



The Tower

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
168 West Boston Post Road
Mamaroneck, NY 10543
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Time Flies

One year ago this month, Linda and I were saying our goodbyes to the folks of St. Mary's as we navigated our way around the rooms filled with boxes waiting for the movers to arrive. On the 11th of September we pulled into the driveway of the rectory, and have been busy ever since. It's been a wonderful year for us – we are so happy to be back in Westchester and I am delighted to serve at St. Thomas – and look forward to many more years to come.

Much will be happening this fall. Tami Burks, a candidate for Holy Orders in this diocese, will be with us as seminarian (and will be ordained to the transitional diaconate in March), and Richard Limato, a postulant for ordination to the vocational diaconate, will be here as deacon-in-training. Both will be here through June of 2016, so will be deeply involved in the life of St. Thomas during that time. As it is our job to help prepare them for the ordained ministry, they have been scheduled to preach often, facilitate quiet days and seasonal programs, help

Content	page
✘From Mother Carol	1,2,3
✘Sunday School News	3,4,5,6
✘Property Update	6,7
✘Men's Retreat	8
✘Pumpkin Patch	8,9
✘Mary Fahl Concert	9
✘Don't forget...	10
✘Birthdays	10
✘Contact Information	11

develop a program for Christian Formation, and serve at the altar. Tami will be at St. Thomas about 8-10 hours a week, and Richard will be with us on Sundays. I am excited about having partners in ministry who will be additional voices from the pulpit and in the classroom). Because it is critically important we provide adequate opportunity for Tami and Richard to develop their preaching skills and voice, we have divided up the preaching schedule so that each of us will preach 6 times between now and the first week of January (our own Shelley Crook will also preach again, the first weekend in December, Advent II). This will be a wonderful learning opportunity for all of us.

As you know, this is the Year of the Youth. You will see greater participation of our youth in worship and other settings. There will be a youth group for our teens that will provide opportunity for community involvement along with fun outings and experiences. Kate Beeby will continue to dazzle us with a great curriculum for the younger kids, and Laura Foster will lead a team for our middle school youth. I will be training all youth ages 5 and up who would like to serve as a torch bearer for Sunday services. We will need two each week, so am looking forward to developing a great team!

We are looking to develop a few new committees this year: Stewardship and Fellowship. We will have the Rev. Sandy Key, associate rector of Christ's Church, Rye, with us on September 9th to talk about different stewardship strategies that have met with great success. A reminder: stewardship is not pledging; it is all that we do, with all that we have, all of the time. It is a way of life, a mindset that enables us to best maximize our resources of every kind to help usher in the reign of God. If you are interested, please join us at 8 pm that evening in the Board Room.

As for Fellowship, there are a few instances each church year that are tied to a more festive celebration, and also the possibility of other events (movie nights, dances, speakers on various topics) that would enrich and delight the congregation. If you feel called to such a ministry, please let me know.

Two other possibilities on the horizon for 2016: a women's retreat and a family retreat. I'm looking for folks who find these of interest and are willing to do a bit of legwork to get them out of the planning stage and onto our calendar. If you are interested, give me a call.

We will be kicking off the church year with our visit from the Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin, Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of New York, on September 13th at 10 am. He will confirm 10, receive 5, and reaffirm 3, so it will be quite the morning. This is an event not to be missed, and a great way to begin the church year. Bishop Shin will be available for conversation at the reception to follow the service, and will meet with the Vestry following the reception.

I look forward to all this year brings us.

Blessings,



Ready, set, let's go: Kicking off the Year of the Youth

We are excited to begin the programming for our Year of the Youth with a series of very special Sundays, beginning with a Blessing of the Backpacks on September 6 during the 9 am service, followed by Bishop Shin's confirmation visit at 10 am on September 13, then the launch of our children's programs on September 20 for St. Thomas' Year of the Youth.

Bishop Shin will confirm or receive about 15 teenagers and adults on the 13th. Mother Carol has invited our kids to participate in this special service as lay readers, acolytes and torch bearers. All families are urged to attend, and while we will have nursery babysitting that day, we would like as many kids as possible in church for the whole service. After the service, we will have a festive reception to greet the Bishop and our confirmands. Please come for church, and stay for the party.

The following Sunday, September 20, our Sunday School year officially begins with some fun orientation activities and ice cream. We've made a few changes to our programming, specifically for our middle school-age group and to our confirmation preparations, in order to better reflect the most current and best practices in Christian formation. These changes are described below.

Nursery is offered every Sunday during the school year, with drop-off beginning at 9:45 am. Nursery is appropriate for our youngest members, from about 6 months old, through age 4. Many Sundays, our toddlers hear a Bible story and are offered a special, story-related activity from dress-up, to coloring, to drumming, as a fun introduction to our faith.

