

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF
ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE



July 25th, 2021

**The Ninth 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 23, 2021

The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. Amen
- BCP, p. 365

My Dear Doubters of Great Faith,

I have to admit, even on my best days of effort, fasting is not one of my favorite discipline actions, the ones that I lean to and reach for when I need to feel a stronger, closer, more intimate connection to my God. I've never quite been able to make the leap from the empty pangs of hunger to the loving, liberating, life-giving God. (I'm usually just cranky!) And so, I am always relieved to make it through the two days of fasting obligation, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday!

However, our Theologian-in-Residence, Dr. Stephen Sprinkle used a phrase that has me wondering about the fast in a different way. He talks about "presence in absence," God's great ability to be in all things, including the negative spaces, the "with-us," even when we are without. God inhabits the holiness of both the positive and the negative spaces, the Cross as well as the Empty Tomb. Even in the raw and bitter emptiness of the tomb, the Marys discover Holy Spirit life, the breath of God, "present in absence." God really does infuse all things for eschatological (in the end) good!

We started the COVID-19 journey in the darkness of fast, fast from the breath of each other, and fast from our most sacred, sacramental act of the "re-remembering" of Jesus Christ, the Eucharistic Feast. After four long months of fast, we were able to return to communion in one kind, the bread, partaking of the full benefit of Jesus Christ's presence in bread alone, the "doctrine of concomitance," with the knowledge that Christ's presence inhabits all aspects of either kind (bread or wine) of the Eucharistic Feast.

As of July, Bishop Sumner has given permission to rectors to decide when we will reinstate the chalice as part of the sacramental act of Eucharist, and I have decided that we will begin our use of wine on Sunday, August 1. There will be several noticeable changes to our communion practice which you will want to note prior to August 1. First, we will no longer offer intinction in any form, either by the Eucharistic Ministers or the person receiving communion. After you receive your host, if you do not wish to receive from the common cup, we will have a tray of individual communion cups with consecrated wine for you to pick up, consume, and replace in the cup tray. For everyone's peace of mind, no one will be putting their hands or fingers into the chalice any longer.

Please remember that if neither of these options is comfortable for you, receiving communion in one kind (the doctrine of concomitance) continues to be a perfectly valid option to receive communion. As I stated when we moved from worship in the Parish Hall back into the Nave, I believe that we are into the phase of this pandemic when it is each person's individual and personal responsibility to gauge how much and what kind of risk they are willing to accept in participating in our ongoing communal life of worship.

There may come a point where I need to reassert control over certain aspects and measures such as mask-wearing and social-distancing, but at this point, these decisions rest with each individual and your own comfort level. (Mask-wearing continues to remain mandatory for those who are unvaccinated.)

You should assess and make your decisions based on your situation and circumstance, knowing that our God is present in all things, through all things, and beyond all things.

Thanks be to God!
Fr. Christopher+

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.

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 25th

25 Sunday	The Ninth 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
26 Monday	James the Apostle Office closed
27 Tuesday	
28 Wednesday	
7:00 pm	CoDA/NR
29 Thursday	
30 Friday	
31 Saturday	
8:00 am	Step Up/SR
	Serving Altar Guild Members Available Members
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: **The Diocesan Staff:** The Rt. Rev. George R. Sumner, The Rt. Rev. Michael G. Smith, The Very Rev. Robert Price, The Rev. Cn. Jordan Hylden, The Rev. Cn. Dr. Victor Austin, The Rev. Cn. David Petrash, The Rev. Cn., Jerry Morriss, The Rev. Cn. Canon Carrie Headington, Mrs. Ticoy Youngs, Ms. Virginia Wilder, Mrs. Amy Wooten, MS. Kimberly Durnan, Ms. Susan Mills, Mrs. Kim LaNore, Mrs. Laura Faulkner

