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THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF  
ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE



March 29, 2020

**The Fifth Sunday of Lent**

Our Mission Statement

*Helping Hands - Healing Hearts*

*Welcome All*

Our Vision Statement

*To be an engaging, passionate, spiritually healthy  
community, open to all God's people*

# The Reverend Christopher Blake Thomas



March 26, 2020

My Dear Doubters of Great Faith,

In the world of 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, I can only imagine that Judeans captive in Babylon must surely have felt that all was lost. For everything that they saw, and felt, and touched, and tasted, everything that their senses recorded, screamed

“Gone!” Forever. Hope was extinguished.

And yet, we know that the story of Yahweh’s love affair with humanity is anything but over. It is simply one moment in Chronos, human time, a moment that God employs the prophet Ezekiel to beckon the people through.

“Prophesy to these dry bones, and you shall live!”

We know, in our logical, thinking minds that that is the case. God is always with us; therefore hope always exists. It is easy, however, in the midst of anxiety to lose sight of hope, and to succumb to fear. And that is what Ezekiel and so many others prophesy against!

“I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live,” says the Lord.

I’ve had many (MANY) pastoral calls with folks over the last few weeks; anxiety around COVID-19, and our current situation, is at the top of most everyone’s list. Everyone is concerned about how it will affect them and those they love. Everyone is feeling the loss of separation from their church, their community, and now, from individual human contact. Everyone has heightened anxiety, fear, and worry. It seems like COVID-19 has forced us to give up so much of what we hold so dear!

It seems so isolating. It must have seemed so to the Judeans as well. And it is that sense of isolation that we simply must continue to press, “prophesy,” as it were, against!

Throughout this week’s “The Doubter,” you will find just such ways to prophesy against this sense of isolation.

First of all, we are going to try something completely different for this Sunday’s worship/ meditation time together. Rather than my “do” worship for you, we are going to try a Zoom Church worship experience in which several people can lead the act of worship. We will have different readers and Mother Virginia Holleman will bring the message for the day.

There will be some opportunity for interaction, and more importantly, you will be able to see each other, from your own locations, and hear other voices besides mine.

If you click on the following Zoom Meeting Link (<https://zoom.us/j/630096782>) on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am (and save it for future Church services), it will take you into the service. A brief YouTube tutorial video can be found at the link (<https://youtu.be/X7XTLlp1kaE>) in case you haven't used Zoom before.

It may be Holy Chaos, but it will be God's Holy Chaos!

Secondly, I have said many times that the beauty of a family-sized congregation is that we know our people by face and by name, and we can be in contact with each other. Rector's Warden Joe DeuPree and Vestry Member Kathy Carson are spearheading the effort to revitalize the "Phone Tree," which was a system of dividing up the parish to make calls and disseminate information quickly to our members. If you have free time and can make calls, I strongly urge you toward this ministry. It will benefit you as well as the people you call! More information is in the article

Finally, I urge you to consider your generosity to St. Thomas as we work through this most difficult time. Although we are small and lean, our expenses march on in the face of closure, and not having church takes its toll on our finances. If you are current with your 2020 Operating Fund pledge, I am so grateful. If you are not, or could consider an additional gift to help the Church through this time, that would be a tremendous blessing as well. We have a full array of on-line giving possibilities on our website (<https://forms.ministryforms.net/embed.aspx?formId=d5588843-231d-407f-a35d-aaf084be704f&custom-templates=>), or you may mail a check to the Church office (6525 Inwood Road, Dallas, TX 75209).

In all of the ways that we can be together, we simply must be together, virtually, electronically, spiritually, during this crisis that has overtaken our world. We must prophesy to the dry bones that exist all around us. Hope is not ever extinguished. Because we are the ones that know that for every single Good Friday there is always an Easter Sunday morning, and my sisters and brother, it will come, and we want to be ready!

