

St Thomas Episcopal Church

*located in beautiful downtown Clarkdale*

***Living His promise in service to others***



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# Saint Thomas Newsletter

***August and September  
2020  
Edition***



The Verde River in Summer

***But let all who take refuge in you be glad;  
let them ever sing for joy.  
Spread your protection over them,  
that those who love your name  
may rejoice in you.***

*Psalm 5:11*

## Announcements

### ECW Raffle – Tickets Still Available

Even though the church is currently closed you can still buy tickets for a chance to win a beautiful Amethyst Geode from Artigas, Uruguay. \$1 per ticket or \$5 for 6 tickets. You can purchase tickets at the church office. Please call Shirley in advance to arrange a time to do so. Winner will be announced the second Sunday in December.

### St. Thomas Remains Closed

As everyone is aware, our church remains closed for now. We have a plan for re-opening once we are given the ok to do so. For us to get the ok to re-open, the numbers of positive Covid-19 cases in Yavapai County must show a steady decrease of at least 15% for a sustained period of two weeks. Once we do re-open, we will be required to follow certain guidelines to insure the health safety of all who enter our doors. Facemasks will be required for anyone in our buildings. We will have masks available for anyone who does not bring their own. Social distancing of 6 feet or more will be mandatory as well. The pews in the sanctuary have already been marked so that people will be seated 6 feet apart from one another. People who live together in the same household may sit together without 6 feet in between. New trash cans have replaced the old ones. The new ones have foot pedals for opening the lid so they are now touch-free. Hand sanitizer is readily available in all areas of the church. So, as you can see, we have been planning and working to have everything ready for re-opening.

### Worship Services at St. Thomas

All of you should have received a letter from Vicar Susan about worship

service plans once St. Thomas has re-opened. To recap, Vicar Susan and Deacon Deirdre wish to hold services three days a week. This is because only ten people will be allowed in the sanctuary at one time so in order to accommodate all who wish to attend worship services, more service times are necessary. There is currently no schedule in place but once we know that the church can re-open, we will let everyone know the details regarding worship services.

### **Diocesan Annual “Virtual” Convention**

Vicar Susan’s recent letter also mentioned this year’s convention. Once again, because of Covid-19 restrictions, the convention this year will be held in an on-line format. People will attend via their computer. However, St. Thomas still needs representatives at the convention. We need two delegates and two alternates. We are now taking nominations for individuals to fill these positions. If you would like to nominate someone, please let Shirley in the office know, (928-634-8593 or [saintthomas889@gmail.com](mailto:saintthomas889@gmail.com)). Also, please check with the person you are nominating to make sure they are ok with being nominated. Do not nominate any of the following people because they will already be attending: Vicar Susan, Deacon Deirdre, Barbara Evans, and Lee Worthen. The Junior Warden is also able to attend. Time is of the essence so please make your nominations quickly. We will be voting very soon.

### **Request regarding Donations to the Priest’s Discretionary Fund**

Shirley, the bookkeeper for St. Thomas, requests that you write a separate check for any donations for the Priest’s Discretionary Fund. Your check should still be made out to St. Thomas with Priest’s Disc.

Fund written on the memo line. St. Thomas has two separate accounts. One is for the Priest's Discretionary Fund donations and the other is for all other donations. Writing one check for two different donations is problematic. For example: Jane Doe writes a check for \$100 and on the memo line writes \$50 for Pledge/ \$50 for Priest's Disc. Fund. The bank cannot split up the \$100 check so the full amount goes into the St. Thomas main account. Then the \$50 for the Priest's Disc. Fund has to be manually transferred from the main account into the Priest's Disc. Fund account. As you might imagine, this has the potential to cause some bookkeeping problems and hence, the request for two separate checks. If you prefer cash donations rather than writing two checks, that is fine since cash is not problematic at all. We greatly appreciate your help with this. Thank you!

