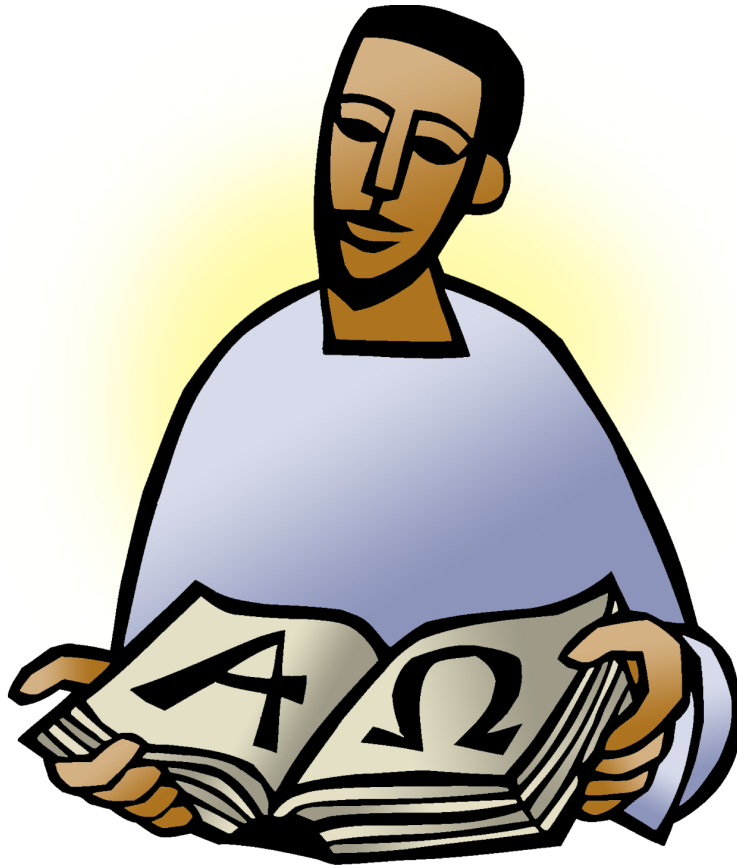


THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF
ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE



August 22, 2021

**The Thirteenth 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*

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The Rev. Christopher Blake Thomas

August 19, 2021

My Dear Doubters of Great Faith,

This has been a week that finds the news wires simply chocked-full of humanitarian crises, with the devastating earthquake in the country of Haiti, and the collapse and fall of the Afghanistan government. The scenes from

both of these unfolding situations have been jolting and heart-wrenching, drawing us back from our own day-to-day life struggles to engage with lives that are lived, even in their normality, so completely differently from the ones we experience in Dallas, Texas.

I'm not sure what classifies something to rise to the level of the label "humanitarian crisis" – is it number of lives lost, severity, horror? I do know that by the very nature of labeling something "humanitarian," that whatever has happened is being connected to me, to us, in ways that we may not be able to see, to feel, to touch, or to taste, and yet we still most definitely are affected.

Case in point – the entirety of the human race, every one of us, is currently engaged in a "humanitarian crisis" with a virus. What happens to any single one affects every single one of us. It should now be abundantly clear that there are no successful isolationist viewpoints. Virus simply won't be isolated. We rise or fall in this battle together!

It is absolutely no different with an earthquake, or a tsunami, or the welfare of women and children, people who are now under totalitarian, abusive rule. However distant these people may be, their humanity is tied more closely to ours than you may even realize or imagine. How we respond to the world around us speaks directly to the condition of our own humanitarian crisis, the crisis of our individual souls.

If you're like me, you may be wondering, "Which way do I turn, when there is so much suffering, pain, and sorrow? There is plenty of need right here in Dallas, Texas." That is true. The answer to the question, "Which way do I turn," is the answer that God always calls us to. It's the great call of our Christian faith, and of all the Abrahamic traditions. Turn away from self, and turn to the divine that we know resides in each of our fellow human beings. And then DO SOMETHING!

We Doubters are a people of resource, in time and treasure. First, we can pray! And then, invest the resource you have been given in easing the suffering of those who are far off, and those who are near. For those who are far off, the quickest surest way you can assist in a crisis is through The Episcopal Church's Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD). You may donate through a check in the offering plate designated "ERD," or on-line. No amount is insignificant.

Gateway of Grace (gatewayofgrace.org), founded by the Rev. Samira Izadi Page, Episcopal priest of the Diocese of Dallas, specifically works to welcome refugees from over sixteen different countries and six religious backgrounds. As the situation unfolds in Afghanistan, they are strategizing how they will stand in the gap to provide holistic care to the refugees who will no doubt show up in Dallas from Afghanistan. Gateway of Grace is holding a Zoom prayer service Friday, August 20, at 6:30 pm. (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83018531908>) There are links to donate to this worthy ministry from their webpage.