Yours faithfully,  
Fr. Christopher+

# Joe DeuPree, Rector's Warden

## STAYING IN TOUCH WITH EACH OTHER

As we continue practicing social distancing, some of us “old timers” remember a time before email, texting, tweeting, etc. Back in the old days, we had what was known as a “Phone Tree”. The purpose of the phone tree is to allow those folks who are called



to check in on others can volunteer to call some of our members every week to make sure they're doing okay and if they need anything. It's perfect for this time in our church's history while most of us are pretty much housebound anyway and quite a few of us have extra time to do something like this. If you are willing to join the Phone Tree



as a volunteer “caller”, please let us know at [pam@thedoubter.org](mailto:pam@thedoubter.org) or [joe@thedoubter.org](mailto:joe@thedoubter.org). The more who volunteer, the fewer folks each of us will have on our calling list.

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## AN UPDATE ABOUT GINGER REEDER

I recently received an update from Ginger's daughter, Grace Vroom. Ginger's disease is definitely progressing. So many of the traits and strengths by which we know Ginger are no longer in her arsenal. Grace tells us that she does really need social contact and suggests that the best way to do that is through the written word. Ginger loves receiving letters; she can read them over and over again. I'm sure she would also enjoy cards and notes. To that end, I'm providing Ginger's mailing information so those of you who feel called to can let Ginger know what is going on with you and how much she means to you.

The Preston of Park Cities  
c/o Ginger Reeder  
5917 Sherry Lane  
Dallas, TX 75225

Please keep Ginger and her family in your prayers.

# Lectionary

## 1st Reading

Ezekiel 37: 1 - 14

## Psalm

130

## 2nd Reading

Romans 8: 6 - 11

## GOSPEL

John 11: 1 - 45

[churchpublishing.org](http://churchpublishing.org)

To help parishes continue ministry remotely, Church Publishing Incorporated (CPI) is making available, free of charge, these digital publications: The Book of Common Prayer in both English and Spanish as well as Living Lent, meditations on the hymns of the season, by Barbara Cawthorne Crafton, and Candle Walk, an illustrated book that prepares toddlers through elementary school children for sleep, by Karin Holsinger Sherman.

## Save the Date

### **Saturday, May 23, 2020**

11:00 am Service in the Church for the installation of our Fifth Rector, The Reverend Christopher Blake Thomas, and the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of The Episcopal Church of St. Thomas the Apostle.  
Reception to follow in the Parish Hall.

# Daughters of the King

A LITANY AMIDST THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK  
LITURGY AND HOMILETICS SPECIAL  
MAR 13  
WRITTEN BY MICHAEL KURTH

God the Father,  
***Have mercy on us.***

God the Son,  
***Have mercy on us.***

God the Holy Spirit,  
***Have mercy on us.***

Holy Trinity, one God,  
***Have mercy on us***

Most merciful God, we come to you in this time of anxiety and uncertainty surrounding the outbreak of COVID-19. As the sorrows of our heart and mind increase, we beseech you to save us from all trouble and fear. Cast away all works of darkness. Be our rock, a castle to keep us safe. For the Lord is our stronghold and sure defense, and he will be our Savior.

For all who have died: receive them into the arms of your mercy, grant them eternal peace, and surround those who mourn with your healing grace.  
***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For those directly infected with the virus: help them recover in good health and restore them in body, mind and spirit.  
***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For those at high risk of infection, especially the elderly, those with underlying illnesses, the marginalized, and the poor: keep them healthy and free from all sickness.  
***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For those in quarantine, the shut-in, and the infirmed: help them find peace, keep them in good health, and renew their mind and spirit.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For all hospitals, doctors, nurses, and staff: protect them as they minister to the sick, relieve all stress, and provide the resources and space to meet the needs of all the infirmed.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For first responders: guard them from all harm, and grant them strength and courage as they respond to all calls for help.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For service industry workers and those forced to work as their community shuts down: keep them healthy, bestow the resources to best care for themselves and their families, and assure them in times of financial and medical anxiety.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For those experiencing financial loss and uncertainty of resources: have mercy on them, alleviate any fear, and provide for them daily bread and wage.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For the leaders of this nation and the world: help them make sound and safe decisions to best secure the future of our planet.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For all schools, students, teachers, administrators and school staff: as schools remain open, keep them healthy and in good spirit to learn; as schools close, feed those who will go hungry without guaranteed meals and shelter all students have no place to live.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For all scientists and those working to find a cure: inspire them towards your truth, and help them discover and disseminate a vaccine and cure.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For all media and journalists: protect them from all harm in their reporting, and move them to be a vector of truth and certainty, and never fear or panic.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For all places of worship: embolden them to be beacons of hope and love, and help us to gather however and wherever we can – be it in person or online – to give you praise.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For the leaders of our church: help them minister to their flock; fortify them to be faithful pastors, to persevere in prayer, and to build up the family of God in new and creative ways.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For the young: spare them from harm and fear, and keep them a joyful sign of your love and light.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For all parents: build in them strength and fortitude for the time ahead, and give them the words and witness to be wise counselors and compassionate caregivers.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For calm amidst the storm: as the waves toss our boat and we wonder “do you not care?”, remind us to not be afraid, that with you all things are possible, and that even the wind and sea obey you.

