musicians and poets. She is venerated as a martyr. Many of the details of her life are unknown and much of what we do know comes from later periods. She is among the women named in the Roman Canon of the Mass.

According to fifth century sources, Cecilia was of noble birth and was betrothed to a pagan who bore the name Valerian. Cecilia's witness resulted in the conversion of Valerian and his brother, Tiburtius. Because of their conversion, the brothers were martyred and while Cecilia was burying them, she too was arrested. After several failed attempts to put her to death, she died from injuries sustained by the ordeal. The date of her martyrdom is generally believed to be 230 during the Roman persecution of Christians under Alexander Severus, although some scholars have dated it earlier.

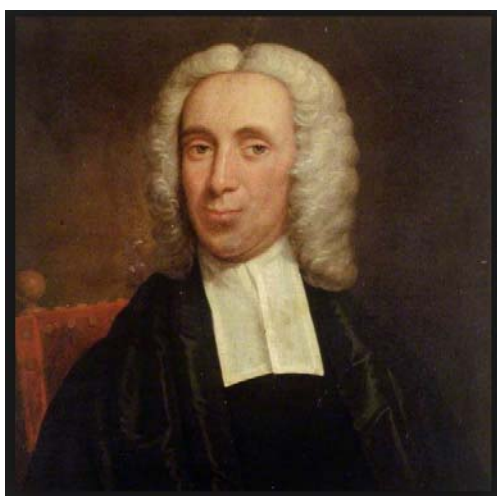
Remembered for the passion with which she sang the praises of God, Cecilia is first depicted in Christian art as a martyr, but since the fourteenth century she is often shown playing the organ, a theme picked up by my *Raphael in his famous altarpiece for San Giovanni-in-Monte, Bologna, painted around 1516* (reproduced here). Her story has inspired centuries of artistic representations in paintings, sculptures, mosaics, and stained glass. Composers such as Handel, Purcell, Howells, and Britten have written choral works and mass settings in her honor. Many music schools, choral societies, and concert series bear her name.



In the ninth century, during the pontificate of Pope Paschal I, the remains of Cecilia were uncovered in the catacombs of Callixtus. On orders from the pope, the sarcophagus containing her remains was transferred to the new basilica in the Trastevere region of Rome. Built on what was believed to be the site of Cecilia's home, a church named in her honor had existed on the site since at least the fifth century, and perhaps as early as the late third century, one of the original churches of the City of Rome.



Isaac Watts, Hymnwriter, 1748, ~ November 26



Isaac Watts is remembered as the father of English hymnody. He was born in Southampton, England, in 1674, the eldest child of a devout Nonconformist family. His academic capabilities and particularly his ability with the English language were recognized at an early age.

He was offered the resources to enroll at Oxford or Cambridge and pursue ordination in the Church of England, but Watts remained faithful to his background and in 1690 enrolled in a Nonconformist academy at Stoke Newington. In 1702, Watts was ordained and served the Mark Lane independent congregation in London for a decade before his health made it impossible to continue.

As a hymn writer, Watts wrote more than six hundred hymns, about a quarter of which continue in popular use. Among his works was his *Psalms of David*, a metrical psalter that versified the psalms in English for hymnic use. Perhaps his most enduring contribution in this genre is

O God, our help in ages past, based upon the opening verses of Psalm 90.

Watts also wrote a wide variety of other hymns and spiritual songs that are well beloved. The attractiveness of his texts is often said to be reflective of Watts' own personal faith: gentle, quiet, sturdy, and deeply devout.

This can easily be seen in the final stanza of *When I survey the wondrous cross*:

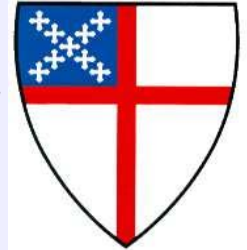
*Were the whole realm of nature mine; That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine; Demands my soul, my life, my all!*

Due to ill health, Watts spent the last decades of his life in semi-seclusion, rarely preaching, but devoted his time to writing, as he was able. During this period, his writings take a new turn and he completed books on logic, human nature, and the English language, in addition to sermons, devotional literature, works for children, and more poetry and hymns. Watts died in 1748. He is honored with a memorial in Westminster Abbey. Among his more enduring hymns are *Jesus shall reign, Joy to the world*, and *I sing the mighty power of God*.

MORE, “101 Reasons to be an Episcopalian”—

Reason # 17: “My mind is Protestant and my spirit is liturgical. Where other than to the Book of Common Prayer can my worship go and still have both and be happy?” *Phyllis Tickle, Diocese of West Tennessee*

Reason # 75: “In a global family, like the Anglican Communion, the voice of prayer is never silent.” *Canon James Rosenthal, Diocese of Canterbury, Canterbury, England*



Thanksgiving Sunday

THERE WILL BE NO “IN-PERSON” WORSHIP ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH OF THANKSGIVING WEEKEND! In an abundance of caution, we realize that many of our members may have visiting family and /or college students returning home for the Thanksgiving Holiday, which presents an immediate threat of unintended COVID infections. As such, we will not hold an “in person” service on Thanksgiving Sunday. However, we will provide a link on our website to the special Diocese of Virginia offering for that Sunday in your choice of: video, audio, and print versions. Additionally, we ask that the following **Sunday, December 6th**, that only those who are absolutely certain that they have not been infected should attend Sunday services.

Commitment Sunday is November 8, 2020



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.** The Vestry and Finance Committee are especially grateful for the support given to our church’s ministries during this past year. The pandemic and social isolation have made it difficult for some so we ask you to be especially generous in your giving. You may also mail in your pledge to the church office at 119 Caroline Street, Orange, Virginia 22960.

