

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE



July 11th, 2021

The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

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
DODD
BIBLER



The Rev. Christopher Blake Thomas

July 8, 2021

“...they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

- *Mark 16:18b*

My Dear Doubters of Great Faith,

It is, after all, the last thing that Jesus speaks to Jesus' disciples, in that fateful, fearful, appearance, some days after his crucifixion and resurrection, this great command to the disciples that the signs and symbols of their belief are to save, heal, deliver, and disciple. Is Mark's decisive gospel finale any different for us claimants of the great good news some 2000 years later, we who claim that same path of "Christ-bearer?"

And yet, thanks to COVID-19, the plague that rides on breath, we have had to all but abandon the great gift of healing that comes through the "laying on of hands," the gift of touch. Of all the things that we have lost over the past 17 months, the ability to connect and heal through touch has been of the greatest. Touch is the great equalizer, the common bond of humanity to life. There is so much of our humanly essence that is shared in the act of "laying on of hands" and praying together. Sharing touch and breath are in equal parts healing and life-giving.

Jesus recognizes the importance of this key aspect of ministry to the health and welfare of the ongoing community, so much so that it is the last thing he says in the Gospel of Mark.

Prayer and healing have been a crucial part of the common life of St. Thomas the Apostle across its many years, the overarching purpose of groups like the Daughters of the King. When any member of the body is sick (in any way), we naturally want to come together and rally around that person, praying for and lifting them up to and before God, surrounding them with love, and carrying them in our hearts as we go about God's work in the world. And it is, after all, a sign and symbol that we are, in fact, disciples of Jesus Christ!

And so, as we continue to unwind from COVID-19, it is appropriate and timely that we now add the healing and "laying on of hands" back into our liturgical life together. If you would like to receive healing and the laying on of hands during the course of the Eucharist service, you will find a "minister" stationed at the rear of the Nave near the ambry and prayer candle station. After you have made your communion, proceed to this station. You will find either an ordained minister (priest or deacon), or a lay minister; we are each and every one of us commanded and empowered to the healing ministry through the waters of baptism in Jesus Christ!

(Please remember, if you are unvaccinated, Bishop Sumner requires that you continue to wear a mask and social distance while gathered in indoor spaces. I continue to urge you to use your best judgment as you participate in our services!)

The real gift that we present, and re-present in the prayers of healing and laying on of hands, is the gift of the ever-present, always-healing touch of Jesus Christ that each and every one of us can and does bring to life. We have all been given that gift, not to hold on to, but to share, liberally, and faithfully!

Yours in the healing power of Christ,
Fr. Christopher+

Did you know...



that the Plate Income from the 2nd Sunday of every month goes to the Rector's Ministry Fund? This fund allows Fr. Christopher to spread the message of St. Thomas beyond the church campus, reaching into the community to help persons and organizations who are in need.

An Opportunity to Service Your Church



As we return to our Sanctuary, and resume a more familiar worship service, an opportunity exists to take a more active role in our services. I am the Interim Acolyte Guild Head. The Acolyte Guild provides the Crucifer, and 2 Torches to each of our in person services, and for special services, when needed. It is an all volunteer group. At this point, each Acolyte will ideally serve no more than 2 Sundays each month. If you have a desire to become an Acolyte, or would like to know more about serving as an Acolyte, please feel free to contact me at davidaheess@sbcglobal.net.

Ministry/Outreach Opportunity

The Rev. Virginia Holleman
(vfholleman@icloud.com; 214-450-9652)

We will be taking the school supplies to Dallas Champions Academy on July 15 so ***please bring your donations by this Sunday, July 11.*** And thank you so much for helping these kids have a good school year!

Dallas Champions Academy has the school supplies they need for their initial project; several DOK chapters donated to their effort, supplies have been ordered and are coming in. DOK members are meeting at St. Luke's Episcopal Church on Royal Lane to assemble backpacks for the students – next Tuesday and Wednesday (June 29 & 30) at 10:00 am. Then on Saturday, July 3, the backpacks will be handed out at St. Matthew's Cathedral from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. I have signed up to help with the project at the Cathedral. If you are interested in helping with either project, please text Linda Cox at 512-750-7983 and let her know you can help. They will greatly appreciate our help!!

