

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF
ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE

Every 
 *Perfect*
Gift

October 3, 2021

**The Nineteenth 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
BIBER

Stewardship Moments



Growing up and going to church in Beaumont, Texas, I remember that my family would contribute to the plate being passed around on Sunday. Little did I know that you could actually contribute more than just money to our church. That's where Lisa comes in. Ever since we met, 13 years ago, I learned about Stewardship and what it meant to her and eventually to me as we attended church in Houston.

But wholly molly, I've never seen the amount of giving that you have given at St. Thomas. I ask myself, how can we give more? By not just providing money to the plate, but participating in the activities that help communities. Your giving spirit is infectious. After joining St. Thomas, we were moved right away to participate at the St. Thomas

exhibit at the Pride Festival. Charles Mullins had invited us and we eagerly said yes. We never thought we'd be standing outside on a hot June day at our Pride exhibit promoting our church. I sweat so much that I had to change my shirt. Then there is Joe Deupree's toy drive for children at Christmas. So many worthwhile events to give to!

This stewardship year, lets try and give a little more, both at the plate and to communities in need. Thank you!

Terri & Lisa



For those that do not know me, my name is Linda Van Buskirk and my husband, John, and I have been members of St. Thomas the Apostle for almost 25 years. We were introduced to St. Thomas by two former members, Scott Turner and Tracy Reeves and had gotten to know the congregation by attending several social events at the Church. After Father Waller married us in December of 1996, we made the decision to make St. Thomas our home Church.

Over the years I have witnessed the ways that St. Thomas supports the community at large. It supports the community in supplying school supplies and uniforms for children that would otherwise not have them, we have an Angel Tree every year at Christmas so a child can have a toy to open on Christmas morning. Sandwiches are made for the service at Thanksgiving Square, and we collect donations for Austin Street Shelter. St. Thomas also supports its members. The support of its members became very personal for

me this past summer when I was hospitalized and lost my left leg. I know that you have all seen the list of people to pray for in the bulletin that need healing in their lives. But do you really know what that means for those people? I can tell you firsthand. Every time you pray for me, I feel it and feel lifted up to God in those prayers. St. Thomas also showed it's "caring" to me in visits, cards and phone calls. When each of you signed those Get Well Cards for me and I received them it felt like it was a personal hug from each of you and my heart was lifted.

St. Thomas is my Church Home and the members my family. It's where I feel safe, protected and loved. Supporting St. Thomas in its ministry is important for all of us personally and in our community. It's the way we show we care and share the Love of Christ with each other and with those around us.

Annual Parish Meeting & Elections

The Rector announces that the Vestry has set the date for the Annual Parish Meeting for election of three (3) Vestrypersons, one (1) Diocesan delegate, and one (1) Endowment Fund Committee member will be held in person in the sanctuary of St. Thomas the Apostle at 11:45 AM following the 10:30 in-person Sunday service on Sunday October 31, 2021. Pursuant to Canons and Bylaws only confirmed members of at least 18 years of age who have contributed to financial support of the Parish in the last year and who are physically present at this meeting shall be eligible to Vote. (There will be no proxy voting and no online voting for attendees. In order to vote, members must attend the meeting at 11:45 AM in person.)

The following Vestry members will complete their terms effective December 31, 2021: David Hess, Andrew Besterman, and Murray Followill. We thank them for their service. To be eligible to serve on the Vestry, an individual must be at least 18 years of age, a confirmed member, have been a contributor of record to the support of the Parish for at least one (1) year before the date of the election, and have taken communion at least 3 times in the last year. If you wish to nominate a person for the Vestry, please confirm with that person first that they are interested in serving and meet the criteria. Additional information on the nominating process will be forthcoming.



A special animal blessing will be held on Sunday, October 3rd at 4:00 pm beneath the Oak tree in the Community Garden area.

There is information from Episcopal Relief & Development on the table in the Narthex for those who may be interested in making a contribution to help with their on-going work for disaster relief.



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.



Mr. Allen M. Junek

Dear Co-conspirators in the Gospel,

If you attended any of our worship offerings last week, then you heard Father Christopher mention an upcoming “Basics of the Faith” or “Episcopal 101” class. Mark your calendars! Our first class will be **Wednesday, September 29th at 6:00pm** and will continue weekly until November 3rd.

Classes will meet **in-person in the South Room** and **there will be a virtual option** as well. All are welcome!

While the Episcopal Church recognizes that all baptized with water in the Name of the Triune God are full members of Christ’s one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, we also recognize the need to make this faith our own. After this period of six weeks, participants may choose to be confirmed, received, or reaffirm their baptismal vows:

- ◆ **Confirmation:** the sacramental rite by which baptized Christians make a mature, public affirmation of faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their baptism (BCP 412).
- ◆ **Reception:** Baptized persons who have been confirmed in another church (Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, and others) may wish to be received into the Episcopal Church and the wider Anglican Communion.
- ◆ **Reaffirmation:** Those who have returned from a time of religious inactivity to an active practice of faith may publicly reaffirm the vows made at their baptism.

