

August 23, 2020

St. Thomas's Episcopal Parish
276 S. College Ave Newark, DE
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weekly newsletter

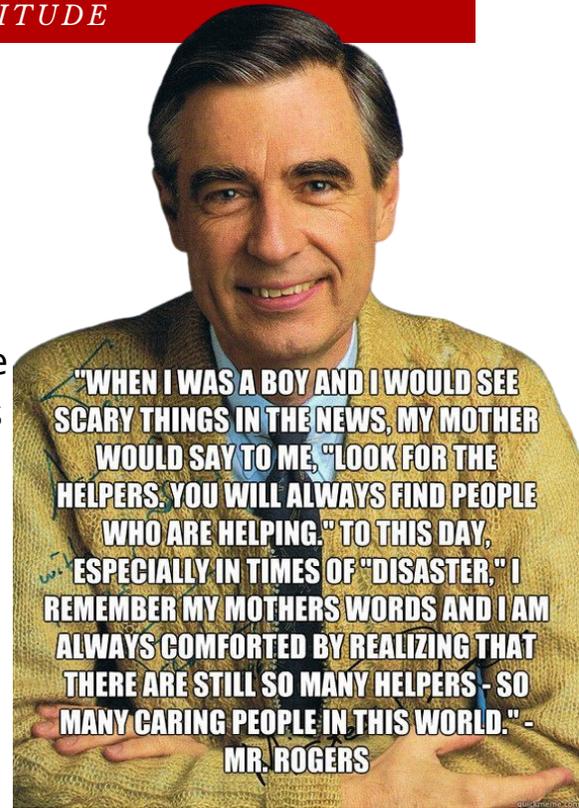
The Carpenter's Helper

This Week..we are filled with GRATITUDE

Dear faith family,

I write to you with a message of GRATITUDE. It has now been almost half a year since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. During this time, all of us have experienced dramatic changes in our lives, which were unanticipated and unimaginable. However, without question, one of the few things that has remained constant is our faith family's commitment to our mission, and to each other. St. Thomas's Parish continues to be a safe and inclusive community of worship that welcomes everyone as a child of God, and values everyone's ministry in the Church and the world. We are deeply committed to being the Gospel in our community, our diocese, and our world, and it is showing.

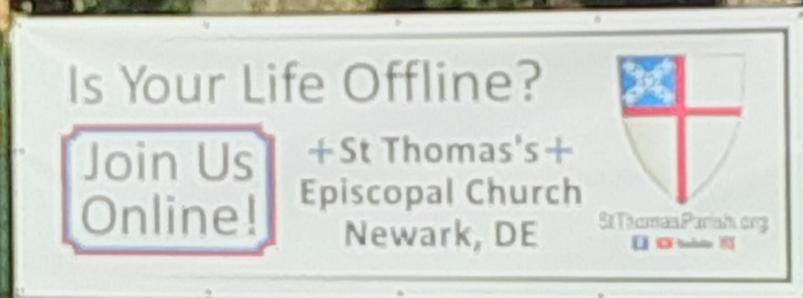
(thanksgiving continued on the back)



During the COVID-19 pandemic, St. Thomas's is alive and well. We are worshiping via live streaming on YouTube (See our YouTube Channel and hit Subscribe!). The full-text bulletins for our services can be found on our website, and by email request.

We also continue to respond to the needs of the Newark Community through our collaboration with the Newark Empowerment Center and others. Those who would like to support our work may do so by going to our "Giving to St Thomas's" page.

Our prayers are with all those who are ill, all who are caring for them, and all who are striving to hear the voice of God in these challenging times. May God bless you and keep you, now and always. For more, see the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware COVID-19 site.



One of the most visible adaptations that has been made is the shift to online worship. What a blessing this has been: our services have been opened up to many who have never, and may never be able to come to our church building. But, it has been no easy undertaking. It has taken a willing team. What may come to mind first is the undertaking of setting up the cameras, microphones, and coordinating broadcasting through YouTube and ZOOM. **Thank You to everyone who rapidly learned how to get us online, and those who continue working to keep services visible and audible.** Although we may miss enjoying the beautiful floral arrangements in person, and participating in receiving the Holy Sacraments, those meaningful parts of our tradition continue. **Thank You to those working behind the scenes in the flower guild and altar guild for their unceasing service.** And for those who are more visible, **Thank You for sharing your gifts of singing, reading, ministering to our children, and assisting with our services.**

Though the traffic in our church building has slowed tremendously during these times, the property still requires tending. **Thank You to those who have tirelessly given their time to the upkeep of this house of God:** cleaning, weeding, watering, and responding to weather events. During this time of social distancing, this property has enabled us to reach out to our community, first with the Christmas in July display, and more recently with our new sign advertising our online presence.

At a time like this, we all need to be there, more than ever, for our most vulnerable. Our Christian love has been shining through in how we continue to care for those who are in need. **Thank You to everyone who participated in making and serving meals, and to those who financially supported this effort.** This has now laid the groundwork for St Thomas, in partnership with St Nicholas, to once again participate in the Hope Dining Hall. Additionally, the Blue Hen Bounty has continued to serve, without interruption. **Thank You to the volunteers who give their time to coordinating donations and providing a safe delivery of food to students.**

I cannot list all of the examples I've witnessed of parishioners reaching out to each other with kindness and care; it is truly awe inspiring. **Thank You to everyone making check-in phone calls, writing letters, sending postcards, and providing meals.** We continue to push through these challenging times with grace and positivity. You and your actions are the strength of our community. And, and huge **Thank You to everyone who has generously continues to share their financial gifts.** Without your contributions, none of this would be possible.

No one but our Lord knows what the future will hold. We continue to be mindful of the health and safety of our parish, staying abreast of guidance from our Diocese, as well as the national, state, and local guidelines. I look forward to the day when our family can again come together in our beloved house of worship, and I can thank you all in person. As we move towards that day, please continue to demonstrate patience, understanding, kindness, and compassion.

Your sister in Faith,
Cana