



# Seasons

at

ST. THOMAS



## A CASE FOR LOVE

Do you remember Presiding Bishop Curry's sermon at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle? He used the occasion of a wedding to remind the world of the power of God's love and what life can look like when Love is the Way.

*There's power in love. There's power in love to help and heal when nothing else can.*

*There's power in love to lift up and liberate when nothing else will.*

*There's power in love to show us the way to live.*

Our world needs that power in a mighty way!

A new Presiding Bishop will be elected at General Convention this summer. As Bishop Curry nears the end of his momentous nine-year term, during this season after the Epiphany, we will focus on his teaching and witness.

See inside for details about -

**A Case for Love** - a new documentary that follows Bishop Curry and stories of famous and ordinary people living lives of unselfish love. The film is showing all over the country on **Tuesday, January 23**, at 4 and 7 pm at AMC theaters in Columbus. We want everyone at St. Thomas to see the film and bring a friend! A group for St. Thomas will be attending the 4 PM showing at Hollywood Connections ACM Classic Ritz 13 and getting a meal together after. I will also attend the 7 pm show with those who want to watch then. Tickets can be purchased at [amctheater.com](http://amctheater.com). A donation has been made to cover the cost of tickets for those who cannot purchase on their own. Please call the office if you would like to use one of the donated tickets.

The film kicks off a **Month of Unselfish Love** - a challenge to perform an act of love each day for a month and see how it changes you and the world around you. We will take part in this challenge.

Our **Journey Groups** will begin again on January 31, focusing on more sermons by Bishop Curry and on his teaching about the power of love.

**St. Thomas Youth** will attend General Convention next summer to be part of Bishop Curry's final revival service and witness the election of a new Presiding Bishop.

Plus more **opportunities to worship, learn, and serve together**. We are *Making Room for All* in order to share God's love more widely. Join St. Thomas in this season and beyond as we make *A Case for Love* and seek to put God's love into action.

Blessings,  
Grace

# ANNUAL MEETING



## St. Thomas Annual Meeting

January 28 at 9:30

In the Episcopal Church, we practice shared governance at every level of church life. From General Convention to the diocesan level to the local congregation, clergy and lay leaders work together to make decisions and discern God's call to us. An important part of this shared work is the Annual Parish Meeting. Here, the congregation gathers to elect Vestry members and offer input about the work of the congregation in the year ahead.

Join us on January 28 in the Parish Hall at 9:30 for this important gathering. Our Vestry approved online participation this year via Zoom. Pre-registration is required to participate online. Look for a link to register in upcoming e-newsletters or contact the church office. The parish Annual Report (a long version and a short version) will be sent by email the week prior to the Annual Meeting. A more detailed discussion of parish finances including construction finances will take place on Sunday, January 21 at 9:30 in the library. A zoom link will be sent for the financial update meeting if requested. Contact the church office for this link.



## Children & Tween Animal Meeting

January 28 at 9:30

The "Animal Meeting" will take place in the Outreach Center on Sunday, January 28 during the Annual Meeting. Children and tweens are invited to bring stuffed animals and enjoy breakfast and animal antics with Maddie.



## St. Thomas Vestry

The Vestry is the governing body of the parish, with responsibility to see that the congregation's administrative and financial life allows our ministries to flourish. We elect three members each year to serve three-year terms. Retiring vestry members serve as a nominating committee and present a slate of three candidates to be approved by the parish at the Annual Meeting.

*According to the Canons of the Diocese of Atlanta, Those qualified for election to the office of Vestry Member shall be as follows: Any confirmed (or received) communicant in good standing of the Parish who is not less than eighteen years of age, a regular attendant at the services of the Church in the year preceding election, and known by the Treasurer to have made and fulfilled a stated financial commitment for church support in the year preceding election.*

Thank you to our retiring vestry members Spencer Garrard, Deidre Bohannon, and Julia Slater for their faithful service.

Thank you to Norm Easterbrook, Jessica Ezzell, and Sue O'Dell for agreeing to be on our slate of candidates this year. Our nominating committee felt that Norm's ministry experience in prior congregations, his leadership of stewardship and vision planning at St. Thomas, and his professional experience with managing large performance venues make him a helpful addition to vestry at this time. Likewise, Jessica Ezzell's dedication to St. Thomas and her professional experience with landscape design and large construction projects are skills needed by vestry in this season. Sue O'Dell has been chair of our altar guild for many years. With the adjustments to worship anticipated over the next few months, the committee felt that it was important for altar guild to be represented on the Vestry. Read ahead for more information about our candidates.

Due to the need to vet candidates for vestry, we do not take nominations from the floor at the Annual Meeting. If you wish to nominate an additional candidate, please contact our Senior Warden, Spencer Garrard, by January 21.

