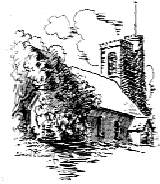




The Tower

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
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September 2011

Dear St. Thomas Family,

Our first Sunday back after the summer, when our regular worship schedule resumes, will be September 11th. Memories of that dreadful day are still as vivid as though it just happened, yet this year marks the 10th anniversary. Life in our country is very different than it was a decade ago. Add the volatility of the current economy and it's no wonder we are now keenly aware of vulnerable feelings that just didn't used to be in our consciousness. What was normal then is not normal now. If we aren't careful, reasonable concern can turn into paralyzing fear, and that is not who we are as believers.

I'm not suggesting we should all just focus on the next world and let this one take care of itself, nor am I promoting Christian escapism. It is as a community that we face the reality of our lives together. We may not be of this world, as Jesus points out in John's Gospel, but we are in this world, and have to

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make our way through it every day. There are a couple of things we can do for ourselves and each other that will mean our daily walk is a faithful one.

Let's be practical, since it helps give us some sense of control in a world that looks so out of it. If a catastrophic event occurs – and that means natural disasters (this year's hurricane) or a power failure (just last year) as well as something brought on by terrorists – you should (and I do mean *should*) have a plan already in place for dealing with it. Moreover, everyone in your family should know it as well, so there's less chance of confusion in what will already be a bewildering time. Know, in no uncertain terms, how you are going to communicate with each other or at what place you will meet if going back to your home is not possible. There is a whole list of things you can do to be prepared – go to the www.ready.gov website to see what they are. Be mindful of neighbors who are elderly or those who live alone, and don't forget to have preparations made for the care of your pets as well.

St. Thomas has a long history as a shelter and safe haven and we are prepared to be that whenever necessary. This is our common home, and if events dictate, we will gather here, to be with each other and to see what we can do, as a faith community, to minister to others. We are a sanctuary, first for our congregation (and our pets) and then, as we are able, for others with needs.

That's the pragmatic part, the actual “doing,” in case we are faced with a disaster of either human or natural origin. For the other, spiritually practical aspect of this: first and foremost, I hope you are prayerful. Not just in a “Please don't let that happen” kind of way, but in a meditative way that helps with knowing to the depths of your soul that each of us is loved by God beyond our wildest imagination, and there is nothing that's going to happen that will make us hopeless. There may be moments of feeling rather helpless – that is part of our human condition – but we are a people of hope. Whatever the task, whatever the need, within our own church family or within our local community, we will be strengthened and empowered by God to rise to it.

One of my favorite prayers includes the words, “O God, in whom we live and move and have our being.” It just covers it all for me, and serves as a reminder that God is always present, even in (I believe, *especially* in) what can be the most awful moments of our lives. Read Psalm 121. Believe in your heart what it tells you.

If “life is what happens when you’re making other plans,” then together we will face whatever happens in this life as a faithful, loving and ministering community. Just remember, when you’re putting together your emergency supplies and go-bags, be sure to include the Bible and the Prayer Book.

*“I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come?
My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.”*

Psalm 121: 1-3

As we approach September 11th... do not be surprised if you find yourself reliving the events of that day, or if you experience feelings of anxiety and/or depression. These feelings are not unusual, particularly if you were in New York City or Washington, D.C. that day, or if you knew someone who died in the attacks. Please don't hesitate to email, call or speak with me. Having done shifts at Ground Zero, I also deal with memories and I understand.

God's Peace,

Pastor Tanneau

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

T.S. Eliot once said, “Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.”

In the saga of Joseph, Eliot’s wisdom plays out. Despite being sold into slavery by his own brothers, Joseph prospers. Through God’s guidance, he rises first to the top managerial position in Potiphar’s house.

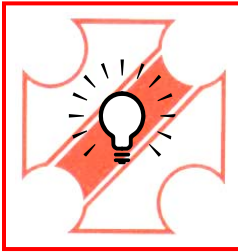
He survives an accusation of adultery by Potiphar’s wife and a stint in prison, only to rise again to head Pharaoh’s government. From his place of power in Egypt, he is able to rescue his brothers (yes, the same ones who sold him into slavery) from starvation.

At some point in time, Joseph proactively decides to forgive his brothers’ terrible wrong. The Bible doesn’t give us a big window into Joseph’s thought process. We only know that he returns his brothers’ actions with kindness. Years after he was sold into slavery, he sees God’s providential hand in their actions. His brothers meant something for ill, but God meant it for good. God works through human forgiveness.

Joseph’s story reminds us that sometimes we need to take the first step in forgiving someone. It can preserve our sanity. It can change a situation from one of conflict or resentment to one of reconciliation. Forgiving always brings the risk of non-repentance by the other. But until we take big risks, we never find out just how far God can go through forgiveness.