If you are unsure where you fall, please speak with either Fr. Christopher or myself; and of course, further discernment is always an option! Whether you’re new to the Anglican way of Christianity, or have been here for a while now, this is a great opportunity to either learn the ropes or explore your own faith. We will be exploring the Sacraments, the Church Year, The Book of Common Prayer, and more. If there is particular engagement around one aspect of our common life, we may use this to inform future offerings.

RSVPs are not required, but to help us get an idea of how many to expect, please email pam@thedoubter.org .

O God, you prepared your disciples for the coming of the Spirit through the teaching of your Son Jesus Christ: Make the hearts and minds of your servants ready to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit, that they may be filled with the strength of his presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 819)

Shield the joyous,
Allen

If you would like for your loved ones to be honored in the November 7th Doubter for All Saints' Day, please email the name(s) to pam@thedoubter.org by Noon on **Tuesday, November 2nd**. If you would like to make a memorial donation, please note on the memo line of your check "All Saints" and mail to St. Thomas, 6525 Inwood Rd., Dallas, TX 75209.



An Opportunity to Serve 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 Opportunities

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.



Baskets are located in the Narthex for collection of items such as canned and nonperishable food items - single serve packaging and protein foods are preferred - and travel sized toiletry items.



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) before coming to ensure there is someone here.

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.



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.

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 October 3rd

03 Sunday		The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
8:00 am	Rite One Eucharist/Nave	
9:00 am	Rite Two Eucharist/Zoom	
10:30 am	Rite Two Eucharist/Nave	
11:30 am	Coffee and Social time/ IG	
4:00 pm	Blessing of the Animals/CG	
04 Monday		Office Closed Frances of Assisi
05 Tuesday		
06 Wednesday		
Noon	Rite Two Eucharist/Nave	
7:00 pm	CoDA/ZOOM	
07 Thursday		
08 Friday		
09 Saturday		
8:00 am	Step Up/SR	
		Serving Altar Guild Members J. DuePree, J. Lambert, S. Toon, D. Aston
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	

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 Ginger
Annie Sandy Merjen Jack Harold Kelly
David Rusty Tim George John Rodney Ronny
Linda Wynne Cody Boes Family JT Carlo Christoria
John S. Stephanie Annette Edward Dane & family Gina
Malcolm Ronnie Darin Gary Don People of Houma Chase

In Thanksgiving For: This Parish

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

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

Holy Death: Sara

Rest of the Soul: J.R. Carolyn Gayle Sharon Melba

In the Diocese: Clergy Spouses & Families
Surviving Spouses of Clergy

Liturgical Assignments & Lectionary

Sunday, October 3, 2021

Counters: D. Hess & M. Followill

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

Lectors: 9:00 am Zoom Service

R. Woodward

10:30 In-Person Service

1st: F. Ellis 2nd: L. Pearson

POP: Congregation Volunteer

Ushers & Greeters: T. Chaney, C. Reed, F. Balderas

Acolytes: **Crucifer:** K. Carson **Torches:** J. Knight & J. Brown

Sound: Fred Ellis

First Reading

Job 1:1, 2:1-10

Psalm

26

Second Reading

Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12

Gospel

Mark 10:2-16

Sermon for the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Christopher Thomas

Sermon for 18th Sunday after Pentecost, Year B, Proper 21 – 9/26/21

Ester 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

Psalm 124

James 5:13-20

Mark 9:38-50

“Real power isn’t something anyone gives you.”

“Real power is something you TAKE!”

Pure prophesy? Pearls of wisdom in a world shaped and molded and formed by business, pure and simple greed, lust, survival of the fittest. Divide and conquer, power and control. Isolate the weak.

If you are old enough to have been a fan of the original TV drama “Dallas,” you may recognize the sentiment in Jock Ewing’s iconic words of advice to the “weakling” son Bobby in the face of the power-grabbing JR. Don’t expect anyone to hand you anything; if you want something, by God, you had better go take it!

I wonder if the producers of that show spent much time in 1970’s Dallas?

It seems as though they capture the spirit of “the Dallas Way,” as its known, pretty well.

“The Dallas Way” is the ongoing history of our city being run by the few (elite, white, men), under the strictest of business principles, cloaked in a thin veil of altruism. “A rising tide lifts all boats,” or so the theory goes. If it hasn’t lifted for you yet, just hold on. The tide is eventually coming. Or so I’ve heard.

The reality is the reality of the sickness of the world. The weak are isolated and marginalized (divide and conquer), resources siphoned off for the benefit of those who have power and are willing and able to grab for more. These things are quite often done in the name of “your own good.” That’s how we end up with these racial and socio-economic divides, north versus south, east versus west. You can see the actual physical manifestations as freeways literally and figuratively cut off neighbors and neighborhoods from each other, forming islands of isolation that benefit and privilege others.