# VESTRY CANDIDATES

## Norm Easterbrook



I have been a member of St. Thomas since moving to Columbus with my wife, Margo in 2015 from Oxford, Mississippi. At St. Thomas, I was a member of and chaired the Stewardship committee, was part of the leadership of the 60th anniversary special offering campaign and served on the planning committee that led to the St. Thomas 2020 Vision. I currently serve on the Finance Committee and am assisting with the Making Room for All capital campaign. I help as needed with other ministries to include Buddy Packs for Brewer Elementary and other efforts in service to St. Thomas.

In Oxford, I was an active member of St. Peter's Episcopal Church where I was a member of the choir and served on the Vestry and as Junior Warden. There I chaired the annual stewardship campaign for a number of years and was actively involved in the maintenance of the historic structure. I serve as the Executive Director and CEO of RiverCenter, Inc., the independent non-profit partner organization with Columbus State University charged with operating and maintaining the RiverCenter facility.

The work that St. Thomas does in our community is urgently needed. Even more necessary is the example that St. Thomas sets with each seemingly insurmountable challenge that we take on. As we complete the immediate and important goal of expanding and updating our facilities, our work begins anew to be the active, living example of Love of Christ by serving others. I look forward to getting closer and more deeply involved in ways that St. Thomas meets any who seek the Love of Christ wherever they are and whatever their need might be. I look forward to helping to enable St. Thomas to continue to share the Love of Christ in the simplest, most profound, and most unexpected ways and places.

## Jessica Ezzell



I first attended St. Thomas in the summer of 2018 with my husband, Jon, and my children, Will and Luke. Since then, I have delighted in serving as a Lay Eucharistic Minister, providing snacks for Path to Shine, and assisting the grounds committee with the design and implementation of the Clifford Swift Memorial Garden.

As a landscape architect with twenty years' experience, I have managed large-scale construction projects throughout the United States. My local experience includes the National Infantry Museum, the Citizens Service Center, and the MCSD Administration Building. More recently, I have been the principal Landscape Architect for Mat Swift Park and the Riverfront Place development in Uptown Columbus.

I look forward to serving St. Thomas as we work to make room for all. By accommodating needs and removing barriers to participation, we declare all people beloved and valued by God and by our congregation.

## Sue O'Dell



My family's first worship at St. Thomas was in August 1977. We felt at home and quickly knew it was the place for us. My daughter was married at St. Thomas and both of my Columbus grandchildren grew up at St. Thomas and were baptized and confirmed here. Throughout these years I have been involved in a variety of ministries and have served on the Altar Guild for over 25 years. As Altar Guild chairperson I am a member of the Worship Committee. For awhile when my grandchildren were young I was a teacher in Children's Church which was then located in the area that is now Meg's office. For several years I had the wonderful privilege of being a "rocker and roller" in the nursery, getting to know the youngest

members of St. Thomas. In the early 1990's I served a term on Vestry and was also Clerk of the Vestry for about ten years. Recently I have been a member of the design committee for our Vision Campaign renovation to Make Room for All.

What an exciting time this is to be a part of the future of St. Thomas as we live into our vision of Loving Every Person and Making Room for All. St. Thomas has for many years had a reputation of loving and welcoming all people and our renovation plans to enhance and expand our worship space will build on that vision. We are fortunate that the original architects had faith that we would grow and eventually need more space and provided a design that would enable us to do just that. I can envision how wonderful it will be to have a covered entrance walkway, access to the altar and choir area without any steps, and of course additional seating. It is going to be beautiful! During the months of construction we will have to make adjustments in our worship services but with thoughtful planning and the end result in our sights, we will continue to worship God together.



# MAKING ROOM FOR ALL



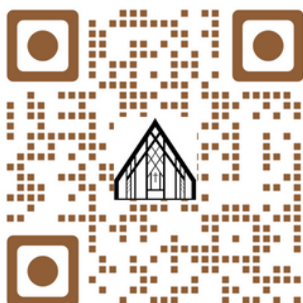
**The vision is closer to becoming a reality and quite a lot will happen in January 2024.**

- January 15 - This is our initial fundraising deadline. If you are planning to make a pledge to the Vision Campaign, please let us know as soon as possible. The names of all who made pledges and gifts to the campaign will be listed in our Annual Report.
- January 19 - We will receive and review final pricing from our contractor. Our contract will be a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) contract to guard against escalation in costs. There are some exceptions for unforeseen circumstances, but our contractor has done due diligence and does not expect any changes. We will not make changes to the design after this date.
- January 21 - At 9:30 that morning in the library, we will offer a financial update, including an update about construction financing, in preparation for our Annual Meeting the following Sunday.
- January 22 - Vestry will meet in a special session to review the terms of the contract and terms of a construction loan and approve our application to the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Atlanta.
- January 25 - We meet with the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Atlanta to seek their approval. Approval from the Standing Committee is required for major changes to church facilities and for any encumbrances on church assets (such as a loan or line of credit).
- January 28 - At our Annual Meeting, we will provide an update about vestry discussions and the meeting with the Standing Committee.



