

# Parish Profile



EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF  
ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE



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# INTRODUCTION

## Helping Hands Healing Hearts Welcome All

Parishioners describe The Episcopal Church of St. Thomas the Apostle in many ways. It's a small church with a big heart. It's a progressive parish with a long history of inclusiveness. It's a way station where people broken in spirit can heal and find their niche in life.

Our vision statement reads: "To be an engaging, passionate, spiritually healthy community, open to all God's people."

However, each of us chooses to characterize our parish, we would all agree that we came to St. Thomas the Apostle, and stayed, because we soon felt like family. "Church family" may be an overused term in other parishes, but certainly not at St. Thomas.

It's especially apt here. We genuinely see ourselves as members of an extended family.

We pray together. We volunteer together. We laugh together. We cry together. And, of course, we hug. First-time visitors to St. Thomas are often struck by our friendly embraces during the Peace on Sunday mornings. And why not? We care for each other.

We've hugged more than usual since the retirement of a beloved priest earlier this year. But we know the life of any church, like any family, is made up of comings and goings. We look forward to our future with a new rector.

During this interim period, we have done considerable reflection and self-evaluation. We've taken stock of what we've accomplished as a parish, who we are today and where we see ourselves headed. We've distilled what we've learned into this church profile and hope it introduces us to you.

You'll find a history of our parish, a Who's Who of staff and others, a summary of our finances, an overview of our community service and ministries, a description of the qualities we're seeking in a rector and our hopes for tomorrow.

We trust that, after reading our profile, you'll agree that St. Thomas the Apostle is indeed a special place that not only nurtures its own members but also understands the importance of reaching beyond its comfort zone to serve the broader community.

This is a place where people can come to celebrate their faith, tend a community garden and grow food for the hungry, care for the sick and homebound and, yes, where they can also come to watch old movies and share a few laughs.

Call us proud Episcopalians. No doubt about it.

# Our History



The 69-year history of St. Thomas the Apostle has been, and remains, a story of inclusiveness. We receive all people into one family without reservation and provide a sanctuary for self-examination, growth and healing.

The parish's roots go back to 1950 and the post-World War II boom in Dallas. Henry Hutchins Jr., a young ex-GI, and Greer Taylor, a young seminarian, worked through the bishop of Dallas to organize The Mission of St. Thomas the Apostle. The Rev. Edward Ferguson became the part-time priest in charge. Less than two years later, The Rev. Guy Usher became the full-time vicar.

During its first six years, the fledging mission worshipped at parishioners' homes, then at Arlington Hall in Lee Park, two private schools and, finally, at the Inwood Theater. This itinerant period of St. Thomas' history calls up stories of certain trials and tribulations, such as the need for especially stout parishioners to lug around a pump organ that had been borrowed from St. Matthew's Cathedral.

By 1955, the mission had gained parish status and called Father Guy to be the first rector. The parish's present site at Inwood Road and Mockingbird Lane was purchased, and construction of a chapel, church school and offices got underway. A year later, the new facilities — built for \$75,000 — were consecrated, and the 50 families who then belonged to St. Thomas settled into the parish's permanent home.

From early on, inclusiveness was woven into the church's fabric. In 1962, Ethel Stewart had heard of the friendly neighborhood church at Inwood and Mockingbird and wanted to become a part of it. Yet Ms. Stewart was African-American, and segregation was the accepted norm in Dallas at the time.

Despite outside threats, including hateful signs posted on the church doors by unknown persons, and the need to have police presence on Sundays, the St. Thomas family welcomed her into their midst and became the first integrated parish in the diocese.

St. Thomas' history has had other "firsts," such as the first parish in the diocese to elect a woman to its Vestry and the first parish in the diocese to have women at the altar. Still, the moment that speaks most profoundly to the parish's commitment to "receive all people into one family without reservation" came in 1985, when a young man named Jerome walked into St. Thomas and asked for a proper burial.

He was dying of AIDS and had been turned away by three other churches. The Rev. Ted Karpf, a young priest who had become St. Thomas' second rector a year before, reached out and gave him hope. Parishioners brought the man into their church family and cared for him. Soon, others like Jerome came needing help, and an AIDS ministry, the first of its kind in Dallas, began and grew at St. Thomas.

The new ministry was not without challenges. As people with AIDS started attending worship services, some members left St. Thomas out of fear of using the same chalice for communion. Ultimately, though, the parish's willingness to answer a desperate community need energized the church and made it more diverse. The Rev. Stephen Waller became the parish's third rector in 1989, and St. Thomas evolved into a "destination church." People drove from many miles away to worship and serve.