Sunday School utilizes St. Thomas' whole campus, meeting in Heathcote Hall's chapel, classrooms, kitchen, or hall depending on the day's activity. Sunday School is offered most Sundays from September through June and designed to meet the needs and interests for children in kindergarten through grade 4 or 5. Drop-off begins at 9:45 am; the daily lesson begins promptly at 10:00 am, followed by a craft or activity relevant to the day's lesson. Each year, we custom build our curriculum to meet the needs and interests of the specific group by offering activities like the Lego Bible study program, crafts, cooking and service projects. While children are always welcome in church, we will schedule family-oriented worship services throughout the year.

Our new **Junior Youth Group** will meet in the Heathcote Hall boardroom most Sundays during the school year at 9:45 am. This newly formed group

will be offered for kids in grades 6, 7 and 8, but may also be appropriate for mature 5th graders. This school year, under the leadership of a dedicated rotation of volunteer teachers, the Junior Youth Group will explore foundational theology through a series of amusing and thought-provoking videos before joining their parents in church for the Eucharist. In addition, we will offer special field trips and activities to help build a tight-knit and mutually supportive group of young teens. And, about once a month, this group will participate in the full 10 am service as a way of underscoring the centrality of communal worship in our church life.

In the future, **Confirmation class** will be open to high school students for intensive exploration and discernment in the months leading up to the next Bishop's visit. This group will not convene during this school year. Instead, we will offer weekly Junior Youth Group for middle school students and special programs and activities for high school students.

Senior Youth are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the congregation. St. Thomas offers a wide variety of service programs, and will also offer special clergy-led activities for older teens, like dinners and discussion groups organized in response to current issues or the particular interests and needs expressed by our high school students.

Worship: In order to involve our kids directly in worship, Mother Carol asks that children as young as five consider participating in our worship services as torch bearers and acolytes. Please see if your kids are interested (you can let them know the job comes with a nifty robe).

Start time question: In addition, Mother Carol has asked parents to consider whether an earlier Sunday School start time, specifically drop-off at 9:30 am, with classes starting promptly at 9:45 am would suit your family. This would allow Sunday School and Junior Youth Group 45 minutes of instructional time each week and would help us trim the length of the 10 am worship service because the kids would join the service at 10:30 am each Sunday. No decision, nor changes, have been made, so please weigh in on how feasible this is for your family (e-mail Carol at rectorstthomas@gmail.com).

Teachers/Leaders: Mother Carol has asked the adults in the congregation to consider leading the new Junior Youth Group about once a month for the next year. Leaders can fly solo, or team up with a friend or partner. Your commitment of eight hours over the course of this school year will help make for a successful launch of this new group. And if you'd be more comfortable teaching the younger kids in Sunday School, please let us know. New Sunday School teachers would allow some current teachers to shift to the new middle school group. For my part, I can make teaching and leading these groups easy for everyone by providing all the necessary supplies and support. Please consider this ministry and let me, or Carol, know if you have any questions or can assist.

From baptisms, to backpack blessings, to graduation send-offs, St. Thomas seeks to meet the spiritual needs of our children, to help them grow, as they grow up, in Christ each day. See you in September!

Questions? Please contact me by e-mail, katebeeby@optonline.net.

Kate

Properties Committee Report

During these summer months when most folks go away on vacation, the properties committee is busy getting projects scheduled during a prime time for outdoor work. You can expect to see work beginning soon on the exterior of the Parish House with stucco repairs followed by a new coat of paint. We will also remove the flagstones from the entrance to Heathcote hall and have a new concrete pad poured to be able to support the heavy pallets of food delivered there for our feeding programs.

We will also be working on some upgrades on lighting in the Thrift Shop to make it easier for people to see all of the great items our volunteers have sorted and placed on the tables and racks. You may have already noticed

one of the changes we implemented in the Edifice – Rev. Carol is using a new microphone during services. Please be patient while we fine tune this new device as we work at enhancing the sound system. There have been other repairs large and small that have required our attention – one of the drains in the lower car park needed to be dismantled and rebuilt, our front sidewalk was damaged by a truck that was working on a different repair project and needed to be repaired before our next service for safety reasons and our mason came out that Saturday and made the repair – excellent response and service!

Another area of concern for us is the kitchen in Heathcote Hall. The current stove and exhaust hood in the area are not in proper condition per the report from our church insurance carrier. We have been cautioned/warned that this is not acceptable and so we are planning on asking all of the other committees that use this area for their input. What are the current and predicted future needs for this kitchen area? Do we replace the stove and hood with a smaller model, or do we look to maintain the same size stovetop and oven size? If you are one of the people that utilize the kitchen area we welcome your comments as well.

A larger concern for the future is the area of stained glass window repair. We have contracted with an agency to give us a report on the status of all of our windows. We will share this information when the report is completed – the person that gave us the estimate for the work is very excited to start the process because of the beauty and quality of our windows!