Once Standing Approval is granted, we will sign contracts and begin preparing for construction. Our goal is to worship in the current nave one final time on April 7 and begin construction on April 8. During construction, the Chapel will remain open for Sunday and midweek services. The 10:30 Sunday service will be in the Parish Hall.

This is an exciting step for St. Thomas. We are excited about creating accessibility and adding additional parking and seating which we need. Our goal is to welcome more and more people into the experience of God's all-expansive love made known in Jesus. Please be in prayer over the next few weeks for St. Thomas and for all who will guide these decisions.



*Scan this QR code for more information and to make a pledge online.*

# LOVE GOD: WORSHIP



## Contemplative, Healing Worship

*New dates: 4th Sunday evenings at 5:00, January 28, February 25, March 24, and following.*

We've been gathering for a year, and now we have sacred traditions! Services will be much the same in 2024, filled with candlelight, soft chanting of Taizé music and Psalms, scripture and meditation, healing prayers with anointing oils, and Holy Eucharist. The Holy Spirit will usher us in and out, the light of Christ will glow in our hearts, and we'll have the opportunity to sit and pray in holy stillness and silence. God is surely always listening to us, always listening for our voices silently or aloud. Yet this service sets aside time for us to quiet our minds and hearts and be very present in the moment, very close to God. If you'd like to know more about the Contemplative Healing service, contact Roxane.

## Parish Hall Service

*Sundays at 10:30*

If you find yourself looking for a different way to participate in the 10:30 service, consider joining a small group in the Parish Hall where the live stream is shown. Coffee, snacks, and plenty of room to move freely are available. Those worshipping in the Parish Hall are invited to the nave for Communion if you wish. Children may participate in Children's Chapel or remain with their parents.

## Save the Date!

Ash Wednesday is on February 14. Services will be at 7 am, noon, and 6:30 pm, with nursery care at the 6:30 service only. The noon and 6:30 services will be livestreamed.



## Children's Chapel

*during 10:30 service*

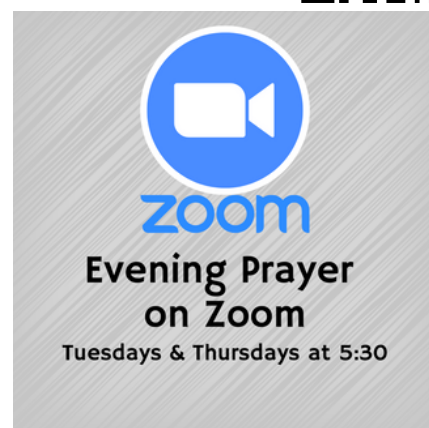
During the hymn before the gospel lesson, children follow the petite cross and leaders to the Chapel for Children's Chapel where they continue to follow the service order and have an interactive worship experience. Children set their own altar, interact with scripture, and ask questions. Each week the children are encouraged to pray, think deeply, and have fun. Children also receive a bulletin just for them made by Illustrated Ministry.



## Saints and Sinners

*February 1, 11:15 am*

Saints and Sinners will meet for a brief Eucharist, fellowship, and potluck lunch on Thursday February 1 at 11:15. Following Eucharist at 11:30, the group will enjoy a potluck lunch in the Parish Hall. Bring a dish to share! Everyone is welcome to join! This is a great way to meet folks at St. Thomas.



## Zoom Evening Prayer

*Tuesdays & Thursdays from 5:30 to 5:45 or so on Zoom*

We continue to gather on Tuesdays and Thursdays online at 5:30 pm. Join us for a brief time of prayer in the evening. The link is available on our LinkTree.

## Prayer Group

The St. Thomas Prayer Group meets weekly to offer all kinds of prayers, including Prayers of the People shared on Sunday mornings. We also pray for those who have asked for prayers but wish them to be private. This list is confidential to the Prayer Group. Contact the church office to request prayers or to find out about being a part of the Prayer Group. The group meets in person in the Chapel at St. Thomas the first Monday of each month and online on other Mondays.

## Music Notes

*From Rick McKnight*



I am excited about *A Case for Love* and our study. On January 21 the choir is going to open this season of study singing David Hurd's (born 1950) setting on an old text by George Herbert (1593-1633). I can share a link of the choir of the Basilica of the National Shrine singing this riveting piece. In a tremendous contrast we will sing a Shaker song, "Love is Little" on February 4. Many thanks to Ruth Nichols for gifting these scores to the music library in memory of her husband, Mike. We hope these pieces will add to your worship.