# Who's Who

Father Stephen's 23 years at St. Thomas brought an ambitious million-dollar-plus rebuilding of the parish's facilities and grounds and a broad community outreach program. From the church's focus on helping those living with AIDS in the 1980s and 1990s sprang other volunteer efforts to feed the homeless, clothe the needy, tutor and support neighborhood schoolchildren, and care for people recovering from surgery and illness.

After Father Stephen's retirement, the Vestry called The Rev. Joy Daley to become the church's fourth rector in 2014. Under her cheerful leadership, the parish broadened its community outreach and initiated educational programs and community service projects with other churches and houses of worship. Mother Joy and the parish successfully advocated for equal access to "all sacraments for all people" at the 2018 General Convention. The years-long effort came to a joyful culmination in early 2019, when Mother Joy, along with the retired Bishop of New Hampshire, the Right Reverend Gene Robinson, was able to bless the marriages of same-sex couples at St. Thomas who had long been forbidden by the Diocese of Dallas to marry in their own church.

"Our doors are open to all," parishioners say of the inclusiveness that distinguishes the church's past and promises to further enrich its future. Just like the young man named Jerome, just like Ethel Stewart, people continue to arrive at St. Thomas the Apostle's doorstep to become part of something much larger, much grander, than themselves.

## Staff

The Rev. Leo Loyola, Assisting Priest

In addition to his liturgical duties, Father Leo has assisted with Christian education programs, pastoral care and community outreach. A recent transplant to Texas, he previously served as vicar of Calvary Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Hawaii, helping to guide it from a fractured congregation back to its good standing with the diocese.

Lee Corbin, Organist and Choirmaster

Lee has been organist and choirmaster at St. Thomas since 1985. Nearly every summer since 1999, he has joined other organists from the United States, Canada and Australia for a tour of organs in the United Kingdom. Lee has played many of the historic instruments in cathedrals, town halls and parish churches in England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland.

In addition to our professional and small support staff, you will often find the office and campus tended by a number of dedicated volunteers from the parish family itself.





## **Vestry**

Nancy LeGros, Senior Warden  
 Steven Lee, Junior Warden  
 Jean Edwards  
 Todd Frary  
 Kenneth Goodwin  
 Dale Lee  
 Charles Mullins Jr.  
 Jack McCroskey  
 Dianna Rooney

Denise Webb Glass, Chancellor  
 Rusty Rippamonti, Vice Chancellor  
 Mike Gsell, Treasurer  
 Paul McCright, Clerk

## **Search Committee**

Rusty Rippamonti, chairman  
 Nan Alexander  
 Susan Arellano  
 Joe DeuPree  
 David Hess  
 Michael Legacy  
 Charles Mullins Jr.  
 Jack McCroskey  
 Lisa Pearson





## Our City: The New Dallas

The Dallas where most St. Thomas parishioners live is a different place from the rest of the state — different also from the city's image nationwide.

Dallas is a complex and sophisticated place serviced by the largest light-rail commuter system in the country and dotted with newly revitalized urban neighborhoods — particularly in areas near St. Thomas, such as Uptown, Oak Lawn, the Cedars, the Design District and Oak Cliff. The past decade has seen a significant boom in public amenities, with parks, museums and performance halls.

The one cliché that is accurate is that Dallas is big — bigger, in fact, than many people realize. The city, which itself has more than 1.3 million people, is at the center of the fourth-largest metropolitan area in the country — behind only those surrounding New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. St. Thomas is located in the urban heart of the Metroplex, a local term for the metropolitan area.

Like every other big city in the country, Dallas is home to miles of suburbia. But many of those suburbs are surprisingly diverse — with a vibrant Hispanic population, certainly, but also with large communities from Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and the Middle East.