School Supplies they will need for additional backpacks; these can be left on one of the round tables in the parish hall and I will get them delivered.

- Pre-sharpened #2 pencils
- Black Bic stick pens
- Small glue sticks, preferably Elmer's
- Notebook paper, 100 sheets per pkg, WIDE-RULED
- Small plastic pencil sharpeners
- Index cards – pkgs of 100 3 x5
- Pen-style fluorescent highlighters
- Crayola brand 12 ct. colored pencils
- Composition books
- Crayola brand crayons, 24 ct.

Many many thanks for your generosity and caring – Mtr. Virginia



EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE



Join Trinity Retreat Center online this summer to pray, reflect, make space for grace, and listen to the voice of God.

These online retreats are free and open to all. There is no registration required.

Each retreat takes place over five half-hour sessions throughout the weekend on the <https://www.facebook.com/trinityretreatcenter> page at these times EDT:

July 9 - 11

Friday: 8pm | Saturday: 10am, 2pm, 8pm | Sunday: 4pm

- ***Refuge and Resilience: An LGBTQ+ Retreat*** with the Rev. Matt Welsch, Trinity Church Wall Street
- ***Table in the Wilderness: Discovering God in Unexpected Places*** with the Rev. Marcus George Halley, Episcopal Church of Connecticut
- ***REAL Retreat: Cultivating Respectful Relationships, Excellence, Authenticity, and Love*** with Dr. Sandra Montes, Union Theological Seminary

A new way to see church!



We are now live-streaming our 10:30 AM service on Facebook Live. You do **NOT** need a Facebook account to watch the service. Simply click on the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheDoubter/live/>

You will then have 3 options, log in to your Facebook account, create an account, or click on the livestream that you want to watch. If you do not have a FB account, simply click on the livestream that you want to watch, and it will open.

We will go live approximately 5 minutes prior to the start of the service. We hope that you will worship with us in person. However, we are offering this as we continue to move forward in a post COVID-19 world.



Celebrating 136 years of Prayer, Service and Evangelism

All women members of the church can look into this LIFETIME COMMITMENT to this important service to the Parish and our Rector by going to the website - <http://www.doknational.org> - prayerfully consider joining. They may call and leave word on Nan Alexander's voicemail and I will be happy to be of help to anyone interested. This is not a guild but a commitment.

St. Thomas the Apostle in Person Service

DATE: Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

NOTE: The ZOOM service remains at 9:00 a.m.

IN-PERSON LOCATION: The Nave

During the months that the property was closed down due to COVID-19, the HVAC system throughout the entire property has been outfitted with advanced equipment for our safety. St. Thomas has installed air scrubbers on all of its HVAC units.

These air scrubber systems are many times more powerful than normal HVAC filtration systems at eliminating airborne pathogens. HVAC systems can capture dirt and dust from the air through their regular air filter inserts. Meanwhile, the scrubbers using UV light can get rid of much more minute living organisms such as bacteria and viruses, which further improves the air quality.

Parking is available in both the South and North Lots.

Unvaccinated people are expected to wear a mask.

Temperatures will be taken prior to entering the Nave. Individuals with temperatures of 100 degrees or higher will not be allowed to enter.

In case of the unanticipated need for contact tracing, attendees will need to sign a register in the Narthex before going into the Nave.

The entire service will be in a printed bulletin.

Music accompaniment will be provided by the organ.

There will be congregational singing.

During the exchange of the Peace, please be sensitive to those around you during this time. If you sense that someone might not be comfortable with hugging or even touching, respect that person's space.