# LOVE EVERY PERSON: FELLOWSHIP & WELCOME



## A Case for Love Events

### The Movie

**A Case for Love**, a full length documentary featuring Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and stories of many Episcopalians who are living lives of unselfish love. The film will be shown in movie theaters all over the country on Tuesday, January 23. In Columbus, the film will be shown at the AMC Ritz 13 (1683 Whittlesey Rd.) and AMC Columbus Park 15 (5556 Whittlesey Blvd) on January 23 at 4 and 7 pm.

Rev. Grace and members of St. Thomas staff will attend both showings at the Ritz 13 Hollywood Connection (1683 Whittlesey Rd.). After the 4 pm showing, a group will go to dinner at Country's North, 6298 Veterans in Main Street Village. You may purchase tickets in advance online at [amctheaters.com](http://amctheaters.com) ([www.amctheatres.com/movie-theatres/columbus-ga/amc-classic-ritz-13](http://www.amctheatres.com/movie-theatres/columbus-ga/amc-classic-ritz-13)). Tickets are \$15 plus tax. We have some donated tickets available for both showings. Contact the church office to request a

**January 23**  
**4 & 7 pm**

donated ticket. Consider inviting a friend to join you at the film, particularly a friend who is feeling discouraged about church or looking for a new way to love God and love people.

On Wednesday evening, January 24 at 6:30 pm, join us at St. Thomas to discuss the film, The Month of Unselfish Love, and Presiding Bishop Curry's ministry.

### The Month of Unselfish Love Challenge

*A Case for Love* asks what unselfish love looks like in today's world, at a time when division, estrangement, and hatred seem to be as strong as ever. The 13 stories in the movie invite us on a personal journey, reflecting on ways in which we may experience sacrificial love, and then embody it for others in our lives, communities, and the world.

The film kicks off The Month of Unselfish Love, a 30-day journey to reflect on the examples of unselfish love seen in the movie and commit to daily acts of unselfish love.

A journal invites you to:

- Commit a daily intentional act of unselfish love.
- Record each act in this journal.
- Describe the act.
- Describe how it impacted the recipient.
- Describe how it impacted you.
- Did you experience God's presence in any way, and if so, how?

We will have copies of the journal available beginning on January 24.

### Episcopal Campus Ministry

ECM will resume meeting at Columbus State for the Spring Semester on January 16th. Contact Taylor at [taylor@stthomascolumbus.org](mailto:taylor@stthomascolumbus.org) for more information.

### ECM Dinner Donations Needed

We are looking for parishioners to donate food or dollars for our Tuesday evening weekly meals. If you

would like to provide a meal or donate the price of a meal (\$60), please contact Taylor.

### Campus Ministries Retreat @ Camp Mikell

January 26-28, 2024

College students and young adults from across the diocese will gather at Camp Mikell for a weekend of worship, bonding, music, nature, and reflection. The retreat is led by a team of students and campus ministers, including our own Taylor Mack. Participants will get the chance to focus on faith, friendships, and personal growth. If interested, contact Taylor for information about registration and transportation.

**"January" Social**  
**River Dragons Hockey Game**  
@ The Columbus Civic Center  
Friday, Feb. 2nd at 7:30 PM  
  
For tickets, contact Taylor by Jan. 25

**February Social**  
**Desert Tasting @ Saltcellar**  
Thursday, Feb. 22nd at 7:30 PM  
  
Please RSVP to Taylor by Feb. 15

### YACT Socials

Join YACT (Young Adults Connecting Together) for one or both of our upcoming monthly socials! This is a chance for Young Adults to fellowship and connect together while having fun in the Columbus area. Contact Taylor for more information.

# LOVE EVERY PERSON: FELLOWSHIP & WELCOME



## Journey Groups

Journey Groups, beginning again on January 31, will watch and discuss more sermons by Presiding Bishop Curry who has had a profound effect on the ministry and witness of the Episcopal Church. A new Presiding Bishop will be elected in the summer of 2024. In addition, the *Manna and Mercy* Journey Group will continue their study of the second half of the book, focused on the ministry of Jesus and the early church. Groups will meet on Sundays and Wednesday. If you're interested in leading a group that meets at another time during the week, let Rev. Grace know.

### Wednesday groups begin on January 31.

Wednesday groups will meet from 6:30 to 7:30 from January 31 until March 20 EXCEPT on February 14 which is Ash Wednesday.

### A Sunday group will begin on February 4.

The Sunday group will meet at 4 pm in the library with an online option. The Sunday group will meet from February 4 until March 17.