***Lord, hear our prayer.***

Stir up in us a spirit of compassion and tenacity for the time ahead.

***Amen.***

Move us to check-in with loved ones at high risk of infection and those in quarantine.

***Amen.***

Ease our fear and anxiety, that we may share our resources rather than hoard them, and extend a helping hand to those in need.

***Amen.***

Inspire us to share the Good News of your love and hope.

***Amen.*** All this we ask through your son Jesus Christ our Lord: healer of the sick, ruler of the tempestuous sea, and Savior of the world.

Amen.

Officiant: Lord, have mercy.

***People: Christ, have mercy.***

***ALL: Lord, have mercy.***



## PRAYER LIST

### ***Healing in the Lives of:***

Ben Gloria Susan Patricia Rose Kelly Cleola Denise  
Warren Dwight Gary Don Rod Barbera Jacqui Mary Maxine  
Lindee Bob JR Virginia L. Judith Georgia Scott Dwight  
Ginger Henry Melissa Maine Betty John Tom Jerry  
Joyce Tonya Nancy Ann Sandi

### ***God's Grace for:***

Children of Belize Kaden Emri Junior Joanna Kelli Lance  
Talle Addidon Emberly Zoe Jean

### ***In Prison:***

Justin Allen Orlando Steven Aaron Brandon

### ***Serving in the Armed Forces:***

Alex Aaron Connor Joyce Collin Ed

### ***Seeking Employment:***

Bryan Maurice Brook Robin Vicki Trey Gary Don  
Gabby Gabriel Gail

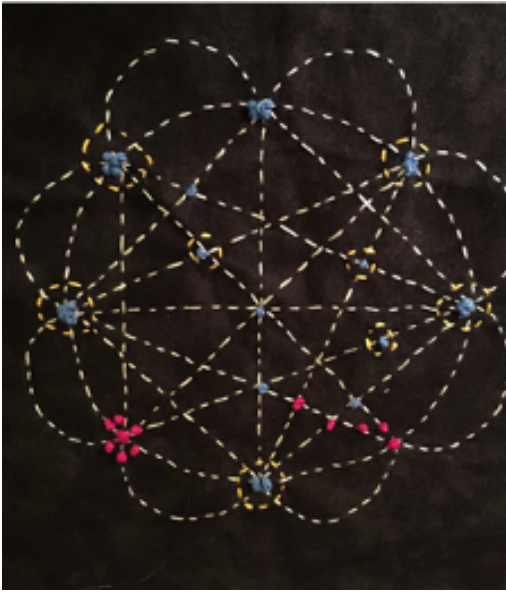
### ***Repose of the Soul:***

James Jeri Kay James Sylvia Sara

# Harnessing Our Creativity

## Harnessing Our Creativity: Turning Fear & Free Time into Art

Vestry member Kathy Carson has come up with a terrific idea to make good use of some of our newfound free time and space. It comes from her quilting group.



“Marcia Wood, group leader, suggested that the participants make something that reflects our understanding or experience of life with the Coronavirus. We’re making 8” squares from our imagination or something we’ve found on-line. Once we reconvene our meetings, we will show our work. Someone may take all the squares and combine them into a quilt. An end product is not decided. I may frame mine!”

“The blue represents people either in clusters (families, apartment buildings, neighborhoods) and individuals. The white lines show the multiple ways we network and are interconnected. The red represents our new companion, COVID-19. The yellow lines are containment. I got the

idea from a PBS program about networking and connectivity.”