This Sunday, we will welcome Carrie Headington, Canon Evangelist for the Diocese, and also founder of the Dallas Champions Academy, as our guest preacher. In her role, she is uniquely situated to help direct our response to humanitarian crises that are taking place both at home and

abroad. I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to be with us in worship, either on Zoom or in person. You won't want to miss this!

With all that is going on, it can seem overwhelming, to the point of paralysis. But we cannot allow our souls to ignore the humanity all around us. Because the humanity we will be ignoring will be our very own. God is calling us to turn. And we can do it. Our souls depend on it!

Yours in the faith,
Fr. Christopher+



Dear Doubters of Great Faith,

We need additional people to assist with the Audio Visual equipment and livestreaming of the 10:30 service. This involves being at the church by 10 AM on the Sunday scheduled, getting the system turned on, distribution of microphones, and getting the livestream ready to go. Once we go live, you need to be at the monitor in the back of the church throughout the service in the event that there would be an issue. If this is something that you think you might be interested in, please contact Fred Ellis for more details. Fred may be reached at 214-704-3923 or fellis@sbcglobal.net.

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.

Mission/Outreach

Fellow Doubters,

The Outreach Committee is excited to announce a new partnership with Cathedral of Hope in supporting their three programs that help to serve the food insecure and homeless population of Dallas. Our goal in partnering with other organizations is to support existing, robust programs that assist those in need in our community. In partnering with Cathedral of Hope, we hope to provide volunteer opportunities to our members as well as encourage interaction between St. Thomas and likeminded local organizations.

In addition to the three volunteer activities, we Doubters can also support the programs by donating items for the food pantry at CoH. The items to be collected would be canned or nonperishable food items (single serve packaging and protein foods are preferred) and travel sized toiletry items. Both food and toiletry items are distributed to visitors on a regular basis along with hot meals. We will collect the items at the services in the Narthex. We will have a basket or similar container to leave any donations you may have.

If you are interested in the new volunteer opportunities with Cathedral of Hope, please see the descriptions of the three food programs. To sign up or receive additional information, please contact Anita Haddy at the following link <https://cathedralofhope.com/anita-haddy> or call (214) 351-1901.

Breakfast at Cathedral of Hope (BACH) operates on Saturday mornings from 8:00 a.m. to 9 a.m., providing a hot, to-go breakfast for those living with food insecurity. Volunteers arrive at 7 a.m. to set up and they leave after everything is cleaned up. The number of volunteers is limited to those who have been scheduled to serve on a specific date since we are still operating on a to-go, take away basis. All those who participate in this ministry must have a current food handler's certificate on file, and Bill Martin can assist you in obtaining it. During this time of COVID 19, we are observing protocols of wearing face masks and social distancing.

iCare Lunch operates on Monday mornings from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., providing lunch to-go for those living with food insecurity. Volunteers arrive at 9:30 a.m. to set up and they leave after everything is cleaned up. The number of volunteers is limited to those who have been scheduled to serve on a specific date since we are still operating on a to-go, take away basis. All those who participate in this ministry must have a current food handler's certificate on file, and Bill Martin can assist you in obtaining it. During this time of COVID 19, we are observing protocols of wearing face masks and social distancing.

Taste of Hope – Volunteers gather to cook, package, and deliver hot meals to deliver to those experiencing food insecurity in Dallas. Prior to serving, participants in this program must obtain a food handler's certificate. During this time of COVID 19, we are observing protocols of wearing face masks and social distancing.

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.

Masks are required for all in-person services.

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 August 22nd

22 Sunday	The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
9:00 am	Rite Two Eucharist/Zoom
10:30 am	Rite Two Eucharist/Nave
11:30 am	Coffee and Social time/ IG
23 Monday	Office closed
24 Tuesday	St. Bartholomew the Apostle
25 Wednesday	
7:00 pm	CoDA/NR
26 Thursday	
27 Friday	
28 Saturday	
8:00 am	Step Up/SR
	Serving Altar Guild Members T. Chaney & TBD
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)

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 Cody Boes Family JT Carlo Christoria
John S. Stephanie

