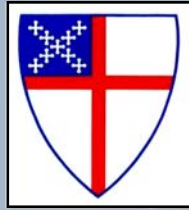


The Builder

Making Disciples for Jesus Christ

St. Thomas's Episcopal Church
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Issue No. 9

From the Pastor

Stewardship season is upon us! It is the time that we Christians are called to take stock of our lives, our gifts, our talents and treasures. Who are we in Christ? How are we to serve Christ in this world? How can our “gifts” increase the in-breaking of God’s kingdom? Stewardship is not just about money, although it certainly helps. Stewardship is a way of Christian living. It is living out the gospel message everyday. Stewardship is really about relationships—with God, with family, with friends, with our community, and all of creation.

Much has been said by the so-called “Prosperity Churches.” These churches emphasize that God only wants blessings to shower down upon us, that God does not want us to be broke, and that gaining wealth is a reflection of God’s love and bounty. Although I would certainly agree that God wants only good things for his beloved children, the problem comes when we start defining what is “good.” All too often we define goodness as “power” or “wealth,” as in: “the one with the most toys wins.” When we begin to define God’s bounty and prosperity only as financial or material wealth, then we make wealth an idol. Worse, we imply that the millions of Christians living in poverty must somehow be deficient Christians. However, “you cannot measure your *self*-worth by your *net* worth.”

So this is a time to take stock of our gifts, those special things God has given each of us, young or old: good management skills, keen perception, organization, insight, joy, an open heart, optimism, pessimism, flexibility, inductive thinking, deductive reasoning, rigid thinking, healing, teaching skills, a thirst for learning, caution, strength, stability, and so forth.

In his bounty, God has showered each of us with a variety of these practical “gifts.” Each of us must choose how we will employ our gifts. Stewardship means remaining mindful of the one who gave us our gifts in the first place. Christian stewardship means that we serve Christ; it means remembering for whose glory we serve. I urge you to take this next month to consider the many and diverse gifts that God has bestowed upon you. Have you used those gifts wisely? Have you sought to improve on them? Have you thanked God for those gifts lately? Have you taught your children to thank God?

Ironically, despite everything that God gives us of his own creation, he asks only for one tenth in return. The 10 percent represents the “first fruits” of our labors, the “tithe” that reminds us that it really all belongs to God anyway. Interestingly, God even models tithing and the giving of first fruits for us. God gave humanity as the first fruits of all creation [*James 1:18*]. In God’s relationship with humanity, he considered his relationship with Israel as the first fruits of all other nations [*Jer 2:3*]. And God gave his own self. The resurrection of Christ is the gift, the first fruits, of our resurrection [*1 Cor 15:20*]. Christ, the Good Shepherd, came and gave his very life that we might have life and have it abundantly [*John 10:10*]. His “tithe” was his very life; what is yours?

Pastor Lin +

For All the Saints...

All Faithful Departed, ~ November 2

In the New Testament, the word “saints” is used to describe the entire membership of the Christian community, and in the Collect for All Saints’ Day the word “elect” is used in a similar sense. From very early times, however, the word “saint” came to be applied primarily to persons of heroic sanctity, whose deeds were recalled with gratitude by later generations.

Beginning in the tenth century, it became customary to set aside another day—as a sort of extension of All Saints—on which the Church remembered that vast body of the faithful who, though no less members of the company of the redeemed, are unknown in the wider fellowship of the Church. It was also a day for particular remembrance of family members and friends.

Though the observance of the day was abolished at the Reformation because of abuses connected with Masses for the dead, a renewed understanding of its meaning has led to a widespread acceptance of this commemoration among Anglicans, and to its inclusion as an optional observance in the calendar of the Episcopal Church.

Richard Hooker, Priest, 1620 ~ November 3

In any list of Anglican theologians, ***Richard Hooker’s name would stand high, if not first.*** He was born in 1553 near Exeter, and was admitted in 1567 to Corpus Christi College, Oxford, of which he became a Fellow ten years later. After ordination and marriage in 1581, he held a living in Buckinghamshire. In 1586 he became Master of the Temple, in London.



A controversy with a noted Puritan led Hooker to prepare a comprehensive defense of the Reformation settlement under Queen Elizabeth I. This work, his masterpiece, was entitled ***Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity***. Its philosophical base is Aristotelian, with a strong emphasis upon natural law eternally planted by God in creation. On this foundation, all positive laws of Church and State are grounded: from Scriptural revelation, ancient tradition, reason, and experience.

Book Five of the Laws is a massive defense of the Book of Common Prayer, directed primarily against Puritan detractors. Hooker’s arguments are buttressed by enormous patristic learning, but the needs of the contemporary worshiper are paramount, and he draws effectively on his twenty-year experience of using the Book. Hooker’s vast learning, and the quality of his style, reveal him to be a man of moderate, patient, and serene character.