In Christ,

J. Will +



Deacon Thinkin'

I return from my second pilgrimage to Tanzania awed once again by the resilience of the gentle people I met there. As before, I found myself in the presence of hearts filled with gratitude for the good work we all do.

I was surrounded and enfolded by pure generosity of spirit, by the hospitality I received, and, most essentially, by a faith that is not diminished by the hardships of poverty and the lack of everyday comforts we take for granted.

I come home with a deeper appreciation for all the ways I have been blessed, and the sincere hope that my gratitude will not fade with passage of time. My prayer is that I never forget the unencumbered joy and thankfulness expressed by the villagers as we pilgrims distributed new school uniforms, shoes, socks, and gifts of toys and candy to our Carpenter's Kids, as well as school supplies like maps and books to fill their classrooms.

The generosity and faithfulness of each one of you who provided for one or more child in the Carpenter's Kids program, as well as the support by all who collected baseball caps, books, toothbrushes, toothpaste, pens, pencils, pencil sharpeners, and composition workbooks, brought huge smiles of delight from each child. Thank you, thank you!

Grace and I will be sharing our pilgrim experiences with you in the near future. We have a gazillion pictures to sort through, and more coming in from other pilgrims every day, although I promise not to overload you with a never ending slideshow.

We talk a lot about the children we encounter and the experience of seeing the joy and love on their faces, but that's only part of the reward inherent in the work we do. On this trip I found myself especially

touched by the grownups in each village who gladly become guardians to Carpenter's Kids, even though this act of kindness and responsibility is difficult for those already stretched to the max in providing for themselves and their families. I am convinced they will have a special place in God's Kingdom.

May it be so.

Peace, *Lynn*

THANK YOU
For helping us collect 233 caps for Tanzania

St. Thomas Sunday School Starts Sept. 11 at 10 AM!



Sunday School

It's been a long and lovely summer, but Heathcote Hall's been too quiet. Tell your kids it's time to come back to Sunday School and the nursery. I've spent the summer cleaning-up, clearing-out and coming-up with fun, new activities. I can't wait to see the kids and see how much they've grown.

Parents, please mark your calendars and watch your e-mail for our fall schedule and our registration materials. Call me if you have any questions

Considering Our Kids, please read the following:

We are very lucky at St. Thomas to have a core group of dedicated parishioners, many of them non- parents, who regularly share their faith with groups of our kids through music, stories, discussions, crafts, games, service projects and cooking. And we'd like to involve more people in our expanded programming. Will you consider joining the ranks of Sunday School teachers?

The nursery and Sunday School are buzzing with kid-energy--kids looking to learn about God and Jesus, and what it means to be a Christian. To help you discern your interest in this ministry, please consider the following criteria that I developed a few years ago:

#1 You do not have to be an expert. Most of us who teach at St. Thomas learn the stories of the Bible and the tenets of our Episcopalian faith through the act of teaching. Questions are as important as answers. Each teacher receives in advance a well-considered curriculum to rely on for facts and background information for each lesson.

#2 Sunday School teaching does not take a lot of time—less than six hours per year. In addition to the published curriculum which outlines each week’s Bible lesson, I prepare a schedule which lays out the progression of the 50 minute long class—lesson, discussion, craft, games, etc. To make things easy for teachers, I pre-plan class activities and prepare all materials for each class. A teacher need only read over the lesson in advance of class (which takes about 15 minutes), then show up a few minutes before Sunday School classes begins at around 9:45 A.M. on the day you are scheduled to teach. For continuity, we ask that teachers commit to teaching a minimum 4 Sundays per school year. With preparation time, it will take less than an hour and a half per class—something short of 6 hours per year.

#3 You do not have to be a great teacher, nor have extensive experience with children. Our kids respond well to all kinds of people, including those who do not see themselves as teachers. Non-parents offer our kids fresh views of the world. Kids easily connect with folks who witness their own personal faith, share their own questions, and even their doubts. Seniors offer wisdom. Any adult who respects children and their inquiries will be successful a Sunday School teacher. If you are unsure of yourself, I can orient you by serving as an assistant in your class.

#4 We can be flexible. For those of you who usher, sing in the choir, read, we can and will work around your schedule. It’s great for our kids to see people serve our church in more than one role. Think you would

like to teach with your spouse? We can do that, too. If you'd like to receive some teacher training, I can provide that as well. Certain days or times of the year are just too hectic for teaching? We can work that out. We will consider mature high school students, too. Just ask me.

Three or four additional teachers will make all the difference for our kids, their families, and our current teachers.

Please know that I am thankful for all who consider joining this ministry. I encourage all who are interested to try out teaching this fall.