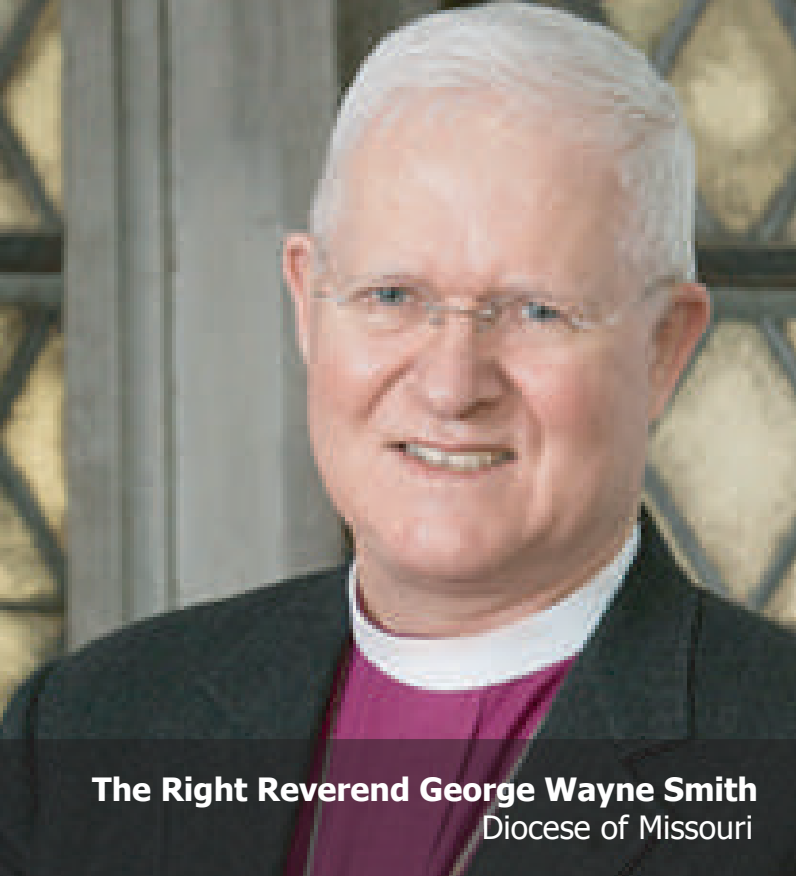
The LGBTQ+ community, once most visibly present in Oak Lawn, is now much more diffused, but it's still one of the most active and politically powerful communities between Chicago and Los Angeles.

For those who equate all of Texas with political conservatism, the voting patterns here might come as a surprise. Dallas County voted for the national Democratic ticket in 2008, 2012 and 2016. Indeed, virtually all county offices are now held by Democrats.

All of which is to say that progressive-minded individuals can feel right at home, deep in the heart of Big D.

That's D, as in diversity.





**The Right Reverend George Wayne Smith**  
Diocese of Missouri



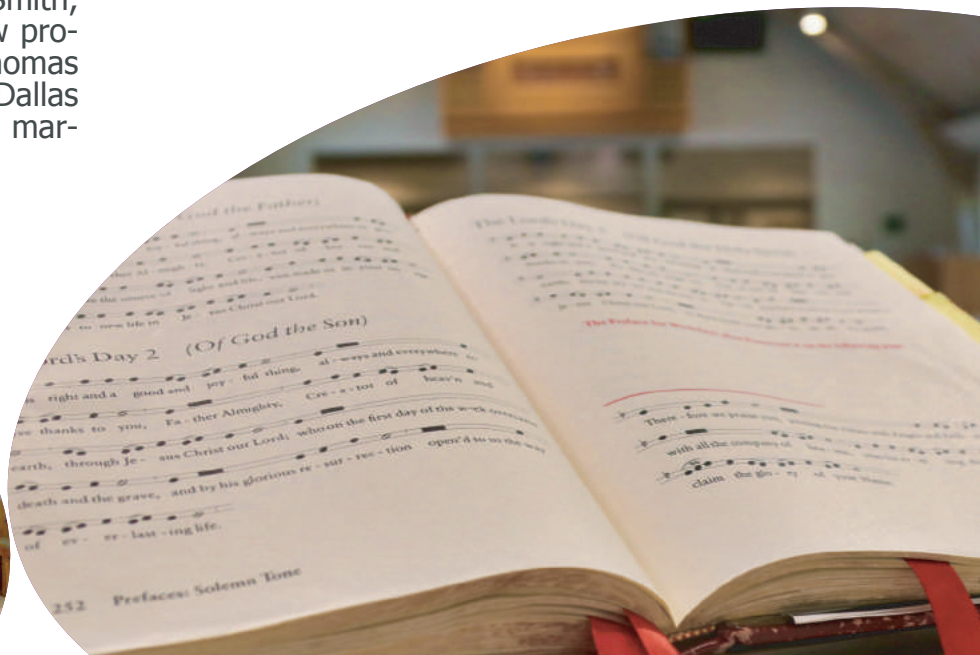
**The Right Reverend George R. Sumner**  
Diocese of Dallas

## Our Diocese

The Diocese of Dallas has about 67 parishes and missions and is known for its many ministries and extensive community outreach. The current bishop is The Right Reverend George Sumner, elected in 2015.

After the 2018 General Convention's actions on marriage equality, Bishop Sumner determined that he could not oversee our parish that had wanted to and has moved forward in providing marriage rites for gay and lesbian couples. As a result, The Right Reverend Wayne Smith, bishop of the Diocese of Missouri, is now providing that pastoral oversight to St. Thomas and two other parishes in the Diocese of Dallas that have chosen to perform same-sex marriages.