We will be visited by the Bishop for the receiving and confirmation of members of our church in September and we will also ask the Bishop to re-consecrate our newly repaired pulpit. The work turned out to be more of a challenge that any of us expected, but Empire Metals has come through for us and we look forward to having it back in place in early September.

If you have any questions or concerns, the property committee members are: James Whitehouse (chairman), Steve Bonaparte, Jeff Shearman, Mary Olsson, Bob Poney, David Bilotti, Mark Penn

Men's Retreat at Holy Cross Monastery

The St. Thomas men's group will be attending a retreat at Holy Cross Monastery over the weekend of October 23-25-25 2015. We have chosen the topics for our retreat – thanks for the inspiration, Shelly Crook!

**Modern Prophets -
How to sort through all the noise and listen for them
Evangelism -
How to express our faith to others outside of our church family**

The cost to attend is \$190 and this includes a guest room and all meals from Friday evening through Sunday lunch. We have been assigned 10 single rooms and 2 double rooms for this weekend, but if we need to add more rooms we will need to let them know soon. For additional information about this retreat please feel free to contact me – steve.bonaparte@gmail.com or come and join us at our September meeting which will be on Friday September 11th in the board room.

15th Annual Pumpkin Patch

Soon it will be fall, and this means that it is time again for our Pumpkin Patch. This year will be our 15th anniversary!

Please mark your calendar: the pumpkins arrive on **Friday, October 9th** in the afternoon. Everybody is invited to help unload the pumpkins.

This is a wonderful time to come out as a family and spend an hour or two of your time between soccer games to make it happen. Without your help the patch will not survive, and we appreciate any time you have available.

We need your ideas and help to make this year a success. We may change the hours of operation to include some evening hours. What do you think?

To thank you for all your efforts we are planning for the end of the patch a Pumpkin Chunkin Party, something you have never experienced before. It will be a ton of fun.

If you are interested in joining our team as an organizer or volunteer, or if you just want to share your ideas, please direct them to: stthomaspumpkins@gmail.com. Looking forward to hearing from all of you!

The pumpkin team,
Karen & Greg

Please order your tickets soon!

**The Episcopal Churches
of the Sound Shore present**

MARY FAHL

former lead singer of

OCTOBER PROJECT

Saturday, October 17th, 8 pm

**St. Thomas Episcopal Church
168 West Boston Post Road, Mamaroneck**

Tickets \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door
Go to: www.saintthomasmmrk.org

YOU DON'T WANT TO FORGET...



September 6 - one service at 9am with Blessing of the Backpacks.
September 13 - one service at 10am with Confirmation.
September 20 - two services at 8AM and 10AM, Sunday school is in session. We celebrate the Holy Eucharist every Wednesday at 7:30pm in St. Luke's Chapel



Bible Study meets on September 8 and 22



Tuesdays: Brown Bag Lunch and Pantry: 11:00am—12:00pm



You are invited to a free Community Dinner every second Saturday of the month at 5:30 pm



The St. Thomas Women's Group meets on September 3 at 7:30pm in the library



The St. Thomas Men's Group meets on September 11 at 7:30pm in the boardroom



Thrift Shop and Book Room reopen on September 12. Opening times are Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10am to 1pm.

September Birthdays

Rose Gareri
Russell Foster
Ryan Mustacato
Dominick Mustacato
Lark Aresty
Olivia Gargiuolo
Steven Bonaparte

Rosanne Aresty
Shelley Crook
Noel Hart
Louis Scenti
Anna Hong
Janessa Bing
James Whitehouse
Jacqueline E. Ogata



St. Thomas Clergy, Staff and Vestry Directory

Rector: The Rev. Carol D. Gadsden	rectorstthomas@gmail.com
Parish Secretary: Barbara Gessler	office@saintthomasmmrk.org
Sunday School Director: Kate Beeby	katebeeby@optonline.net
Director of Music: Noel A. Hart, Jr.	ExcellentSingers@aol.com
Bookkeeper: Nancy Mustacato	bookkeeper@saintthomasmmrk.org
Sexton: Edgar Garza	edgaregarza@yahoo.com
Sunday Sexton: Anner Garza	
Senior Warden: Sue Perciasepe	Junior Warden: Linda Shearman
Vestry:	
Patricia Bave	Lou Scenti
Shelley Crook	Maria Thomas
Brian Gassick	Denny Wong

Service Schedule:

Sundays:	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist (said)
	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist with music, followed by refreshments in the Parish Hall
	11:30-12:45	Choir rehearsal

Christian Education for Young People:

10:00 AM Sunday School
Nursery care available from 9:45AM until 12 Noon

Deadline for articles and submissions for the next Tower: September 20, 2015

Submit articles to Barbara Gessler at office@saintthomasmmrk.org



We now have a QR code on our website. It can be copied and added to Facebook, Twitter, flyers, etc. Those with smartphone readers can then scan it and will be automatically directed to our website! Try it!

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