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 Aarib

Rest of the Soul: Mildred Joyce George

In the Diocese: VA Medical Center - Chaplains
Chaplains in the Armed Forces

Liturgical Assignments & Lectionary

Sunday, August 22, 2021

Counters: J. DeuPree & R Woodward

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

Lectors: 9:00 am Zoom Service

1st & Psalm: M. Legacy 2nd: M. Legacy

POP: M. Legacy

10:30 In-Person Service

1st: F Ellis 2nd: J. DeuPree

POP: F. Ellis

Ushers & Greeters: A. Montague, Mark Woods, V. Holleman

Acolytes: Crucifer: J. Knight Torches: M. Legacy & J. Brown

Sound: Fred Ellis

First Reading

1 Kings 8:(1,6,10-11), 22-30,
41-43

Psalm

84

Second Reading

Ephesians 6:10-20

Gospel

John 6: 56-69

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

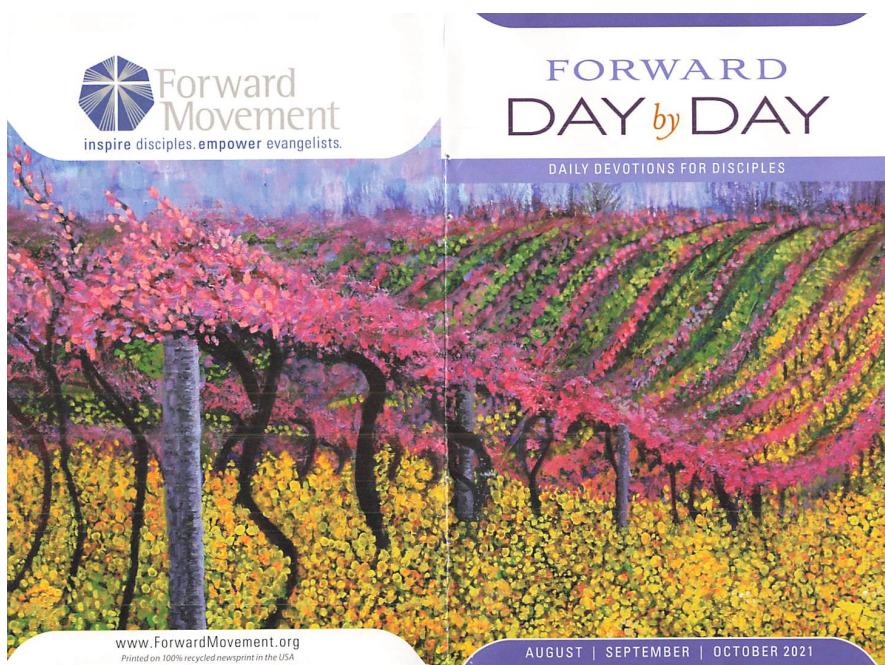
We now have a weekly service in the Nave on Sundays at 10:30 followed by a social gathering in the Parish Hall. We need folks to step up and take on some responsibility for making it happen. If you can help with:

- 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 Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Christopher Thomas

Sermon for the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 15, Year B – 8/15/21

1 Kings 2:10 – 12; 3:3-14

Psalm 111

Ephesians 5:15-20

John 6:51-58

“I AM the bread of life. “I AM the bread of life.” “I AM the bread of life.”

(If something’s repeated, it’s most likely important and may be worth some attention!)

As we enter the third week (with another to come) of this ongoing metaphor, I ask, Jesus, again and again, is there, Jesus, another metaphor that you might use, to make your point, with me? For if you know me, you know that I am not a “foodie,” and so images of food, implementations of great banquet feasts do not particularly motivate me. I am nonplussed. I have never been one who eats for sheer pleasure, or joy, or fun; no, eating, for me, has been simply the fulfillment of the need, the goal of survival, taking this breath into the next.

And so, imagine my (and maybe all our) great surprise to realize that the survival to which you call us today, the banquet feast of our souls, minds, bodies, flesh, and spirit, the totality of who we are, rests firmly and solely in dining on – you? What is it about this experience, this sacramental moment that at first blush sounds down right cannibalistic to outsiders, eating of your flesh that surges forth this fountain of new life, again, and again, and again? What am I missing here?

When you keep telling me to eat of you if I want to have new, unending, eternal life, what, for God’s sake, does that mean?

For I love God. I follow the ways of God. I do what is right, and good, and a joyful thing, most of the time. I come to church (when I don’t have something more pressing to do). I let folks cut in front of me at the grocery store. I usually say “Please,” and “Thank You.” I send my mother a card on Mother’s Day. I don’t rob, or steal, or kill. I like to think of myself as a good person.

Go along to get along, Christianity as a form of social lubrication.

Is that the hunger that you are calling me to satisfy, the thirst you beg me to quench, when you invite me, week in and week out, to this table, to eat of your flesh and drink of your blood? If it is, that doesn’t seem altogether very sacramental, in my estimation.

For what is sacrament, after all, but holy, divine intersections of time, space, and place, where humanity and divinity line up as witness again of the power, majesty, and great goodness of God at work not only in our world, but more importantly, beyond me. For it is in sacrament, the partaking of sacrament, that we see human time, past, present, and future, Chronos, collapse into God’s time, Kairos, yet again. Eternity become reality when we consume the divine.