Bishop Smith is providing spiritual oversight, while the Diocese of Dallas maintains temporal oversight. Bishop Smith is engaged with St. Thomas' Vestry and Search Committee and expressed his strong support for the parish's mission and vision. The Rev. Canon Joseph Chambers, canon to the ordinary of the Diocese of Missouri, is assisting the Vestry and Search Committee.

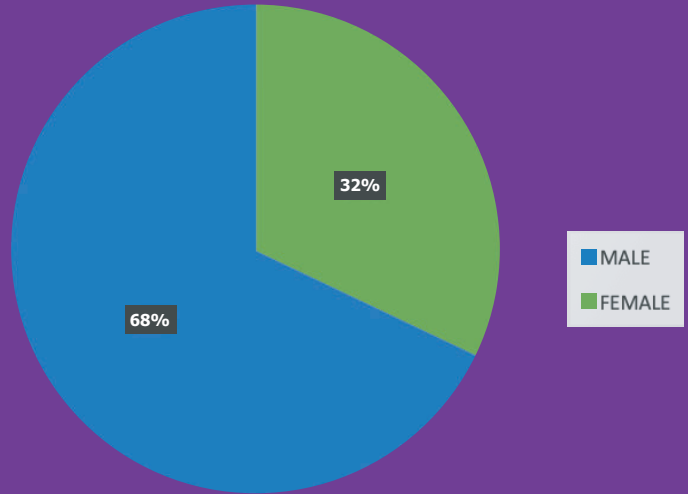




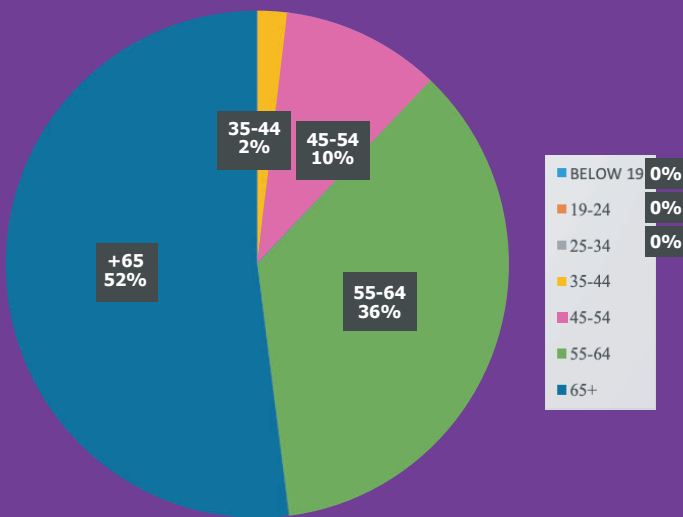
# Who We Are

Most of us at St. Thomas the Apostle prefer not to be defined merely by categories, but we thought it would be useful to prospective rectors if we did just that. Here's a brief overview of who we are.