Kathy would love for us to have a show when we are able to come together again. There are many in our parish who are creative in so many different ways. The show should not be limited to fiber arts, but open to anyone, and any medium of creativity. Some paint, others knit, or sew, or bake cakes. Some spin pottery. You name it, Doubters do it! Let those creative juices flow.

Kathy will coordinate and corral all this great work! Let her know if you would like to participate, and what type item or with what medium you will work. As soon as we’re back in the building, she will put the show on the calendar.

This can be an exciting and fruitful outlet as we meditate on how isolation, fear, and panic intersect with faith, and the hopeful loving embrace of God.

If you have any questions, or want to discuss, contact Kathy! (214.236.4372, [kcarsonrpcv@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kcarsonrpcv@sbcglobal.net))

**P.S. Hope this is a good idea and works to energize our creativity side, give us something else to talk about and helps keep us sane and mentally healthy.**

### Lent 2020: A Call to Prayer, Fasting, and Repentance Leading to Action

#### An Invitation from Presiding Bishop Curry to Turn and Pray on Behalf our Nation

Link to video:

[https://episcopalchurch.org/invitation-to-fast?wvideo=jcwrh1wyqv&wkey=ZmVsbGlzQHNIY2dsb2JhbC5uZXQ=&foreign\\_data=mailchimp\\_campaign\\_id%3Adf5910f141](https://episcopalchurch.org/invitation-to-fast?wvideo=jcwrh1wyqv&wkey=ZmVsbGlzQHNIY2dsb2JhbC5uZXQ=&foreign_data=mailchimp_campaign_id%3Adf5910f141)

February 11, 2020 As the season of Lent approaches, Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry invites Episcopalians and people of faith to turn and pray on behalf of our nation:

“In times of great national concern and urgency, people of faith have returned to ancient practices of repentance, prayer and fasting as ways of interceding with God on behalf of their nation and the world. This is such a moment for us in the United States.

“On Ash Wednesday I will join with other Christian leaders observing this Lent as a season of prayer, fasting and repentance on behalf of our nation, with continued fasting each Wednesday until the Wednesday before Advent begins.

“Our appeal comes during a time of profound division and genuine crisis of national character. This is not a matter of party or partisanship, but of deep concern for the soul of America.

“The group of religious “Elders” who share this commitment – the same group that over a year ago published the “Reclaiming Jesus” statement – includes Evangelical, Roman Catholic, mainline Protestant leaders. While we hold diverse political affiliations and positions on many issues facing our country, we find common ground in two shared convictions:

First and foremost, we are committed to Jesus Christ as Lord, and his way of love as our primary loyalty.

Second, because we love our country, we are concerned about its moral and spiritual health and well-being.

“For me, this call is rooted in my personal commitment to practice Jesus’s Way of Love, by which I turn, learn, pray, worship, bless, go and rest in the way of our savior. Especially now, drawn together by love, hope and concern, and recalling the wisdom of our ancient traditions, I am grateful to join others in the spiritual practice of prayer, fasting and repentance for our nation. If you feel called to join us in this practice, the invitation is attached. The full text, together with the “Reclaiming Jesus” document can be found on the Reclaiming Jesus website.”

Let us pray.

Almighty God ... We humbly pray that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of your favor and glad to do your will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in your Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to your law, we may show forth your praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in you to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Your brother,  
The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry  
Presiding Bishop and Primate  
The Episcopal Church

#ReclaimingJesus  
[ReclaimingJesus.org](http://ReclaimingJesus.org)

# Living Compass



## Liminal Time by Scott Stoner

Pandemic is now a new word that many of us have added to our daily vocabulary. I don't believe I had ever really used the term until recently.