Parish Schedule

Week of July 11th

11 Sunday	The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
9:00 am	Rite Two Eucharist/Zoom
10:30 am	Rite Two Eucharist/Nave
11:30 am	Coffee and Social time/ PH
12 Monday	Office closed
13 Tuesday	
6:00 pm	Mission/Outreach Group
14 Wednesday	
7:00 pm	CoDA/NR
15 Thursday	
16 Friday	
17 Saturday	
8:00 am	Step Up/SR
9:00 am	Audit Committee/CR
	Serving Altar Guild Members D. Calhoun & M. Followill
Key Code:	SR - South Room; NR - North Room; CG - Community Garden; PH - Parish Hall; CR - Office Conference Room; K - Kitchen; N - Nave; IG - Interior Garden



Consecrated Hosts are available at the church office for those participating virtually in Sunday services. Please email or call the office (pam@thedoubter.org or 214-352-0410, ext. 104)

PRAYER LIST

Do you know someone who is in need of our prayers? Please email pam@thedoubter.org to add them to our Prayer List. Names will be kept on for the current month unless notified otherwise and those names are in *italics*.

Healing in the Lives of: Ben Gloria Ann Patricia Melba
Ginger Annie Sandy JR Merjen Jack Harold
Kelly David Rusty Tim George John Rodney Ronny
Linda Wynne

God's Grace for: Children of Belize Gary Don Tammy James

Guidance: Gwen

In Prison: Allen Orlando Steven Aaron Brandon Hank
GR Stephanie Frank

Serving in the Armed Forces: Alex Aaron Connor Joyce
Collin Tyler Jesse

Seeking Employment: Bryan Maurice Brook Robin Vicki
Trey Gabby Gabriel Gail Oliver

Rest of the Soul: Mildred Joyce George

In the Diocese: **Standing Committee:** The Rev. Victoria Heard, The Rev. Robert (Bob) Corley, The Rev. Samira Izadi-Page, Mr. Tim Mack, Mr. Tom Graves, Mrs. Stevi McCoy

Liturgical Assignments & Lectionary

Sunday, July 11, 2021

Counters: Michael Legacy & Lisa Pearson

LEMs: Sub-Dcn: N/A 2nd LEM: N/A Ext: Ben Day

Lectors: 9:00 am Zoom Service

1st & Psalm: R. Woodward 2nd: R. Woodward

POP: R. Woodward

10:30 In-Person Service

1st & Psalm: J. Brown 2nd: J. Knight

POP: LEM

Ushers: Kathy Carson & Ben Day

Acolytes: Crucifer: M. Legacy; Torches: N/A

Sound: Fred Ellis

First Reading

2 Samuel 6: 1 - 5, 12b - 19

Psalm

24

Second Reading

Ephesians 1: 3 - 14

Gospel

Mark 6: 14 - 29

Click on or paste the following link to see the daily Lectionary selections:
www.lectionarypage.net

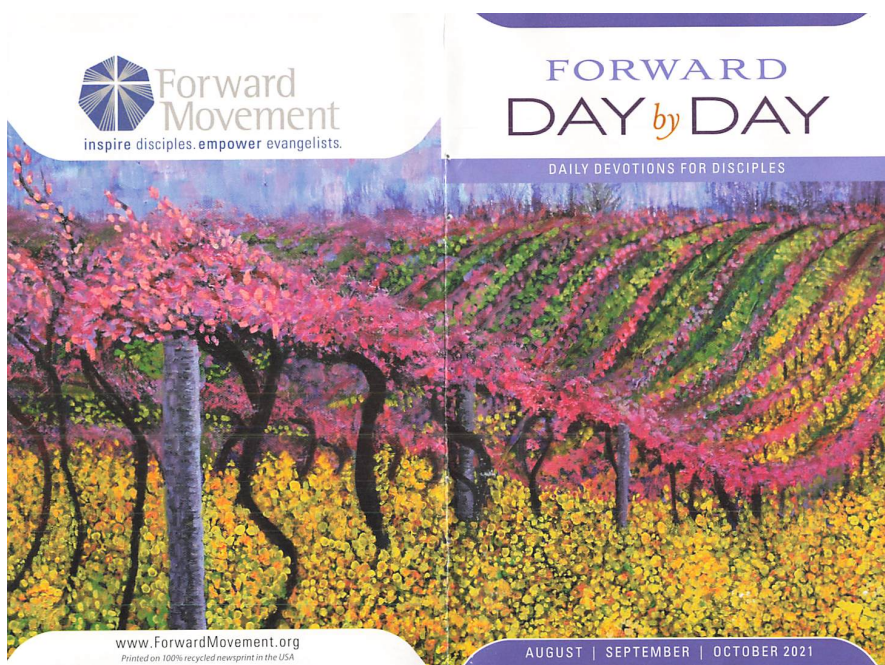
We now have a weekly service in the parish hall on Sundays at 10:30 followed by a social gathering in the garden area. We need folks to step up and take on some responsibility for making it happen. If you can help with:

- Coming a little early and help with setting up the service;
- Providing a snack; or
- Staying a little longer and helping put items away

please let Pam know at pam@thedoubter.org Together we can put social in the Social Time.



As we gather again in person for worship, if you would like to sponsor the **Altar Flowers**, **Mary Candle** or **Sacrament Lamp**, please contact pam@thedoubter.org.



Forward Day by Day
for Aug/Sept/Oct
is now available in the
Narthex, the church office
and on the newsstand
outside the South room.

Sermon for the Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Christopher Thomas

Sermon for the Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 9, Year B – 7/4/21

2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10

Psalm 48

2 Corinthians 12:2-10

Mark 6:1-13

Living in the Tension

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

- *Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence, 1776*

A bold, glorious, shining, luminous declaration!

Radical, if you stop to think about it. Seriously!

What did the world look like, what was the world view, for those few, who came, and cleared, and claimed, that glorious stake in the dirt, not theirs, not ours, but God’s glorious Creation?

“Oh beautiful, for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain;
For purple mountain majesties, above the fruited plains
America, America! God shed God’s grace on thee!
And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea!”

When God and man come together in co-creative force, its good stuff, right? No kings and queens, no monarchs, no fiefdoms or serfdoms for Americans. The glorious song ringing out in our hearts is FREEDOM! How could God NOT be behind this endeavor? God knows our hearts, after all. God knows the situations we have come from. God knows the situations we are in. God knows the situations God is calling us into, for God is, after all, past, present, and future, everything rolled into one.

I can scarcely imagine the instant Jefferson birthed the words, the struggles, deep within his own mind, his own heart, his own soul, surely must have, had to have, begun. For these truths were to him, after all, self-evident. God the Creator deigned it so. Do I turn to my own back yard? Do I overlook the misery toiling away in the dirt, the grueling grind that will make all of this grand gloriousness that I have dreamed come to life? Are these people part of self-evidence? They should thank me!

Well, that won’t work, so, they must be 3/5ths people (like being “almost pregnant”), or maybe they are savages, or maybe they are women, or maybe they are gay, or maybe they are UFO’s, who knows. But they are not me. And I need them, to fulfill this great purpose, God’s purpose. To build this thing, this imagination of mine, this grand, glorious expedition we are on called FREEDOM!

God knows my motives. God knows my heart. Surely God’s grace is with me, on me, on this expedition.

I don’t claim to know all things of God, only sprinklings of misty footsteps here, there, yonder, and even I surmise through the Great Good News that FREEDOM must be a top agenda-getting item for

Sermon for the Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

the loving, liberating, life-giving God. And for this on-going project of FREEDOM, on this day, and every day, I give thanks.

I find myself wondering how Jefferson wrestled with the tension in which he found himself...

Proclaiming goodness, meanwhile perpetrating, codifying systems of radical social injustice?

Do the words, does the aspiration, did the goals simply fall to the ground in ash heaps of hypocritical failure in the midst of years (and years and years) of obvious tension? Where are those amber waves of grain and purple mountain majesties that so many have fought and died so that every single one of us might have the gift, the responsibility of FREEDOM?

Please don't ask me to give up my Jefferson, my hopes and dreams for my better life, the better life that Jefferson dared to dream for me in those self-evident truths, the dreams that took hold, and caught flight, and were worth blood, and sweat, and tears, and Iwo Jima, and Stonewall, and 9/11, and apple pie, and Bob Hope, and "God Bless America." How do I, how do we, how do all of us, hold these things, good and evil, in tension?