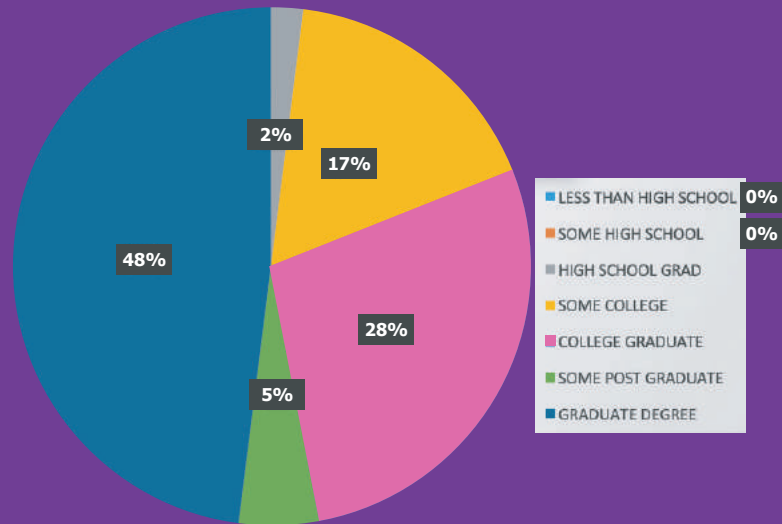
## GENDER



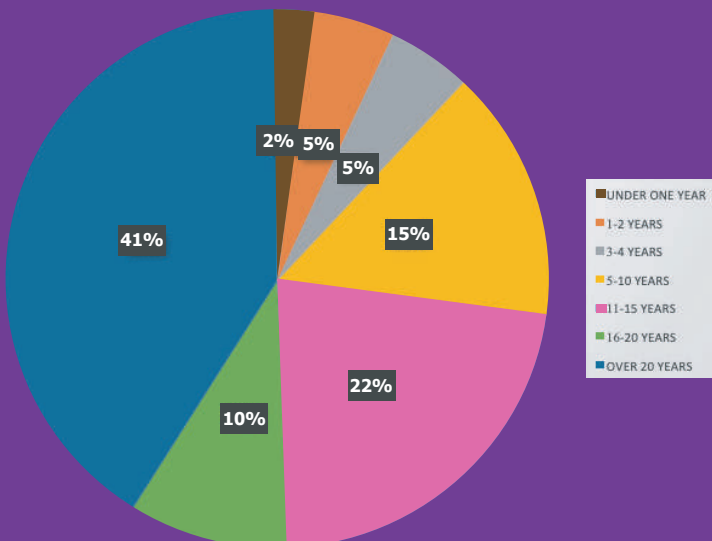
## AGE



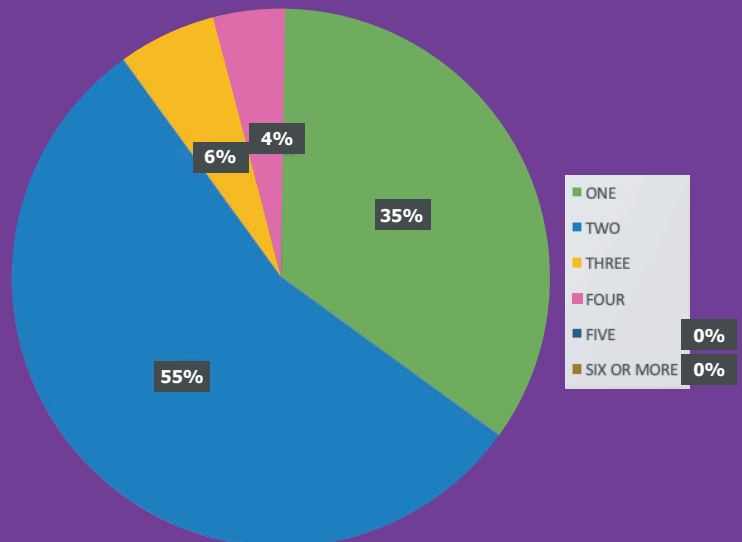
## LEVEL OF EDUCATION



## TENURE



## PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD





## Our Worship and Christian Education

We have two services each Sunday morning. The main service at 10 o'clock uses Rite II. The choir and organ play prominent roles. Our congregation loves to sing, not just the traditional hymns but portions of the Mass as well. We also look forward to challenging and timely homilies from the rector or other clergy. As a parish, we laugh easily during lighter moments of the service, embrace each other during the Peace and clap as a show of support after individual blessings, such as for birthdays, anniversaries and travel. On special holy days, we use incense.

On Sunday, we also have an 8 o'clock Rite I service. It is simpler and lower key than the 10 o'clock Mass, though it still includes a homily. At 8 o'clock, communicants typically form a semi-circle in front of the altar and pass the Body and Blood of Christ from one to another.

Evening worship services and educational programs are held during Lent and Advent.

Many parishioners participate in our midweek Bible Study. The group recently began a 14-week "Journey Through the Bible" series, which is an overview of the foundational documents of the Christian faith. Also popular is the St. Thomas Book Club, which offers a broad array of thought-provoking reading and discussion. The group just finished Cornel West's groundbreaking classic on race in America, "Race Matters."

## Our Ministries

Like any church, St. Thomas couldn't function without the helping hands of its members. Each fall, the church holds a Ministry Fair at which parishioners can learn about the various ministries and choose the ones they'd like to join. Here are some of the ministries in which they're involved. Some will be more familiar to you than others.

### **Acolytes,**

are among our most visible parishioners, carrying the cross and torches in the processional and recessional and assisting the celebrant each Sunday.

### **Altar Guild,**

members, on the other hand, work behind the scenes. They look after the linens, candles, silver, glass and other utensils used in the Eucharist and set up the altar and church for services.

### **Beyond the Pew,**

events bring together long-standing parishioners, newer parishioners and prospective parishioners for an evening of good food and casual conversation at a church member's home. Recent gatherings have featured wine and cheese tastings and, of course, because we're all Texans, chili cook-offs.

### **Choir,**

members are among our parish's most gifted members. At least that's the feeling among those of us who can't carry a tune but still look forward to their music.

## Daughters of the King,

an order of the Episcopal Church, that serves the rector and parish through prayers, service, and evangelism.

## Foyers,

give church members a chance to know their fellow parishioners better. Members who volunteer for Foyer are randomly assigned to small groups, which usually meet monthly for six months. The informal get-togethers are usually over lunch or dinner in homes or restaurants.