## Wednesday Evenings at St. Thomas

**5:30 Eucharist** in the Chapel  
**5:30-6:15 Dinner** served in the Parish Hall  
**6:20 Prayers** around tables  
**6:25** All depart for **formation** time  
**6:30 to 7:30 Formation** time for children, youth, and adults  
**6:45 to 8:30 St. Thomas Choir** in the Choir Room  
*The nursery is open on Wednesdays from 5:30 to 7:30, or longer if needed by choir members.*

### Ways to Serve on Wednesdays

Wednesday nights at St. Thomas are a special time for worship, fellowship, and learning. It takes many people to help these Wonderful Wednesdays go smoothly. Contact the church office to sign up to assist!

**Wednesday Eucharist** - Serve at the altar or as a lector or both.

**Wednesday Dinner** - Help in the kitchen beginning at 4 or 4:30 with setting tables and preparing drinks. A volunteer also helps serve plates from 5:30-6:15.

**Table Prayers** - We pause at the end of dinner for brief prayers around the tables. A volunteer or a family leads the prayers.



### Wednesday Dinners at St. Thomas

5:30 - 6:15

Sharing Wednesday dinner is a beloved tradition at St. Thomas. A typical dinner is an entree with two sides and a simple dessert. Seth also prepares vegetarian and gluten free options if

requested. The suggested cost is \$7.50 per adult, \$5 per child under 12, and \$25 per family. However, we invite you to pay what you can - more or less as you are able. We want everyone to be able to participate. In order to prepare (and not waste food), we need reservations each week by midnight on Monday. Menus are posted on the website, and you can register and pay online for up to a month at a time. (We actually prefer to receive payment online to avoid dealing with cash.) Wednesday Dinner reservation cards are in the pews. Fill it out on Sundays and drop in the offering plate.

Menus:

January 17th: Roasted chicken or Roasted cauliflower, Corn, Sweet peas

January 24th: Porkloin roast or portobello steaks, Mashed potatoes, Green beans

January 31st : Lemon pepper chicken or Roasted sweet potatoes, Turnip greens, Roasted carrots

### Children and Youth on Wednesdays

6:30-7:30 pm

Children and Youth programming on Wednesday nights follow a consistent pattern. The first and third Wednesdays of each month are L.O.V.E. formation hours where we Learn about our faith, Offer our gifts, Value others, and Evolve as God's children. Second Wednesdays of the month are craft night and the fourth Wednesdays are game night. Children gather in the outreach center and youth gather in the youth room.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS <i>episcopalis &amp; thommas</i>	
6:30-7:30 PM	
1ST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH	2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH
L.O.V.E. learning, offering, valuing, evolving	Craft Night
3RD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH	4TH WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH
L.O.V.E. learning, offering, valuing, evolving	Game Night
BONUS 5TH WEDNESDAY JOINT YOUTH & CHILDREN ACTIVITY	

# LOVE EVERY PERSON: FELLOWSHIP & WELCOME



## Excursions with St. Thomas!

Our first **January EXCURSION** will be gathering for Presiding Bishop Curry's "**A Case for Love**" film at the AMC Classic Ritz 13 theater on Jan. 23. See this newsletter for details. We'll end the month with a **lovely winter hike on Standing Boy Trails** in Columbus. We'll meet there at 10 am on Saturday, January 27 and take off for a gentle one-hour hike. Folks who'd like more exercise will be welcome to hike another hour. Contact Roxane ASAP to sign up.

In **February** we'll attend a performance of "**Come From Away**" at the RiverCenter. This true story and hit musical celebrates the best in all of us! The show begins at 7:30 pm on Thursday, February 29. Roxane will purchase group tickets on the mezzanine level, and they're selling fast, so please contact her ASAP if you're interested.

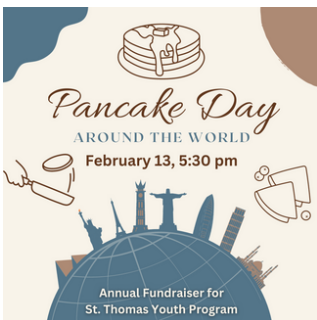
For our **March EXCURSION** we're planning a Lenten pilgrimage to Montgomery AL to experience both the **Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice**, powerful immersive journeys through America's history of racial injustice. This will be an all-day event. We'll carpool, leaving very early, eat lunch between the two tours, and arrive home early evening. Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 16 and contact Roxane for more information.



## Celebrating Ten Years of Ministry Together

*Sunday, February 11, following the 10:30 service*

This February will mark the 10-year anniversary of Rev. Grace Burton-Edwards' installment as Rector of St. Thomas. On Sunday, February 11th, we will gather in the Parish Hall for a lunch celebration, recognizing all that we have accomplished together over the last 10 years while also celebrating our "Making Room for All" Campaign. Let us know you're coming to lunch on our website or by contacting the church office.



