

April 25, 2021

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 celebrating Earth Day EVERYDAY!



Drive Through/Walk Up Communion and Prayers

continues every Sunday

10-11am

ALL are Welcome!

Bishop Kevin is coming to St Thomas



On May 16th at the 9am service, he will confirm those in our confirmation class who have been waiting for some time (!), and could also receive or reaffirm the confirmation vows of anyone who feels called to do so.

If you have not been received into the Episcopal Church and would like to be, or would like a “booster shot” for your confirmation promises, please let Fr Howie know just as soon as possible.



Thank you for wearing a mask in the church building. It protects those who are worshiping, and communing. Your mask protects the clergy, staff, faith family members, and community. Let's keep our church building safe, healthy, open, and a respectful place for all.

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.



AN OUTDATED VESTRY PICTURE

In the lobby of the church building, there are many pieces hanging on the wall, all of which tell a story of who we (St Thomas's Parish), are. There is the gorgeous oil painting of the old church building; now Sharp Hall. There are a choir of crosses from around the world, joining us with our faith family from far away places. There is our newest art piece, the tree from our neighbors at Tarbiyah School. And, there is a photo collage of our Vestry: a group who literally represents the congregation.

This week, that photo collage went out of date. The Vestry class of 2021 has graduated, and the new class of 2024 has been installed. Due to the pandemic and social distancing, that picture may not ben updated right away, so I wanted to take this opportunity to thank those who have completed their service, and welcome the new.

The Vestry is the elected group that, along with the Rector, looks after the parish's worldly affairs. It creates and monitors the parish's budget, discusses and decides on major church programs, and plans for the church's short- and long-term future. Vestry members usually do not represent specific constituencies, but are expected to act for the good of all members of the parish. They are elected, at the annual meeting, to 4 year terms.



So, first, a huge round of applause for the entire Vestry!! This was a year unlike any other. A global pandemic changed the way we conducted business. All meetings were shifted to remote Zoom sessions. When worship moved to YouTube, many ministries had to rethink ways of doing things, that had been in place for ages, and the Vestry representatives were there to support them. The church building still required upkeep and maintenance, and even got some upgrades: solar panels being the most exciting! The Vestry, again, supported this work. But, the biggest stand out for me was the way that they stepped up to keep us connected during the most isolated times. How many of you received phone calls, postcards, or emails, checking in and sharing a much needed smile?

The Vestry class of 2021 didn't do any of these things alone, but isn't this a great time to give a huge shout out to **Denise Burgher**, who continues to be our convening advisor for ECM and shines her light on many ministries. Thank you **DJ Ferguson**, who continues to be a blessing to Stewardship and several other ministries. **Barbara Graham** is a treasure and I suspect she has already started planning for this year's annual bazaar. And last, but not least, we must acknowledge **Joy Lynam**'s grace and dedication. She held the position of Senior, or Rector's Warden. Her kind but prodding leadership kept us on track, not just checking and maintaining course but always working to add wind to the sails. Can you serve more than once on Vestry- Yes! So, it may not be the last time these fine faith family members faces are in the photo collage, but let's offer our thanks and let them take a rest from this responsibility.

WELCOME to our new Vestry Members! (left to right) **Philippa Sunergen**, **Cami Seward**, and **Larry Duggan**, who previously stepped up to fill an opening left in the Vestry by our dear friend Jerry's passing, and has agreed and has been elected to continue serving. We are greatful for your fresh eyes and ideas, and for your loving care for St Thomas's Parish.