## St. Thomas Angels,

assist other parishioners who need help with some of their everyday living activities. Angels might provide a ride to a doctor's appointment, bring in a meal or two, take them grocery shopping or visit them in a hospital or residence.

## Kitchen Crew and Social Committee,

members put together our social events at St. Thomas and plan, prepare and organize the delicious meals we have throughout the year, such as our "flaming dish" lunch on Pentecost and our Thanksgiving feast on the Sunday before the holiday.

## Lay Eucharistic Ministers,

commissioned by the bishop, help administer the chalice during worship services and deliver communion to homebound members.

## Lectors,

read the Scripture lessons during Mass and lead the Prayers of the People.

## Ushers,

hand out service bulletins, collect the offering and help with the orderly flow of the congregation.

## Welcome Guild,

members greet visitors to St. Thomas, making them feel welcome and often assisting first-time guests who may be unfamiliar with Episcopal services.

## Connecting at St. Thomas Brunches,

held following the 10 o'clock service on the first Sunday of each month at a casual neighborhood restaurant, give parishioners an opportunity to welcome new or prospective members and form deeper friendships with other members.

# Our Community Outreach

Our church's mission statement reads: "Helping hands, healing hearts, welcome all." Community service has been part and parcel of St. Thomas' history. Our commitment to helping others begins with a financial commitment for good causes but extends far beyond dollars and cents. Parishioners collectively donate hundreds, if not thousands, of hours of their time each year through a wide range of outreach activities. A few of these are mentioned below.





## Community Grant Program

St. Thomas invites community service organizations to apply for individual grants each year. A committee of parishioners reviews the applications and makes recommendations to the Vestry for approval. The church distributes the outreach checks to the recipients during a Sunday worship service.

## Community Garden

Several years ago, parishioners repurposed the site of the former Rectory next to the church into a bountiful garden that has fed the hungry in Dallas. The Presiding Bishop at the time, The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, accepted St. Thomas' invitation to come to Dallas and bless the new garden that's "fighting hunger where we live." Dozens of St. Thomas members and neighbors have tended the plots to produce thousands of pounds of vegetables each year for local food pantries. This has become a community garden in the true sense of the word. It is a popular volunteer and outreach activity for many community groups that have joined in the tilling, nurturing and harvesting.

## Blood Drives

St. Thomas has hosted blood drives during the winter and summer, resulting in good turnout from not only parishioners but neighborhood residents as well.

## Austin Street Center

A group of dedicated parishioners rise early on the first Saturday of every month to meet in the church kitchen and prepare a lunch they serve at the Austin Street Center's homeless shelter.





## The Gathering

A group of church members prepare and serve lunch to the homeless at Thanks-Giving Square in downtown Dallas four Sundays each year.

## Food Drives and Special Projects

The congregation collects non-perishable items for community groups that maintain food pantries. Parishioners have also sewn hundreds of one-of-a-kind pillowcases for children in the state's Child Protective Services system.

## Ewing House Dinner Group

St. Thomas parishioners prepare, serve and share dinner each month with the residents of Ewing House, a facility run by a local nonprofit for people living with HIV/AIDS.

## Fund-raisers

Parishioners raise funds for other charitable causes, such as the annual AIDS LifeWalk, which supports community groups that help people live with the illness. Bryan's House, a pediatric facility for children affected by HIV/AIDS and other serious illnesses, also receives our strong backing. And every December, we donate clothing and toys to youngsters within the Child Protective Services system.

## North Dallas Shared Ministries

Parishioners give clothing and food to help Dallas area residents on limited incomes. St. Thomas members also volunteer many hours to the interfaith agency's social service programs.

## Our Partnerships with Central Christian Church and Christ Episcopal Church

We have reached out to other congregations with a common purpose. On Christmas Eve, for example, the choirs of Central Christian and St. Thomas sang together at one church at 6 p.m. and at the other at 8 p.m. We also have had Taize services together. With Christ Church, we supported that congregation's summer reading program and its mission trip.





## Our Finances

St. Thomas has substantial financial strengths. It is debt free. The parish invested more than \$1 million to remodel and rebuild its facilities and landscape its grounds. Though debt was incurred to finance the most ambitious phase of the project, that was paid off during a capital campaign supported with the generous contributions of church members. Nor are there outstanding debts from anything else.

The church always pays its full diocesan assessment and its full offering to the national church.

St. Thomas covers its operating expenses each year through the income it receives largely through pledges and the plate. Stewardship is a theme the church's lay leadership emphasizes each fall, discussing "time, talent and treasure." Parishioners have a proud history of honoring their financial pledges, and the church typically receives 97 to 98 percent of the money pledged.