## Annual Shrove Tuesday Youth Fundraiser

*February 13th, 5:30 PM*

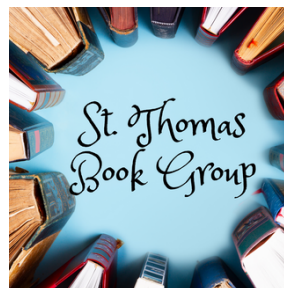
Join us for a "Pancake Day Around the World" celebration presented by St. Thomas Youth. Youth will showcase Shrove Tuesday traditions from countries all across the globe as we enjoy our own delicious pancake dinner. We will also have a pancake flipping contest and pancake trivia. Come out to support the youth ministry and hear an update on all that's happening for young people at St. Thomas. Donations for the meal support youth ministry at St. Thomas.

## Women's Group

*January 25, 6:30*

Gather with women at St. Thomas for a meal and fellowship. This group meets once a month and typically alternates

or dinner at a restaurant. All who identify as women are welcome to gather. The next women's group dinner will be on Thursday, January 25 at 6:30 at El Carrizo on Whittlesey Blvd. Contact Susan Sealy, Ellen Free, or the church office to let us know you're coming by January 22.



## St. Thomas Book Group

*First Fridays at 11 am*

The St. Thomas Book Group meets the first Friday of each month September through May in the church library at 11:00 am. The February book selection

is *The Shattered Tree, A Bess Crawford Mystery* by Charles Todd. Celia Page will be leading the discussion. *The Indigo Girl* by Natasha Boyd is for March, and April's selection is *The Runaway Quilt* by Jennifer Chiaverini. An informal group, everyone is welcome. Come and bring your friends. Call Martha Mullinax or Alice Barlow for further information.





## Sunday Morning Formation at St. Thomas

9:30 - 10:15 am

Come for fellowship and formation as we dive deeper into scripture, theology, and faith.

There is a group for everyone!

- Shine Time - Preschool-3rd Grade Children - Outreach Center
- Tween Time - 4th Grade-Middle School Tweens - Youth Suite
- Adult Formation - All Life-Long Learners - usually in the Library

### Sunday Mornings for Adults this Season

- **January 14:** For Martin Luther King weekend, we will listen to and discuss Dr. King's sermon "On Loving Your Enemies." This sermon is referenced in the film *A Case for Love*.
- **January 21:** In preparation for our Annual Meeting, join us for a deeper dive into St. Thomas finances, including an update about fundraising and financing for our *Making Room for All Vision Campaign*.
- **January 28:** Our Annual Parish Meeting takes place in the Parish Hall.
- **February 4 and 11:** "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Art France will lead a reflection on the second of Christ's commandments. He writes, "This sounds simple and straight forward. Our personal experiences and observations of the world we live in suggest that this is much easier to say than to do. Over the next two weeks, we will ponder the difficulties in following this commandment. When we have just one word for love, how does this complicate our understanding of love? What are the stumbling blocks that we encounter when we try to be loving people and how are we to overcome them? How does our experience of love expand and change over our life spans?"
- **Lent begins on February 14.** Beginning February 18, on Sundays in Lent, we will use a video teaching series developed by Bishop Wright.



### Sunday School for Children & Tweens

Sundays, 9:30-10:15

Each week, children and youth will explore a bible story and consider how it applies to their own life. Parents will receive a handout with information about the topic covered and discussion questions to continue the conversation as a family. Parents and parishioners are also encouraged to volunteer with our classes. We would like our children growing and learning with our community's help. If you would like to volunteer please contact Maddie for more information. [Maddie@stthomascolumnbus.org](mailto:Maddie@stthomascolumnbus.org).

Classes offered are:

Children ages 3-5 meet in the 3-4 year-old class just past the Nursery  
 Children grades 1-3 grades meet in the large classroom in Outreach  
 Tweens grades 4-8 meet in the Youth Room

Sunday School for Children & Tweens	
THE SEASON AFTER EPIPHANY	
JAN 14	THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
JAN 21	YOUNG JESUS TEACHES IN THE TEMPLE
JAN 28	"ANIMAL MEETING" PARTY IN OUTREACH
FEB 4	JESUS'S FIRST MIRACLE
FEB 11	JESUS TEACHES US HOW TO PRAY
For more information: <a href="mailto:StThomasColumbus.org">StThomasColumbus.org</a>	



## Meet Maddie!

Maddie grew up at St. Thomas as an Episcokid and youth. For the past few years, she volunteered with our children's programs and worked in the nursery. She worked for a time as Youth and Children's Director at St. Nicholas in Hamilton. She currently works as Lay Director for Happening for Youth in the Diocese of Atlanta. Maddie recently graduated from CSU and started her first full-time teaching job at South Columbus Elementary. Maddie is excited to be serving as our Interim Children's Ministries Director. She can be reached at [maddie@stthomasatl.org](mailto:maddie@stthomasatl.org).