Barry Barr, Stewardship Co-Chair



Ministry Minute

As a current Vestry member, I am joining the group in asking for your pledge commitment for 2021. I have not been a St. Thomas member that long but during this time I have seen what we can do as a Church to fulfill God's will and purpose in our lives/community. Pledge commitments substantially support our ongoing operations which are necessary for us to fulfill our Christian mission. One of the direct benefits of pledging is our outreach programs, which are strongly needed in Orange. The schools' programs are a prime example. Also, through the Christian Emergency Council, some of us have been assisting in financial mentoring for financially at-risk people in Orange and have seen firsthand how desperate many of our citizens are and the basic necessities they often lack. ***We are all blessed in different ways, so I urge you to please give what you can in these especially challenging times. The rewards which you will reap are surprising and well worth it.***

"...when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your alms giving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you." Matthew 6: 3-4

Don Place, Vestry Member

Tithing and our giving is our thankfulness to God, as it comes from the heart of worship that encompasses everything that we have and give already belongs to the Lord. Our giving supports our church family in receiving the message of God as a collective body, but it also does so much more. ***It allows us to support one another through life's challenges and celebrations and show the love to one another just as God has shown his children. It allows us to perform outreach ministry in support of the needy and support the children, who are the most innocent and suffer the most.*** To quote Proverbs 31:8-9, *"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice."* In terms of giving to God, I think back to a story in Mark where Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all others. They all gave out of their wealth, but she, out of her poverty, put in everything – all she had to live on". In short, we often give with our hearts and God recognizes that we often give all that we have as everything that we own, belongs to him.

Graham, Senior Warden





We don't have to tell our fellow parishioners that things are very different this year. We have shelved our book giveaway this Halloween, and we are not doing Thanksgiving baskets or the church bazaar.

WE ARE STILL DOING OUTREACH!



Orange Elementary school is very appreciative of your donations so far this year, but **students are still in great need of single serve goldfish crackers**, and will continue to need them for the foreseeable future. Please bring these to the blue bucket in the church office.

This Advent season, we are making our snack bag assembly for the Orange Children's Toybox recipients bigger and better than ever.

On **Tuesday, December 8th from 3:00 PM to 5 PM** we will put together 500 bags filled with snacks and treats for school children of all ages. The outreach committee will buy zip lock bags and snacks, but we still need donations from you! We are collecting granola, power, and breakfast bars, slim Jims, fruit snacks, single Christmas candies, and other non perishable snacks that will fit in the bags. Our team will wear masks and gloves, and will be socially distanced at tables around the parish hall. Please let Betsy Amos or Ellen Otto if you can help, and feel free to call or email with questions.








Thank You ! This month we were able to work with our Christian Emergency Council to help **Mrs. G** with needed additional funds for her rent. She had lost her job due to COVID closures and was applying for every job opening available but with no luck. These are increasingly anxious times for many of our local residents. A most grateful **"Thank You"** to those of you who occasionally provide funds to **The Rector's Discretionary Account**, which allows us to address these **urgent and emergent needs** within our local community.

November 2020

St. Thomas Church



Key: Chapel (C); Conference Room (CR); Holy Eucharist (HE); Rector's Study (RS); Robertson Hall (RH); Youth Room (YR)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 8:00 am HE I 10:15 am HE II</p> <p>This is a "Penny Sunday"</p>  <p>ALL SAINTS' DAY</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Mark Study 5:30 pm</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>Election Day</p> <p>Mark Study 2:00 pm</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8 <i>The 23rd Sunday after Pentecost</i> 8:00 am HE I 10:15 am HE II</p> <p>Commitment Sunday, please return your pledge cards or mail them to the office</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Mark Study 5:30 pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Mark Study 2:00 pm</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Veterans Day</p>  <p>Church office closed</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Vestry Meeting 5:30 pm</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15 <i>The 24th Sunday after Pentecost</i> 8:00 am HE I 10:15 am HE II</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Mark Study 5:30 pm</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Mark Study 2:00 pm</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22 <i>The Last Sunday after Pentecost: Christ the King</i> 8:00 am HE I 10:15 am HE II</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Mark Study 5:30 pm</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Mark Study 2:00 pm</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>  <p>Church office closed</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 <i>The First Sunday of Advent</i> (Lectionary Year B-begins) No in-person worship service Link to online service will be available at: www.stthomasorange.org</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Mark Study 5:30 pm</p>		<p>St. Thomas will be participating in the <i>Orange Toy Box</i> by donating "snack packs." These "stocking stuffer" gifts are aimed at teens, kids often overlooked when donating Christmas gift as we focus on younger children. Now is the time to send in those fun foods you've been tempted to buy all year! Cookie packs, candy bars, slim jims and jerky are all okay!</p>			



~Anniversaries~

Keith Frick & Borden Lee

~Birthdays~

11/03 Bob Brockman
11/07 Alice Smith
11/18 Virginia Butterfield
11/18 Zachary Yowell
11/19 Larry Rosine
11/19 Abby Yowell
11/24 Katie Barfield
11/26 Jennifer Porter
11/26 Claire Porter



Food Pantry

Special requests for November are toothbrushes, toothpaste, cake mix, and frosting. 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

Our country: President Donald, Vice President Mike, & Governor Ralph

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation:

For: Carroll, Ed, Ellen, Harriett, Margaret

And Especially for: Our students, teachers, administrators, and support staff as they return to school in-person and on-line; we pray for a safe and productive school year.

*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.*

Want something included in the Builder? Please submit information to Ann Wood at annwood304@gmail.com by November 23, 2020 for inclusion in the "double issue" December & January Builder.

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

November 2020