### **A word from our Vicar, The Rev. Susan C. Armer**

If one of your children comes to you and says "I love you" and you respond "I love all children", that may well be true, but is thoughtless and cold in the moment. And if a friend comes to you in her grief and says "my father has died" and you respond "all people die" that would be true but is thoughtless and cold in the moment. When someone says "Black lives matter" and you respond "All lives matter" that is true but heartless and cold in the moment. It discounts the zeitgeist of this time--the pain and grief of the moment. (*Doug Williford, ed.*)

We know that experienced trauma is passed down and manifests in the generations that follow. When the original trauma is continued, even in more subtle and systemic ways, it does not decrease but deepens and lives on in each generation that follows. The experience of the enslavement of Black people in this country, and then the endeavors by law in our history over the generations to keep them subservient while at the same time, purposefully omitting the full

Black and Brown story in our history books and narratives, has brought us to this time.

A racial hierarchy—racism—is entrenched in our society and structures. The air we breathe is infused with the sin of White Supremacy. It is embedded in our lives and is felt by all people of color with pain too deep for words. It does not mean that we are not good people, or that our lives have been necessarily easy or without difficult challenges. What it means is that those challenges have **not** been about the color of our skin or the culture we carry, or the policies enacted to keep some people down.

We have the power to change this and we must. We start by listening without our natural tendency to defend or make light of or “yes, but...”ing. We need to really hear, –deeply hear–and understand. And then we have to work endlessly to change what needs changing, and correct what needs correcting, and mend what needs mending. We have the power of our purse, our voice, our vote, and yes, the color of our skin. We need to use all of these powers to make this society what it can be—just, and truly equitable, and humane. As co-workers with God and followers of Jesus Christ, as people of the Baptismal Covenant, we have urgent work to do.

Bishop Steven Charleston recently wrote:

*...We are living in a time of emergence. We are the witnesses to a great renewal. The world is full of the fear of birth and change, but that transformation will one day be our blessing. Do not be afraid, but be believing.*

This has the ring of truth and hope for me. May it be the same for you. Susan+

## **Senior Warden’s Corner with Barbara Evans**

Well, hello again. Seems like it has only been a little while since I last wrote to you all. Unfortunately, I’ve not much to say.

I really do miss all of you. I miss the togetherness. I’ve been sequestered at home with my sister. We don’t get out much so we look

for things to keep us occupied at home. I hope all of you have found enjoyable things to do at your homes to occupy your time.

Please remember to call friends on the phone or send them a friendly greeting card to let them know you miss them and are thinking of them. It really does mean a lot to people.

Hopefully soon, perhaps in September, we can gather together again for church services during the week even if it is only in small groups. I know that Vicar Susan is trying hard to get the ok from our Bishop to hold services two or three times a week with small groups of people. But, we cannot gather together at our church until the numbers of COVID-19 cases in Yavapai County steadily diminish by 15% for at least a two week period.

In the meantime, try to stay busy with something and remember, this too shall pass. Hugs to all, Barbara

### **A Word from Jim Gemmill, Junior Warden**

Hello from cool Colorado! We finally got our new modem and now have good internet. We have been battling it all summer and are relieved to have reliable service now.

We hope things are going well with everyone there. We worry about poor little St. Thomas and what is going to happen since we can't re-open with the terrible virus numbers and it makes us sad when we hear the news about how Arizona is leading in the number of Covid-19 cases lately. So, we have decided we are going to stay here through September. With the numbers and the heat we just thought we should stay here.

We have had some hot days but nothing like the Verde Valley. We have had no rain to speak of so things are very dry. We keep hoping the monsoons will arrive but so far....nothing. The river near us is very low now and we fear it might dry up very soon. You can easily walk across it now. In fact, a bear came up on the porch of our neighbor and took a 40lb bag of dog food. Our neighbor got pictures of bear across the river. We don't think any bears have visited us but we think some raccoons are drinking from our hummingbird feeders so



we'll start putting them inside at night. We have 9 feeders and the raccoons cannot reach 4 of them but we will have to move the others. With not so many flowers this year, the hummingbirds are really thirsty so I am buying sugar for the feeders by the ton.

We stay in camp most of the time and have only gone to Durango one time where we were very careful, wearing masks and social distancing. We have taken a few drives up into the mountains but that's about it. We have done a lot of work around the "yard" pulling out small trees and bushes and planting some new trees.