Kate Beeby

Sunday School Director
914-833-3237 katebeeby@optonline.net

Pilgrimage Opportunities

As we give thanks for the safe return of Harry Gaffney, Peggy Saunders, Ronnie Sessler and Pastor Tammearu from the Holy Land, and for Grace Gallo and Deacon Werdal from Tanzania, here are future opportunities for your prayerful consideration.

Carpenter's Kids pilgrimages are set for July 16-28, 2012 and August 6-18, 2012. Holy Land pilgrimages are set for October 19 -31, 2012 (this is a women's pilgrimage, led by the Rev. Deborah Dresser) and June 11 – 22, 2013 (this pilgrimage is co-ed and will be led by Pastor Tammearu and the Rev. Roy Cole.)

A pilgrimage is much more than sight-seeing and a pilgrim is not a tourist. These journeys can be transforming to your faith and your life. As the Carpenter's Kids website notes, "The life you change may be your own!"

For more information or a deeper conversation, please talk with Pastor Tammearu, Deacon Werdal or any of our pilgrims. All of us will be more than happy to share our experiences with you.

2011 Pilgrims to the Holy Land



2011 Pilgrims to Tanzania



YOU DON'T WANT TO FORGET...



Tuesdays at 10am: Brown Bag Lunch and Food Pantry. Every week we prepare around 90 sandwiches and distribute the lunch and food for 3+ days between 11am and 12 noon.



Thursday, September 8 at 7:00PM: The **Helping Hands Knitting Group** meets - everybody is welcome!



The next **Community Dinner** is **Saturday, September 10**. Please come and help with set-up ; dinner is served at 5:30pm; clean-up is finished by 7:00 PM.



8 & 10 AM services resume Sunday, **September 11**. Sunday School and Choir Practice will start again as well. The first service with Choir is on **September 18** at 10AM.



The Pumpkin Patch starts **October 1** and is open all through October from 12 to 5PM on weekdays and from 10AM to 6PM on weekends.

Transitions:

Deaths:

William Strobel; Theodore Konopka; Charles Anthes, Dawn Strickland

Birth: Francesca Lynn Falco



September Birthdays:

Russell Foster	05-Sep
Steven Bonaparte	12-Sep
Ann Hunt	16-Sep
Noel Hart	20-Sep
Louis Scenti	21-Sep
Janessa Bing	27-Sep
James Whitehouse	28-Sep
Jacqueline Thomas	30-Sep

St. Thomas Clergy, Vestry, and Staff Directory

Rector: The Rev. Deborah G. Tammearu rector@saintthomasmrk.org

Associate Minister of Youth: willfisher@msn.com

The Rev. William A. Fisher

Deacon: The Rev. Dn. Lynn Werdal deacon@saintthomasmrk.org

Director of Music: Noel A. Hart, Jr. ExcellentSingers@aol.com

Senior Warden: Laurie Ozelius

Junior Warden: Ira Hart

Treasurer: Don Giallorenzo

Vestry:

June Hendry

Peggy Saunders

Nigel Holloway

Louis Scenti

Mary Olsson

Pamela Sullivan

Sunday School Director: Kate Beeby sundayschool@saintthomasmrk.org

Parish Secretary: Barbara Gessler office@saintthomasmrk.org

Bookkeeper: Nancy Mustacato bookkeeper@saintthomasmrk.org

Sexton: Edgar Garza

Sunday Sexton: Anner Garza

Service Schedule:

Sundays:	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist (said)
	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist with music
	11:30-12:45	Choir rehearsal

Christian Education for Young People:

10:00 AM Sunday School

Nursery care available from 9:45AM until the service ends

Deadline for articles and submissions for the next Tower: September 15, 2011

Submit articles to June Hendry at jhendry@idealcut.com

Mission Statement

The mission of St. Thomas is to show forth God's love in the community, the nation and the world.

St. Thomas Church is a parish of the Diocese of New York, a branch of the Episcopal Church in the United States which is a member of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

The Anglican Communion



Archbishop of Canterbury

The Most. Rev. and Rt. Hon. Rowan Williams

A global community of 70 million Anglicans in 64,000 congregations in 70 countries.

The Episcopal Church



Presiding Bishop

The Most Rev. Katherine Jefferts Schori

A community of 2.4 million members in 113 dioceses in the Americas and abroad.

The Episcopal Diocese of New York

Bishop of New York

The Rt. Rev. Mark Sean Sisk

Bishop Suffragan

The Rt. Rev. Catherine S. Roskam



A community of 203 congregations covering 4,739 square miles with approximately 600 priests and 72 deacons, with worship in 12 languages: Akan, American Sign Language, Bontoc, Chinese, Creole, English, French, Igbo, Japanese, Korean, Malayalam and Spanish.