**The average pledge amount has increased the last three years, from \$3,552 in 2017 to \$3,793 in 2018 to \$3,920 this year.** That generosity has allowed the annual budget to remain relatively stable, despite a small decline in the number of pledge units. **The 2019 budget stands at \$371,963, up slightly from \$364,042 the previous year.** Annual budgets are drafted by the Budget Committee and approved by the Vestry.

**We are especially proud of our commitment to Outreach. The amount this year is \$65,113, which represents 17.5% of our total budget.** This includes the Diocesan assessment, ECUSA assessment, and funding for myriad internal ministries as described previously. St. Thomas also funds \$5,000 for yearly, competitive grants available to outside organizations.

This year we used grants to help fund the purchase of beds for hospice patients at Legacy Counseling Center and to provide food and other supplies to the LGBT Youth Home sponsored by Promise House. We also open our doors to provide meeting space at no charge for several groups who have no other space and could not afford to rent such space.

**St. Thomas also maintains an Endowment Fund of \$275,000.** Monies from this Endowment may not be used to subsidize the general budget but can be used for special projects such as starting a new ministry. Such disbursements are at the discretion of the Vestry.





## Our Building Makeover

At St. Thomas our building and grounds are central to our worship, fellowship and education programs. They're the key part of our outreach. St. Thomas' welcoming campus has become a community center. Each week we play host to a diverse list of nonprofit groups and community meetings. Choruses, counseling and support groups, the League of Women Voters, newly forming religious communities – they've all been our guests.

St. Thomas' own version of an "extreme makeover" began in the mid-1990s when church members, who had been worshipping in the parish hall, decided to remodel and return to their unused Fifties Era sanctuary. The darkened and neglected sanctuary was turned into a bright, modern, and inviting space that looks out through a wall of floor to ceiling windows to a lush fountain courtyard, and our outdoor columbarium. It is a warm and inviting place for meditation and reflection. The courtyard is also the scene for outdoor services and parish social gatherings.

After the sanctuary redo, the next phase of our makeover saw an extensive updating to the kitchen, its equipment and appliances. It is equipped to manage complete meal preparation for hundreds of guests. At the same time, the parish hall was remodeled, and included the installation of a labyrinth in the new tile floor. The labyrinth has become one of our community ministries. Parishioners and visitors alike walk it to find peace and solace. It is open to the public.

The final phase of our makeover was the reconstruction of our "west wing" of meeting rooms and offices, now adorned by stained-glass windows from the original sanctuary.

The south Room hosts mainly church functions, such as adult education programs, Vestry meetings, committee meetings, and smaller receptions. The suite of church offices accommodates the priest, administrative assistant and volunteers, and includes a conference area. The newly redone west wing also includes a cheerful nursery, the choir room, and the north room which is a second meeting space frequently used by community groups.

To the north of the west wing and parking lot lies our community garden, described in the previous section on community outreach. It is a hub of activity throughout the year.

The most recent renovations at St. Thomas have included the reconstruction of the north entrance, further improvements to the parish hall, fountain courtyard, and a complete redesign of our landscaping. Through the generous legacy gift of two of our longtime parishioners, a state-of-the-art organ has been added to the sanctuary, along with a sound system for both the sanctuary and the parish hall. A handsome new stone masonry sign stands on the corner of our property at Inwood Road and Mockingbird Lane, one of the most travelled intersections in urban Dallas, welcoming everyone to our campus.

As bespeaks the dedication and generosity of the people of St. Thomas, each phase of the church's makeover was paid for before the next phase began. The result is an up-to-date, modern, debt free facility that serves the congregation and the larger community, as befits the Mission Statement of St. Thomas. There are few days each week that someone or organization is not making use of our "home". We wouldn't have it any other way.



## Our Hopes for the Future

As proud as we are about our parish's past and present, we've also given careful thought to our future with our next rector. During this interim period, we've discussed and surveyed ourselves about where we would like to see our congregation headed over the next several years.

"We need to grow" has been a common response. While St. Thomas continues to be above average when compared to the national average of churches our size in plate and pledge income, we are below average in the number of people a year being baptized, received and confirmed, and in our average Sunday attendance.

We're an aging parish. The upside of this is that we have many long-standing members. Still, we all recognize the importance of the church renewing itself by adding members. From our conversations with experts in congregational development, we understand that doesn't just happen. It requires deliberate action and strong leadership. At its retreat last year, the Vestry set specific strategies for fostering a healthy church and has begun pursuing them.

We know we must do better at marketing our church. Beyond that, we realize we must do better at engaging newcomers. We're a friendly bunch, and we do well in welcoming visitors. But we need to take the next step and plug people into church activities once they've shown an interest in the parish. The Connecting with St. Thomas brunches are just one recent effort in this direction. But we look forward as well to our next rector providing creative ideas and leadership.