And so, what that bread and that cup of wine stand for must be, have to be, so much more than elemental Earth. They are not cosmetic, but “cosmotic,” cosmos, in time and space and place, because they “re-present” the intersection of eternity! Oh, the hunger, oh the thirst that is quenched with that single realization. Taking a bite of Jesus!

Sermon for the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

If this sort of eating, the eating of Jesus, is sacramental by its very nature, then where, oh where, do I find sacramental hunger? Where do I find hunger that is so scandalous that it warrants the very flesh and blood of a savior, our Savior? For this kind of hunger is the only hunger worthy of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. If this meal goes no further than satiating my stomach, my hunger, then it is pure blasphemy, and should be spat out!

No, the body and blood of Christ, if you take it in, if you consume it, requires a much higher bounty, the higher price that has been paid, freely given, and yet becomes necessitated. The hunger it satisfies within you is more than any social lubrication, “going along to get along,” could possibly be! That is not the Christianity of our Lord Jesus Christ, just being nice, respectable people.

But sacraments, holy collisions of humanity and divinity in time, are like that. They fill us up and empty us out, at the same. That which feeds you makes you hungry, you want more, and then you get it, and then you hunger for even more. It’s the queerest of equations, and yet, if you have partaken, you know it to be true. And you know it to be exponential, ever-growing, ever-expanding, ever-encompassing.

An outward and visible sign, of an inward and spiritual grace. (St. Augustine) The miracle of Jesus Christ. Feeding. Healing. Changing. Loving. Sacrament.

There’s a reason why the two official sacraments of the Christian faith, Baptism and Holy Eucharist, anchor the physical space that we occupy. The Baptismal Font lies at the west end of the room, the entry point of our journey of faith, and the Altar in the east, the place we continually “re-member” Jesus Christ’s resurrection again and again. We’re constantly participating in, living out that kenotic process of emptying and filling, hungering and satiating, God’s eternal, co-creative procession of life.

This morning, we are going to “birth” another Christian into the family and household of God, one Emmett Sanchez-Brown. We are all going to “mid-wife” Emmett’s entry into the Christian faith, bearing witness to the fundamental cellular change in his DNA, his identity, that occurs when he too springs up through the waters of new life, is filled with the Holy Spirit, and hears those words, “This is my child; in him I AM well-pleased!”

This faith that he is coming into, the one that we already occupy, is an active faith. It is not “go along to get along.” It is not “just be nice people.” The faith that he is coming into is defined by the food of the five questions of the Baptismal Covenant. These are the things that, if your DNA has been truly and irrevocably changed, you hunger to do. You simply cannot help but do.

- Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
- Will you persevere in resisting evil, and whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
- Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
- Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
- Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

These questions form the hunger/satiation process, the food for the body of Christ that is the foundation of the Christian story. When you do these things, they will know you are a Christian, by your love. When you do these things, they will know that you have eaten of the flesh and drunk of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Sermon for the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

And your motivation will be that you want more, that you hunger for more, of all of these things.

You will know you are doing this Christian thing right when all you want is more of these five things, the things of Jesus Christ, I promise you!

You can hold yourself accountable for an active, alive, vibrant Christian faith. These five questions ARE the bread that Jesus Christ gives us to feed upon, in this day, in this hour, in this moment, to nourish us, so that we can abide in him, and him in each one of us. Whoever eats of this kind of bread and drinks of this kind of blood, this sacrament, will discover the wellspring of eternal life!

Are you doing these things? Do you want to do more of these things?

Amen.



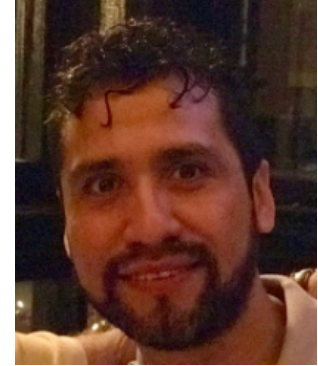
Happy August Birthday!



2nd Wynne Voorhees



3rd Bryan Long



10th Fernando Baldaras



11th Mike Gsell



12th Don Walther



15th Richard Elsea



22nd Andrew Besterman



28th Brent Glass



30th Nancy LeGros

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

doubttertom@thedoubter.org

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

pam@thedoubter.org

Ms. Paula McCormack, Controller

paula@thedoubter.org

The Episcopal Church of St Thomas the Apostle

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The 2021 Vestry

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Senior Warden

Kathy Carson

Lisa Pearson

Rusty Rippamonti

Chancellor

David Hess

Ruth Woodward

Randy Hering

Randy Hering

Treasurer

Michael Legacy

Junior Warden

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Murray Followill

Paul McCright

Clerk