Please allow me to introduce what is perhaps another new word that you may find helpful in these unprecedented times. The word is liminal. In case you were not aware, we are now living in liminal time. The word liminal comes from the Latin word *limens*, which means "limit or threshold." Author and theologian

Richard Rohr defines liminal time in this way: "It is when you have left, or are about to leave, the tried and true, but have not yet been able to replace it with anything else. It is when you are between your old comfort zone and any possible new answer. If you are not trained in how to hold anxiety, how to live with ambiguity, how to entrust and wait, you will run...anything to flee this terrible cloud of unknowing." He goes on to say that ancient cultures referred to liminal space as "crazy time," because it is like nothing we have ever experienced before. Think of it as that space, that time, when a flying acrobat has let go of one swinging trapeze and is in mid-air, anxiously seeking the grasp of another who is swinging their way.

Each of us has most likely experienced a liminal time at some point in our lives. Liminal times can come into our lives as planned or unplanned. These are times when life is forever different - when life is divided between before and after the event. They include, but are certainly not limited to, the following: the loss of a loved one, the birth of a child, the loss of a job, retirement, moving, a health diagnosis/crisis, the beginning or end of a significant relationship, graduations, and military service.

What is unique about the current pandemic is that it is a liminal time that literally the entire world is going through together, all at the same time. Of course, some individuals are much more affected by Covid-19 than others, but everyone is affected in some way. I can not think of a time in my life where billions of people all around the globe have faced the same challenge at the same time.

Research on resilience has shown that there are two essential factors that people need when they find themselves living in a liminal time: spirituality and community. These two factors will provide direction and support in the midst of this vulnerable, "crazy" time.

Spirituality is what defines "true north" for us all the time, but especially in times of change. It is what defines and grounds our core values and beliefs, and for many, but not all, is connected to religious faith. Spirituality is what inspires people to risk their own health at a time like this, to show up and support others-whether as health care workers, first responders, or grocery store workers. Spirituality is what helps people to choose love over fear. Spirituality is what gives us a bedrock of meaning, purpose, and hope, when so much around us is changing.

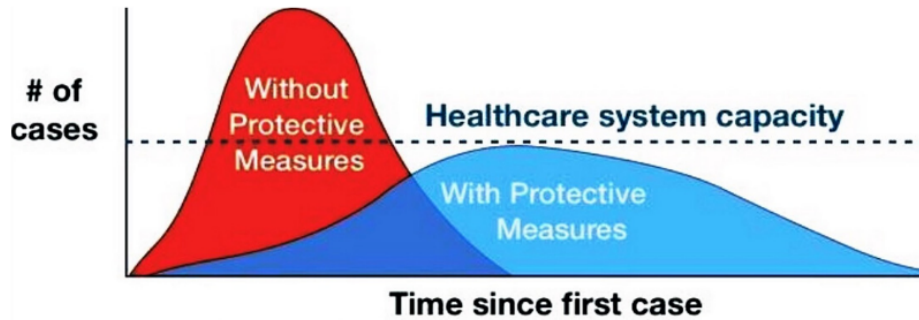
Community is our network of friends and family, the people we can turn to when we need support. This is a challenge in the face of our need to "socially distance" ourselves for the greater good. But because the need to connect is so strong and so universal, we have seen the creative ways people are finding to connect in the midst of this pandemic. People singing on their balconies at night in Italy, faith communities offering online prayer services, neighbors gathering to greet one another across their streets, people volunteering to grocery shop for their at-risk neighbors, musicians offering free online concerts, and grandparents, aunts, and uncles reading bedtime stories and playing games with young family members via Zoom. I'm sure there are other stories each of you could add of the creative ways that people are finding to be both separated and connected at the same time. The resilience of the human spirit is formidable.

I close with one simple, anonymous act of kindness from a member of my community, one that my wife and I were blessed by today. Even though it was a rainy day, my wife and I went out for a long walk late this afternoon. Part of our walk took us to a paved bike trail near our home. Along the side of the bike trail, we noticed a small green dinosaur-like figure with a sign taped on its front. As we got closer, we could see that the sign, created by someone who we will never know, said simply, "Breathe," along with a heart, the universal symbol for love.



That sign expresses my hope and prayer right now for all of us. May we all find a way to breathe in (and out) a little more love at this time. The light of love shines in this liminal time of darkness, and the darkness will not overcome it.

# CORONAVIRUS: MAKE 5 CALLS TO FLATTEN THE CURVE



*Adapted from CDC / The Economist*

We must **delay** and **reduce** the outbreak peak, to stay within the **capacity** of the **healthcare system**.