## Children & Tween Animal Meeting

*January 28 at 9:30*

The "Animal Meeting" will take place in the Outreach Center on Sunday, January 28 during the Annual Meeting. Children and tweens are invited to bring stuffed animals and enjoy breakfast and animal antics with Maddie.



## Diocesan Youth Events

Diocesan youth retreats and events are a great way for St. Thomas Youth to connect with peers from across the diocese and develop their individual faith in a supportive and loving environment. For more information on the events listed below, please visit [eycdioatl.org](http://eycdioatl.org).

- Happening 79 at Camp Mikell - February 16-18, Happening is a spiritual renewal weekend for high schoolers led by high schoolers. Participants are encouraged to deepen their relationship with God and others throughout this fun and reflective retreat. Taylor will attend and provide transportation for youth.
- New Beginnings 47 at Camp Mikell - March 1-3, New Beginnings is a spiritual formation retreat for middle school students. Participants will enjoy a weekend full of fun including small group activities, music, games, and skits. Taylor will attend and provide transportation for youth.



## One Body, Many Parts



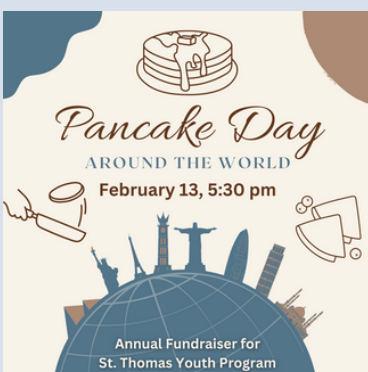
## Save the Date!

St. Thomas Youth Trip to General Convention in Louisville, KY will be June 22-27, 2024. This is an opportunity to share in Presiding Bishop Curry's last revival gathering, learn about the wider work of The Episcopal Church, and be present for the election of our next Presiding Bishop. Contact Taylor by February 8th.

## Annual Shrove Tuesday Youth Fundraiser

*February 13th, 5:30 PM*

All youth are strongly encouraged to participate in the annual Shrove Tuesday fundraiser. To highlight this year's theme, Pancake Around the World, each youth will get to choose a country to showcase that place's traditions for Pancake Day. Youth are also welcome to present any other talents or skills they have at this event. Contact Taylor for more information.





# SERVE TOGETHER



## Pastoral Care at St. Thomas

Several members of our parish family do not drive and are unable to join us at church for worship and events. We've got a solid team of Lay Eucharistic Visitors who share communion with them once a month...AND we'd like to add occasional visits just for fun – to talk and listen, play games, read, tell stories, listen to music together. Might you like to be a part of this team? Time commitments are quite flexible, and benefits are powerful! Contact Roxane right away to learn more and see if this might be a good fit for you.



## Wynnton Neighborhood Network

The Wynnton Neighborhood Network food pantry will be closed on January 15 for Martin Luther King holiday. Otherwise, they will continue to be open Monday through Friday and the first Saturdays of each month. They are able to serve 25 households everyday beginning at 10 am (although cars begin lining up earlier each day).

Please continue to bring non-perishable food items to support this ministry!

WNN is also looking for additional volunteers to serve in the food bank. Opportunities include boxing or bagging food, pushing food out in buggies to cars, shopping for needed items, and answering the phones. Contact Jo Cates, Barbara Ellis, or Libba Russell for more information and to get connected.

## Welcoming a Refugee Family

St. Thomas is working with the IRC to welcome a Guatemalan family of three to our area as official refugees. The Duarte family has settled in to life in Columbus and have been busy getting things in order, looking for work, and meeting others. In January they will begin English classes at International Friendship Ministries and will need transportation. If you would like to help with this need or connect with the family in another way, please let us know!



*Baby Jose enjoying his home at Christmas!*



## Stewardship Update

Thanks to all who made a pledge of financial support for St. Thomas in 2023. We received 162 pledges totaling \$713,246.00. This is up from 146 pledges in 2023 totaling \$617,228.00. Thank you to all for your generous support. In addition, so far, we have received 110 pledges to the Making Room for All Vision Campaign on Campaign totaling \$872,930.00. This is in addition to generous lead gifts by Clifford and Bobsie Swift, the estates of Joe Fischer and Norma Jergens, and the Walter Alan Richards Foundation, bringing our total fundraising for the Vision Campaign just above 2.7 million so far. Thanks to all who serve by giving!

## St. Thomas Yard Sale

February 10

Items will be received in the parish hall beginning Sunday, February 4, 2024. Start saving now! Contact Linda Prince if you would like to volunteer. We're looking for these types of items for donations: Clothing: Less than 3 years old on hangers - Coats, Athletic Wear, Gently-worn Shoes, Children's Clothing. Household Items: Branded mugs/bottles like Starbucks, Sports Team Gear, Books, Artwork, Working Appliances and Tools, Housewares, Furniture, Gently-used Toys, Sports Equipment, Games, Holiday Items, and Jewelry.