Liturgical Assignments & Lectionary

Sunday, July 25, 2021

Counters: A. Besterman & K. Carson

LEMs: Sub-Dcn: N/A 2nd LEM: N/A Ext: Dan Calhoun

Lectors: 9:00 am Zoom Service

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

POP: Allen Junek

10:30 In-Person Service

1st & Psalm: R. Hering 2nd: J. DuePree

POP: Allen Junek

Ushers: John Lambert, Joe DeuPree, Tim Chaney

Acolytes: Crucifer: S. Toon; Torches: M. Legacy & A. Galue

Sound: Fred Ellis

First Reading

2 Samuel 11: 1 - 15

Psalm

14

Second Reading

Ephesians 3: 14 - 21

Gospel

John 6: 1 - 21

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

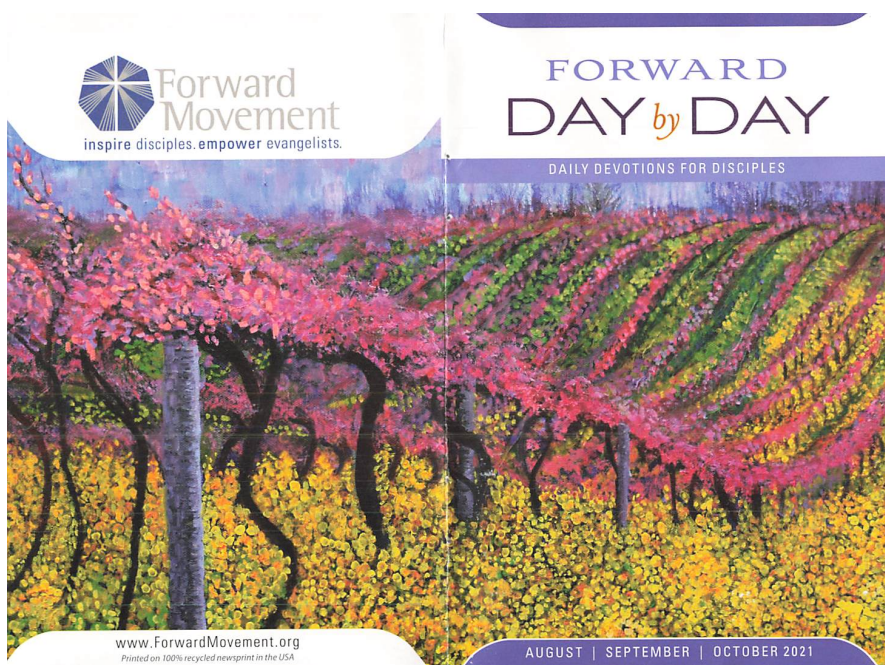
We now have a weekly service in the Nave on Sundays at 10:30 followed by a social gathering in the Parish Hall. We need folks to step up and take on some responsibility for making it happen. If you can help with:

- 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 Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Christopher Thomas

Sermon for the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 11, Year B – 7/18/21

2 Samuel 7:1-14a

Psalm 89:20-37

Ephesians 2:11-22

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

“What’s the buzz, tell me what’s a-happening?

What’s the buzz, tell me what’s a-happening?

What’s the buzz, tell me what’s a-happening?

What’s the buzz, tell me what’s a-happening?

What’s the buzz, tell me what’s a-happening?

What’s the buzz, tell me what’s a-happening?”

What’s the buzz? What’s the buzz? Tell me what’s happening!

What’s the buzz about this thing, this Jesus thing, this movement, that’s out there, that’s afoot, that’s alight, that’s aloft? There’s something out there, in this. Can’t you feel it? Don’t you want to know? I want to know, what is it, that’s got the whole world buzzing?

But this is not the first time that I’ve wanted to know, what it is, “What’s the buzz?”

I’ve stood on a corner before, not unlike the one I’m at today. They liked to call it “The Crossroads of the World,” and at 5th and 55th, in midtown Manhattan, to my sensibilities, it seemed like it very well could be, the crossroads of the world, for all of humanity poured by those doors, each and every day they did. I stood there in the shadows of a “high steeple” edifice, one that would have made King David proud! And I asked the world going by, “What’s the buzz, tell me what’s a-happening?”

The reason I stood out there, on that corner, so many Sundays, so long ago, interrupting those comings and goings, those who had no leisure even to eat, was because I wanted to know, what did the world think of us? It’s easy, therefore we spend copious amounts of time considering what we think of the world, but what does the world think of us?

For, in spite of all of our inspiring programming and majestic works (and trust me, there were many of both), for the most part, they, the world, didn’t know we were even there. They might look up in awe at an historic structure and marvel at its beauty, and then rush on about their business.

“Gosh, I thought that was a museum!”

Seriously!

And so I found myself looking at just what we were offering the world, through the lens of the world.