Well, we miss all of you and hope we will see everyone in October. Stay safe, stay healthy, Dinah and Jim



Sitting by the river in Colorado.



Thirsty hummingbirds.



Jim Gemmill by the river enjoying the cool summer temperatures in Colorado.

(Though it may appear so....no, his left foot is not in the fire.)



## **From your Treasurer, Lee Worthen**

First, let me say that I hope this newsletter finds each of you, your family, and those who love and support you, healthy and well in the midst of the challenges of life during this COVID-19 pandemic. And adding from the Episcopal Diocese of Arizona's Coronavirus Resources page, "Understandably, this is a cause for concern, but not a cause for panic. It is an opportunity for all of us to find ways to love and support one another. Nothing can separate us from the love of God—and nothing can force our prayers to cease."

Second, pending a sustained reduction in COVID-19 cases in Yavapai County in keeping with CDC guidelines, the phased process for congregations to reopen in Phase II consisting of in-person gatherings with limits on size of crowd, social distancing, etc., and acceptance of the Bishop's Committee's assent and information on how reopening will be implemented at St. Thomas, we remain in what Bishop Jennifer Reddall has aptly referred to as "that plaintive cry from the back seat... Are we there yet?"

Thus, for the time being, and who knows for how much longer, we are not there yet. This pandemic crisis has added to the well-known season of the year, when pews are empty, church life wanes, peoples pledges, offerings, and other contributions drop off, and Vicars, the Bishop's Committee, and the church Treasure all begin to panic. Traditionally, the first Sunday after Labor Day is the time when most all the summer activities have calmed down, vacations have been taken, schools are back in session, and church life slips back into the groove, alleviating the afore mentioned panic. This is typically the time of year to catch up on all that has happened over the summer, to once again meet, greet, and work together in the enjoyment of serving our church family and the larger community. It is the time, once again, to get one's spiritual house in order, as the seasons of Advent and Christmas quickly come upon us.

With your gifts and the inclusion of St. Thomas in the Diocese's participation in the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) since May 1st, our current 2020 operating budget deficit is \$3,478.01 as of July

24th. Unless Congress takes action to renew PPP during the continuing COVID-19 battle, resumption of payroll expenses will once again place much stress on our financial resources, especially so, given the absence of loose plate offerings since the last in-person church service was on March 8th.

With your continued help during the next five months, prayerfully seeking an increase in giving as one is able, and hopefully a return to the core aspects of our worship and serving our community, the pandemic difficulties of the year 2020 will become but a memory. THANK YOU St. Thomas Family!!!

### **A note from the Parish Administrator, Shirley R. Pogany**

Summer is nearly over and I am dreading winter already. However, I have to say that this summer was a very productive and extremely enjoyable season for me, even with the constant virus threat and necessary restraints imposed on all of us. I completed many projects this summer, the toughest of which was redoing my father's deck. I finally got it done and my father is very happy. Here are some before and after pictures.



Before



After



After

There was one particular thing that made my summer extra special besides my frequent kayaking adventures down the Verde River. In June my father completed his autobiography and gave copies of it to his grandchildren and to me. Wow, what an eye opener! I thought I knew a lot about my father but in reading his autobiography, I learned many things about him that I did not previously know. To say that I am grateful that he provided this for the family would be a huge understatement. It is a beautiful gift even though some of the events described therein were difficult to read and resulted in many tears. There were also amusing descriptions about some of his experiences in life that made me laugh out loud. Through his words and descriptions I felt as though I was able to meet family members who died before my birth. This was especially true for me as I read about my paternal grandmother, Rose Decker Pogany, who died when she was only 44 years old. I am honored that my parents chose the name Rose to be my middle name. I was lucky enough to meet my paternal grandfather, Laszlo Pogany, when we lived in Europe but that meeting was the one and only time. He died in 1974.

I will be forever grateful to my father for all the time and effort that went into producing the stories of his life from his early childhood to the present day. This is something that our family will cherish and share with those who come after us.

Everyone's life story is very special. There is no such thing as a boring or dull life story. Consider getting your story down on paper. If you feel insecure about your writing capabilities then record your story on video or on an audio device. Your family members, generation after generation, will be eternally grateful to you.

p.s. I also got a new motor scooter this summer. Love it!