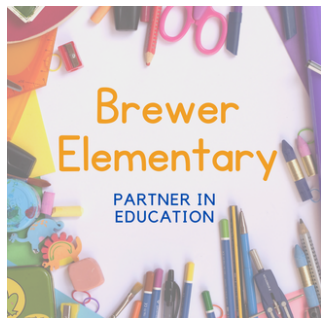


**QR  
CODE!**

Use the camera on your smart phone to scan the QR code to sign up for events.



# SERVE TOGETHER



## Brewer Elementary School

A big THANK YOU to all who donated to our Brewer Buddy Pack Program! Volunteers have delivered over a thousand meals (1040) to Brewer Elementary School students living in food insecure households over the months of November, December, and January. We can't thank you enough for your support!

Delivery dates for the remainder of the year are

Tuesday, February 6; Tuesday, March 5; and Tuesday, April 9. The date for a final delivery in May will be determined at a later date. Volunteers from St. Thomas pick up 32-40 boxes containing 10 Buddy Packs each from Feeding the Valley Food Bank at 9:00 am and deliver them to Brewer Elementary. Counselors at Brewer send the Buddy Packs home on Fridays in the backpacks of 80 students living in food insecure households.

If you would like to help deliver, you can sign up on the Church website or contact Margo Easterbrook or Libba Russell. Financial donations are also needed. Please write a check or donate online to St. Thomas Episcopal Church Brewer Buddy Pack Program. Just specify Online or note on your check that your donation is for the Brewer Buddy Pack Program. \$14 supports one child for a month. \$125 supports one child for a year. \$280 supports 80 children for a week. \$1,120 supports 80 children for a month. Any amount helps.

Our Brewer Reading Buddy Program resumes in January as well. St. Thomas Volunteers meet on Tuesdays at Brewer from 9:00 to 10:00 to read individually with at risk students. If you'd like to learn more about this program, please contact Meg Olive-Allison.



**EAST CARVER HEIGHTS**  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

## Boxwood Soccer Club

Spring registration has begun and we are forming our teams. We will have 5 or 6 teams aged 6-16 this coming season. Practices begin in February and games begin the first Saturday in March and end in May. We provide costs for all registration, uniforms, and other equipment. During the season, each team will practice twice during the week with a game, usually on Saturday. We offer children in the community the opportunity to compete in a top league like Columbus Youth Soccer. Our players have achieved excellence through teamwork, resilience, and persistence. Players learn to care about one another. Parents, neighbors, and relatives have joined our community by attending games, volunteering as team managers, helping with transportation, and providing snacks. There are many ways to help. We need donations, water, snacks, and soccer cleats (new or used). Check out our website at [eastcarverheights.org](http://eastcarverheights.org). If you have any questions feel free to contact Greg Herring, [greg@eastcarverheights.org](mailto:greg@eastcarverheights.org).

**Path to Shine-Columbus** begins January 16th at 4:30 p.m. for the spring at 800 32nd Avenue. We hope to add two new students and are excited to have tutors from Columbus High School for our middle school students. We hope to have speakers from St. Thomas and look forward to learning about not judging others, being yourself and finding your talents to share. If you are interested in being a Path to Shine mentor to elementary school children contact Lisa Herring.

**Boxwood F.A.N.N.** is getting a good assortment of produce, meat and other foods for health and nutrition for our members. We will have speakers and partner with the Boxwood Recreation Center to have the Foodmill Mobile Pantry bring great produce to the neighborhood. We will also partner with Valley Healthcare to have the mobile health unit bring services to the neighborhood and members. We will have speakers talk about resources for classes on nutrition and diabetes prevention.



## CVEM News

**Happy New Year!** Striving for Justice starts another year of social justice conversations. These conversations take place in person on the 4th Sunday of the month from 4-5:30 pm. Join us as we talk about the process of Racial Healing. On January 28, Malinda Shamburger will talk about her trip to Ghana and her path of healing. On February 25, we will hear from the Harris County Community Remembrance Project, and on March 24 we will wrap things up with the Muscogee County Remembrance Project. Additionally, look for invitations to visit Beallwood for Neighborhood Conversations. Hear about what's happening in our community.

*-Malinda Shamburger, Director*

## Next Edition of Seasons

**Our next edition of this newsletter will cover Lent at St. Thomas.** The deadline for inclusion is February 2. We will distribute on February 11.

Seasons at St. Thomas is published each liturgical season. An addressed copy will be available for pick up on a Wednesday or Sunday prior to each season. Copies not picked up are mailed the next day. If you prefer to receive this publication by email, contact Meg in the church office and we will remove you from the mailing list.