The parallel universe of these two questions, “What do I think of the world,” and “What does the world think of me,” is a fascinating place to do some wondering, because we ought to know if these two ever intersecting? Or are we spending all our time and energy thinking we’re meeting the needs of the world, and they have no idea we’re even here. “I drove right by your crossroads and never even saw that you were there!” “Gosh, I thought that was a museum!” “Is that a church?”

Sermon for the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

What's the buzz? What's the buzz? Tell me what's a-happening?

"Oh, come away to a deserted place, a wilderness place, all by yourselves and take rest for a while!"

So many were coming and going that they could not even stop to sustain themselves. They saw them take leave, to the wilderness, and rushed ahead to meet them, the great crowd. You won't, you can't get away from us! We know!

What's the buzz, tell me what's a-happening!

They crowd around, running to and fro, dragging sick in on mats, hoping against hope, to catch a glimpse, to touch a hem, to hear a word, to scrape up any morsel, to seize the crackle of electricity that sizzles off this Jesus movement! Why? Did anybody bother to ask them?

Did the apostles know, what was the buzz? They were so busy doing. Doing. Doing. It's who we church folk are, after all, doers of the Word (capital W), the hands and feet of Jesus! Stop and ask. How is this so? How do we get fed, in the midst of all this teaching, and preaching, and begging, and touching, and healing? Where is the scrap, the morsel, the world for us?

The word that they circled around and around and around, in the wilderness, and in Gennesaret, and, quite frankly, everywhere they went, the word that multiplied fish, and gave life and light to the broken world, the word that was at the center of it all, the buzz was and is, "compassion."

For when they had compassion, when they "did" compassion, the world thronged, in ways they could not even begin to ask or imagine! They had more ministry than they could handle!

What is compassion, after all? If you think that it is doling potatoes on a soup line to the homeless, you are wrong. If you think that it is collecting school supplies, or money to send to South Dallas, you are wrong. If you think that compassion is collecting canned goods or writing a check to North Dallas Shared Ministries, you are wrong. These can be signs and symbols of compassion, but they alone are NOT compassion. They simply are not.

Compassion is co-suffering. The German word for compassion, mitleid, is literally "with-suffering." Be with suffering. Stand with suffering. Presence in suffering. This is compassion.

"As he, Jesus, went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had COMPASSION for them ("he compassioned" them, he co-suffered with them), because they were like sheep without a shepherd..."

What does all of this say about our God, who is so wholly and so authentically involved in the passion of God's people, so much so that God bears God's self in human form, and yet still divine, to suffer with us? Divine compassion. God incarnate, humanity divine. Does God, can God, should God, will God expect anything less of us? We are, after all, created in the co-suffering image of God, imago dei.

What's the buzz, tell me what's a-happening is compassion.

Compassion is not the rest of the story, Paul Harvey. Compassion is the story!

Sermon for the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

When we are “compassioning” God to the world, standing with those in suffering, they will know we are Christians. How? By our love!

This should not be news to the Episcopal Church of St. Thomas the Apostle. I did not know you during the 1980’s and 1990’s, but the world certainly did. They had all kinds of wonderful names for you. The Gay Church. The AIDS Church. Fags Go Here. Who knows what all they called you. What’s the buzz? There was definitely a buzz about St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Dallas, Texas!

You must have been doing something right! Every single one of those names told the world something about who you were. Everybody knew that you were a people of compassion, a people and a church that knew how to “compassion,” how to co-suffer, how to go stand on the margins and stand in the gap for those that the world wanted to cast off and to cast out and to disappear, all those people who were clamoring to get to Jesus that day in Gennesaret. They got to Jesus through you! They got to Jesus through compassion.

What is the world saying about us in 2021? What is the world saying about the Episcopal Church of St. Thomas the Apostle? Are they clamoring to get in here, because they have heard of the great and mighty programming, or education, or preaching, or teaching that goes on here? Have they heard about compassion in our story line lately? Have we been co-suffering of late?

Do they know that we are Christians by our compassion, or are we hoping against hope that among all the bushes and trees that hide these buildings, that someone might spot a sign and wander in and experience the warmth and love that is St. Thomas?

What do we think of the world?

What does the world think of us?

We have to go “compassion” to the world! Then they will know who we are! And they will be beating down the door!

What’s the buzz, tell me what’s a-happening!

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

christopher@thedoubter.org

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

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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

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Randy Hering

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Michael Legacy

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