But sin and sickness, separation, the breakdown of relationship are in no way exclusive or limited to the larger theater, to Dallas, or to Texas, or the United States, or to a pandemic, or even to my TV screen on a Friday night in 1979. I must confess it is just easier for me to see and to identify and to stomp up and down in righteous holy anger about the “log in someone else’s eye,” than it is to pull the one out of my own that is really the problem.

Because, truth be told, isolation and breakdown, the correlation between sin (separation from God) and sickness (isolation), starts right here, with the pronouns “melmylmine.” Only I can own my isolation. My estrangement from God is about my estrangement, my isolation from, my lack of relationship with you, and you, and you, and you. (And by extension of that, our collective isolation as a community from other groups and/or communities.)

Confession! It really is good for the soul! It bridges and brings together!

Sermon for the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

The author of James knows this.

“Therefore, confess your sins (separation) to one another (make yourselves vulnerable to one another); and pray for one another, so that you may be healed!”

These people James is writing to have, by all imagination, what can most likely be classified as an “unhappy” existence, Jewish Christians living in diaspora, sometime after the destruction of their holy space, the temple. They have been driven from their space. Empire shatters their world into a million pieces, building freeways of pandemic through their relationships, driving them into isolation, separation. Connection, to God, and to each other, is severed.

James calls out to all those shattered places, for action! Do not be merely hearers of the word, but do, something! Listen to James’ action verbs! Pray. Sing. Call. Anoint. Confess. Pray again. Action! Be the people of God. Do something!

James doesn’t make much, if any direct theological statements about God and God’s world; James shows us his theology through the practical actions that James beckons from his (or her) audience. James emphasizes care in how we speak to one another, and care in how we attend to the distressed, the isolated. The act of confession culminating in prayer bridges that gap, it brings and it binds people together. Confession binds human and divine activity into one. Confession is holy space!

I heard James’ theology in his epistle summed up this way – “God is compassionate, and God acts powerfully in the world. Sovereignty and compassion.

“Oh God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy...”

Doing the things that James calls us to do have the effect of drawing us deeper into relationship with each other. When you pray, and you sing, and you anoint, and you confess, and you pray again, with one another, you make yourself vulnerable. You meet someone, or some others, in their own vulnerability. You use your vulnerability to engage the vulnerability of others. And then, real relationship begins again. Right there, in that naked moment of vulnerability. It’s the doing, doing something, that brings you to that point. It’s that openness to vulnerability that makes true relationship, the healing of sin, possible.

It is everything that is not “Real power is something you take!”

Real power is something you give, when you open your heart, and your mind, and your body, and your soul, and your spirit. Real power is something you obtain when you step into that frighteningly vulnerable space of confession. Real power is something you receive when you look into someone else’s eyes and hear and know the compassion of, “I forgive you.” Real power is the healing of sin, when isolation ceases to be, when boundaries are erased, when we can be in the same space and share Holy Spirit life-giving breath. That is real power.

Recognizing that gift, the gift that we share, as a part of this community of believers that we lovingly refer to as “Doubters of Great Faith” is a privilege and an honor that we confess to share openly with each other, and importantly, with those outside of these walls. This is a space where the vulnerability of confession, mercy, and grace has a long, deep, rich history of dwelling herein. The world knows and recognizes this. (And quite frankly, is afraid of this!)

Sermon for the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

As we emerge from our own diaspora, finding our ways back to this most sacred, hallowed space, with you, its most sacred, hallowed “Doubters,” I encourage you to be aware of, to remember, and to rejoice in the great gift that God has given us in this particular, unique moment in the life of this faith community. There is no other place like The Episcopal Church of St. Thomas the Apostle, Dallas, Texas, anywhere, that I know of.

As so, as we open our season of Stewardship for 2022, “Every Perfect Gift,” I would encourage you to confess, to yourselves, and to each other, what a unique and beautiful gift it is to which we have been entrusted. We are going to continue in the legacy that many of you have begun, as well as finding new ways to confess to the world our knowledge that “Real power is not something that you take. Real power is something you give, out of the generosity of your heart!”

Amen.

October Birthdays



1 William Leazer



1 Martha Blair



3 Alberto Galue



4 Clara Cantu



12 Randy Hering



19 Bridgette Ball



19 Alyssa Montague



20 Linda VanBuskirk



22 Janet Elsea



31 Betty Bass

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

steve@thedoubter.org

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

allen@thedoubter.org

Mr Lee Corbin, Organist-Choirmaster

music@thedoubter.org

Mr. David Aston, Assistant Organist

daston1227@aol.com

Ms. Pam Liles, Parish Administrator

pam@thedoubter.org

Ms. Paula McCormack, Comptroller

paula@thedoubter.org

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

Treasurer

Michael Legacy

Junior Warden

Andrew Besterman

Murray Followill

Paul McCright

Clerk