Like many congregations, St. Thomas is blessed to have a core of stalwarts who are always willing to step in and get the job done — whatever that happens to be at the moment. Growth will allow us to share those responsibilities with a broader circle of devoted parishioners. The addition of new members will also bring new enthusiasm and the next generation of church leaders.

We also know that we want to keep the familiarity and intimacy that a congregation our size offers, and many parishioners don't want to grow so large that we compromise the sense of community that first brought many of us to St. Thomas. We have no aspirations of becoming a mega-church.

We look for balance here. For example, a larger, more multi-generational parish will permit a more robust Christian education program — an important goal of ours. On the other hand, we value the pastoral care many of us have enjoyed as a result of our parish's small size. Without it, St. Thomas wouldn't seem quite like the St. Thomas we've known.

Our parish has a strong attachment to the national Episcopal Church. We're proud of the national church's initiatives of inclusiveness, and we remain steadfast in our commitment and support for ECUSA. The Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, President of the House of Deputies, accepted our invitation to visit St. Thomas and lead our Vestry retreat. And Retired Bishop Gene Robinson of the Diocese of New Hampshire came to our parish to help bless our same-sex married couples one Sunday morning earlier this year.

St. Thomas has many strengths — devoted parishioners, up-to-date facilities, an enviable outreach program and achievable goals for the future. But it also faces the task of rejuvenating itself and preparing for the next generation of its parish life. Our next rector will be an individual who, like the rest of us, sees that as an intriguing opportunity.



## Our Next Rector

Over its 69-year history, St. Thomas the Apostle has had only four rectors. That, more than anything else, says what a special place this is.

Our first rector served for 32 years. Another was here for 23 years. Why is that? We think it was because of the strong bonds of affection that grew between pastor and parishioners. Together, we celebrated our faith and found new ways to share it in the world beyond our walls.

While we realize that such extended tenures have become the exception rather than the norm among pastors today, we do look forward to having the same affection for our fifth rector and the same uplifting relationship.

We've surveyed ourselves on the qualities and skills we are seeking in that individual. Among the traits that parishioners rated important were: courage, compassion, warmth, engaged, and outgoing. We are looking for a dynamic leader who will be with us on our own spiritual journeys.

Many of those qualities would be expected of any pastor aspiring to lead a parish. But other traits raised by church members bear a closer look, since they speak to the particular priorities of the people of St. Thomas. We'll know by these skills whether we've found our new leader.

First, we look to our rector to nurture and maintain a sense of community among us. St. Thomas is seeking a rector who is comfortable working in partnership with the laity to plan and implement the goals of the parish. We've emphasized throughout this church profile that St. Thomas enjoys a strong feeling of family. We want someone who accepts and loves all of us and with whom we can share our joys and sorrows.

St. Thomas has a history of and continues to want to develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances. We want a pastor who's available to counsel and guide us. We want someone who can listen and console us. Yet we also understand that pastors can't remain responsive to the needs of others if they aren't mindful of their own needs. A rector must have time to rest and relax.



## Our Next Rector

Next, we look to our pastor to be our spiritual leader who can teach us and help us grow in our faith. Many of us are Episcopalians because of our love for the liturgy. We want a rector who's a dynamic preacher, whose homilies challenge us to think and inspire us to act — and who appreciates the value of humor and strengthens our Christian formation. We look for a rector who, like us, is strongly committed to equal access to all of the Sacraments of the church.

Finally, we look for our next rector to help us grow and rejuvenate our parish. As you read earlier, we're an energetic lot. Our ambitious community outreach work proves that. But many of us are getting older. Our church needs new members to bring about a renewal. We want to implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new persons and families with children, and incorporate them into the life of the parish.

A plan for growth requires not only parishioners with enthusiasm but also a rector with solid leadership and administrative skills and, quite frankly, a passion for taking something good and making it even better. We want a pastor who works well with the Vestry and guild heads and who knows how to enlist and encourage other church members to give their time and talents.

Our story of community and inclusiveness remains as compelling as ever. We hope this brief overview has intrigued you enough to introduce yourself to us. If you think you'd like to become part of our future, our family, we'd invite you to apply. The best part of this story is indeed yet to come.





# Your Next Step

If this profile of our parish has prompted any questions or if you're interested in applying to become our next rector, please feel welcome to contact the chairman of our Search Committee, Rusty Rippamonti, at **[rippamonti@thedoubter.org](mailto:rippamonti@thedoubter.org)**.

If you'd like to begin the application process, we invite you to contact the Episcopal Church's Office for Transition Ministry at **[www.episcopalchurch.org/page/transition-ministry](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/transition-ministry)**