Laszlo, my paternal grandfather, and Me.



Rose, my paternal grandmother, holding my father.



My new scooter.

## August and September Celebrations

**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY**

Ooops! Left this one out of the last Newsletter so, **Happy Belated**

**Birthday to:**

**Sarah Duffy – July 10**

**Keehna Sture – Aug 8**

**Mary Ann Palmquist – Aug 9**

**Greg Noyes – Aug 10**

**Doug McFayden – Aug 16**

**Dinah Gemmill – Aug 21**

**Diane Eide – Aug 30**

**Susan C Armer – Sep 6**

**Ailani Felix – Sep 7**

**Jim Gemmill – Sep 17**



**Robert and Christina Andres – Aug 6**

**Joel and Diane Eide – Aug 21**

## August Readings

### **August 2: 9th Sunday after Pentecost**

Genesis 32:22-31  
Psalm 17:1-7, 16  
Romans 9:1-5  
Matthew 14:13-21

### **August 9: 10th Sunday after Pentecost**

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28  
Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b  
Romans 10:5-15  
Matthew 14:22-33

### **August 16: 11th Sunday after Pentecost**

Genesis 45:1-15  
Psalm 133  
Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32  
Matthew 15:21-28

### **August 23: 12th Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 1:8-2:10  
Psalm 124  
Romans 12:1-8  
Matthew 16:13-20

### **August 30: 13th Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 3:1-15  
Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c  
Romans 12:9-21  
Matthew 16:21-28

Once Saint Thomas is open for worship and until further notice, Vicar Susan and Deacon Deirdre will be doing all the Readings and the Prayers of the People. They will also conduct the worship service without Acolytes serving at the Altar.

## September Readings

### **September 6: 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 12:1-14  
Psalm 149  
Romans 13:8-14  
Matthew 18:15-20

### **September 13: 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 14:19-31  
Psalm 114  
Romans 14:1-12  
Matthew 18:21-35

### **September 20: 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 16:2-15  
Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45  
Philippians 1:21-30  
Matthew 20:1-16

### **September 27: 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 17:1-7  
Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16  
Philippians 2:1-13  
Matthew 21:23-32

Once Saint Thomas is open for worship and until further notice, Vicar Susan and Deacon Deirdre will be doing all the Readings and the Prayers of the People. They will also conduct the worship service without Acolytes serving at the Altar.

**Monthly Calendars will be posted once Saint Thomas is open. Currently, all services, classes and events are cancelled until further notice.**



# Prayer List

*Comfort and heal all those who suffer  
in body, mind or spirit; give them  
courage and hope in their troubles, and  
bring them the joy of your salvation.*

## Names added this week:

### Continued prayers for:

For all infected with COVID-19  
Doris Gardner and Family  
Tim Childers  
The Smith Family  
Joyce Harry  
Conor Steidl  
Sandy Hensley  
Carol W.  
Cindy Massaro  
The Gardner Family  
Barbara Evans  
Nancy McAnally  
Carolann Chambers  
Michael Romero  
Nathan (Bishop Reddall's son)  
Bishop Jennifer Reddall  
Doug and Diane McFayden

### For the soul of:

Meilani Wang  
Clair Smith

### Those serving our country:

Andrew Gillis  
Jesse Reeves  
Mike Kellenbenz  
Chris McKeag  
Joshua Lawton  
Buster Kellenbenz  
Jason Allred  
Melissa Jones  
Nathan Smith  
Robert Jones  
Jeremiah Juhlin  
Ann Henry  
Taylor Zale  
Michael Shaklee  
Josh Edgerton  
Brandon Gemmill  
Rande Robinson  
Caleb Edgerton  
Jason Geier  
Zachery Geier  
Ben Jujawa

If you have an immediate prayer request call  
Devon Lewis - 928-210-8929 or the Church office - 928-634-8593



Monsoons over Clarkdale, AZ

***May the Lord answer you when you are in  
distress; may the name of the God of  
Jacob protect you.***

*Psalm 20:1*

***Have a Blessed & Healthy  
August and September!***