Of this we need to know, because I promise you, Jefferson runs through every single one of us. We must know how to honor this tension, because, truth be told, every single one of us carries the seed of humanity along with the seed of divinity within our own human hearts. This is why it is so very easy for the oppressed to become the oppressor, the bullied to become the bullies.

Maybe this was the thorn of evil to which Paul refers that kept him from being too elated. "Three times I appealed to the Lord that it would leave me, but God said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.'"

Freedom in weakness?

Well, that simply can't be right. They are just going to run over me. That's the end of the great experiment. Humanity loses.

So I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses (my humanity, my imperfections), so that Christ's light may dwell within me, so that you will know that whatever good you see is Christ shining through. So you can sling all the insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities you want to fling at me, but for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, that is when I am strong. I have assumed the mantle of FREEDOM!" FREEDOM from your expectations.

People of color, and indigenous folk, and women, and LGBTQIA+ communities have known this all along.

Those people who are not us, those who do not look or act or smell like us, those who do not reside within these walls, are FREE from our expectations; they don't care how we've always done it; they already know right where the amber waves of grain and the purple mountain majesties are located. They are waiting to show us these things. They are waiting to show us Jesus. They are waiting to reveal to us the Jesus that resides within us.

Today's Gospel holds some hard words for Christians to hear, because they invite us into the negative spaces of self-examination, the places that Jesus once occupied, but no longer does. The

Sermon for the Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

message of FREEDOM can be snuffed out so easily in the face of nostalgia, “the way we’ve always done it,” and “who are you,” and are so often met with dust-shaking, and leaving.

If there are people, others who are not here anymore, why are they not? Can we, in humility, ask these hard questions? Can we ask them of ourselves?

This congregation has asked hard questions before. This congregation has been confronted with serious culture shifts that required close contemplation and decision-making and risk-taking. I’d venture integration or HIV/AIDS ministry were paradigm-overturning decisions.

This congregation has been amazingly, resoundingly resilient over the course of the last 16 months. Who would have dreamed that we could go to virtual church, and actually hang together? Who would have believed that we would grow in the midst of that? Who would have imagined?

And yet, when we were FREE, truly FREE, the FREEDOM that the founders of this parish probably envisioned for us, FREE from all of the expectations, we actually soared! Look what we can do when we are FREE!

Memories are an odd, curious thing. You take a few facts and stir them in with nostalgia to get memories. There is something programmed deep in our DNA that always longs to drag us back to Egypt. We are the people of Israel, after all. “Oh, if only it could be like it was when...” This is our weakness to confess. We simply must confess it, so that it will not hold power and sway over us. Because there is only slavery and death in Egypt.

FREEDOM is forward, carrying the light of Jesus Christ into the scary, frightening, joyful, joy-filled darkness of night.

All those others are waiting out there to meet us and to show us FREEDOM!

Let it ring!

Amen.

July Birthdays



4th Hank Cofield



23rd Kathryn Tucker



24th Annie Jones



30th Keith Carney

Parish Office hours are 8:00 AM until 2:00 PM

Tuesdays through Fridays

214-352-0410

Emergency contact: Rev 'd 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. Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop

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

The Right Rev. George R. Sumner, Bishop of Dallas

The Right Rev. Michael Smith, Assistant Bishop of Dallas

The Rev. Christopher Blake Thomas, Rector

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The Rev. Stephen J. Waller, Rector Emeritus

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Dr. Stephen V. Sprinkle, Theologian-in-Residence

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Mr. Allen M. Junek, Seminarian-in-Residence

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Mr Lee Corbin, Organist-Choirmaster

music@thedoubter.org

Mr. David Aston, Assistant Organist

Ms. Pam Liles, Parish Administrator

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Ms. Paula McCormack, Controller

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The Episcopal Church of St Thomas the Apostle

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The 2021 Vestry

Joe DeuPree

Senior Warden

Kathy Carson

Lisa Pearson

Rusty Rippamonti

Chancellor

David Hess

Ruth Woodward

Randy Hering

Randy Hering

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Michael Legacy

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Paul McCright

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