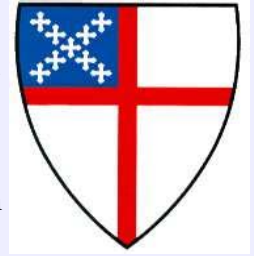
Concerning the nature of the Church, Hooker wrote: *“The Church is always a visible society of men; not an assembly, but a Society. For although the name of the Church be given unto Christian assemblies, although any multitude of Christian men congregated may be termed by the name of a Church, yet assemblies properly are rather things that belong to a Church. Men are assembled for performance of public actions; which actions being ended, the assembly dissolveth itself and is no longer in being, whereas the Church which was assembled doth no less continue afterwards than before.”*

Pope Clement VIII is reported to have said of Hooker’s work: *“it had in it such seeds of eternity that it would abide until the last fire shall consume all learning.”*

MORE, “101 Reasons to be an Episcopalian”—

Reason # 47: “In the Episcopal Church doubt is so okay that we name some parishes “St. Thomas.” *Louie Crew, Diocese of Newark*

Reason # 76: “Women can be ‘pastors’ and ‘ministers,’ but only in the Episcopal Church can they be priests.” *Donna H. Barthle, Diocese of Central Pennsylvania*



Community Missions and Thanksgiving

THANKSGIVING THIS YEAR will be especially tough on many in Orange County. The Community Missions Committee would like to focus its efforts on collecting nonperishable food items and household necessities (toilet paper, dish liquid, etc.) to help the Love Outreach Food Pantry help provide for in need. The Missions Committee will purchase small canned hams to donate. Whether you want to bring holiday meal items like boxed stuffing and instant potatoes, or you are stocking up on canned vegetables and other staples, your donations are welcome. Please bring them to Robertson Hall by Sunday, November 14th.



Giving Thanks



Please join our Vestry with expressions of gratitude as we all approach Thanksgiving 2021.

Each year, November 1 begins my “attitude of gratitude”. It provides me with a mental and spiritual reset. Every day, I reflect on one thing in my life for which I am grateful. Some days, it is something very basic: my morning coffee. Other days, it is more substantive: my faith. At the end of the month, I look back on my list and realize that I have barely scratched the surface of the blessings in my life. *Malaika A. Rogers*

I am thankful for the blessing of LOVE. It’s the love given to me by others and God that have held me up at my weakest points throughout my life. This has been especially true during the challenging times since that we’ve all faced since the beginning of the pandemic period. *Graham Barton*

Being thankful when the sun shines may not be too much of a challenge, but I find being thankful during cloudy days (I speak metaphorically) helps one focus on that which is going right. It may start with one forced thank you for better times, a happy remembrance, a joke shared, and alas, a new world opens up slowly! Our good shepherd walks with us in green pastures, by still waters, and rocky valleys. A forced smile might just be a good start. *Sunithi Gnanadoss*

There's a lot to be thankful for and it's hard to whittle it down to one sentence, but here goes. I am thankful each day for our glorious earth, without it we would have no home in the universe. *Cynthia Arnold*

We are all blessed in different ways and should never forget to be especially thankful for those seemingly minor things which we take for granted in our daily lives. *Don Place*

I am grateful for family, both direct kin and the family communities in which we are involved. *Chip Quietzsch*

I am grateful for all my church friends over the years. What joy it has been to worship, laugh and struggle together while on our journeys together, often singing of course. Their examples of discipleship, stewardship and commitment have given me encouragement, direction and hope throughout the years. St Thomas is no exception. I’m truly blessed and grateful. *Barry Barr*

My simple contribution is fresh in my mind because I was lucky to have had such an encounter just the other day. I am thankful for the opportunities that present and allow me to experience or witness random acts of kindness manifested by friends, loved ones or total strangers with whom we briefly cross paths. I love when I find myself in a situation where I can say “Thank you - you made my day.” Take care. *Ellen J. Otto*

I am so grateful for all of God’s creation, but especially the wonderful singing of birds. *Virginia Donnelly*

I am grateful for friends and family who have shared their love and kindness to volunteer and serve the needs of our church. Thank you all. *David Acree*

NOW SHOWING



Winner of Best Drama at the 2019 Golden Globes, and 10 Oscar nominations, 1917 tells the World War I story of two British soldiers -- Lance Cpl. Schofield (George MacKay) and Lance Cpl. Blake (Dean-Charles Chapman) -- receive seemingly impossible orders. In a race against time, they must cross over into enemy territory to deliver a message that could potentially save 1,600 of their fellow comrades -- including Blake's own brother.

Friday, November 19th at 7pm in Robertson Hall

~ cost of admission is one non-perishable food item ~

November 2021

St. Thomas Church



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Election Day 	3	4	5	6
Zoom Bible Study on Mark's Gospel each Monday 5:00 pm						
7 All Saints' Sunday 	8	9	10	11 Veteran's Day  	12 	13
14 The Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost Commitment Sunday 	15	16	17	18	19 Movie night 7 pm 	20 Committal service for Frances Early 1 pm Graham Cemetery
21 The Last Sunday after Pentecost: Christ the King	22	23	24	25 Thanksgiving Day 	26	27
28  FIRST SUNDAY OF <i>Advent</i>	29	30				



~Anniversaries~

Keith Frick & Borden Lee

~Birthdays~

11/03 Bob Brockman
11/07 Alice Smith
11/07 Caroline Williams
11/18 Sarah McWilliams
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
11/26 Jennifer Porter



Food Pantry

Special requests for October are Brownie Mix, Toilet Paper, and Christmas Treats. 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:

Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury; Michael, Presiding Bishop; Susan, Jennifer, & Porter, bishops for this diocese

Our country: President Joe; Vice President Kamala; & Governor Ralph

For the men and women in our armed forces serving our nation around the world.

And for the special needs and concerns of this congregation:

For: Terrell, Christy, Robby, Betsy, Margaret, Harriet, Barbara, Ellen, Liz, Susie, William, and Susan

*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 24, 2021 for inclusion in the December/January Builder.

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

November 2021