When a healthcare system is overwhelmed it **saves fewer lives**.

All must act to **flatten the curve**, whether we belong to an **at risk group or not**.

## #FLATTENTHECURVE



STAY AT HOME



WASH HANDS



DON'T TOUCH  
FACE

## #MAKE5CALLS



**Call 5** loved ones.

Explain why **everyone** must help flatten the curve, **irrespective** of age and health.

Explain **how** we can flatten the curve.

Let's beat COVID-19.

# Another way to give



Don't forget to link St. Thomas'  
Good Neighbor Number  
**3063**

to your Reward card and help us raise funds the easy way!  
Forms on the Narthex table or email  
[good.neighbor@tomthumb.com](mailto:good.neighbor@tomthumb.com).  
Include your Loyalty Account Number and  
St. Thomas' Good Neighbor Number.



You shop. Amazon gives.  
Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible  
AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of  
your choice.

AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same  
products, same prices, same service.

Support your charitable organization by starting your  
shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)  
Select St. Thomas - Dallas as your charity of choice.





I have books of my mother's that were destined for the Friends of Lakewood Library book sale. However with the current situation, I want to offer them to Doubters. I will deliver.

Authors:

Alexander McCall Smith

Ann McCaffrey

Dorothy Gilman

Georgette Heyer

Margaret Frazer

Margery Allingham

Peter Tremayne

Doubters can call me (214-824-5647) or text me (972-567-5908) or email me ([ruthkwoodward@aol.com](mailto:ruthkwoodward@aol.com)) with their selections.

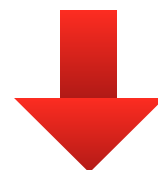
Thank you!

Ruth Woodward



# April

- 1 Shawn Coffey
- 5 Fred Ellis
- 6 Ben Day
- 8 Susan Arellano
- 9 Brad Carter
- 13 Betty Richie
- 22 Tim Chaney
- 25 Duane Harbin
- 28 Sandy Ackermann



**The birthday list is compiled from information listed in the online church directory (<https://tecostta.churchofficechms.com/user/login?destination=>)**

**If your birthday is not on this list, or if the information is incorrect, please update your information in the directory and notify the office of your changes.**

**If you do not have access to the internet, please stop by at the office for assistance.**



**Don't forget to like us on Facebook, and tell your friends too!**  
<https://www.facebook.com/TheDoubter/>

**Parish Office hours are 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM**

**Tuesdays through Fridays**

**214-352-0410**

**Emergency contact: Rev Christopher Blake Thomas 214-352-0410 ext 6**

*(Please leave message with name, call back number, and brief explanation of urgency. Fr. Christopher will receive an urgent message to call back as soon as possible.)*

**The Most Rev'd Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop**

**The Right Rev'd G. Wayne Smith, Bishop of Oversight (Missouri Diocese)**

**The Right Rev'd George R. Sumner, Bishop of Dallas**

**The Right Rev'd Michael Smith, Assistant Bishop of Dallas**

The Rev'd Christopher Blake Thomas, Rector

[christopher@thedoubter.org](mailto:christopher@thedoubter.org)

Mr Lee Corbin, Organist-Choirmaster

[music@thedoubter.org](mailto:music@thedoubter.org)

Mr. David Aston, Assistant Organist

Ms. Pam Liles, Administrative Assistant

[pam@thedoubter.org](mailto:pam@thedoubter.org)

**The Episcopal Church of St Thomas the Apostle**

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[www.thedoubter.org](http://www.thedoubter.org)

[www.facebook.com/thedoubter](https://www.facebook.com/thedoubter)

## **The 2020 Vestry**

**Joe DeuPree**  
**Rector's Warden**

**Michael Legacy**  
**Vestry's Warden**

Kathy Carson  
John VanBuskirk

Steven Lee  
Todd Fray  
Pamala Gilliland

Andrew Besterman  
Jack McCroskey

Denise Webb Glass  
Chancellor

Mike Gsell  
Treasurer

Rusty Rippamonti  
Vice Chancellor

Paul McCright  
Clerk

Wynne Voorhees  
Asst. Treasurer