

# The APOSTLE



Easter 2018

*“In my journey, I have come to think of some congregations as the new village church, a place where pilgrims can remember Christianity. There, the beauty of saintliness is, as theologian Edith Wyschograd suggests, ‘the flash of sanctity’ amid the mundane — the holiness of a reenchanting world. Even as old villages are vanishing, some Christians are remaking the tradition of the village church as they reconstruct spiritual community around this ancient American ideal. And, perhaps not unexpectedly in this transient age, their new village church is spiritually mobile: a pilgrim community on a journey together.” —Diana Butler Bass from **Christianity for the Rest of Us: How the Neighborhood Church Is Transforming the Faith***

Over the last few months, we have been through a lot as a community of faith. Everything from losing many long time members, to celebrations of new baptisms, to community involvement in recent student suicides, and to even some of our members being elected to school boards and other offices. The reach of St. Thomas is getting larger and you can see this in our ever growing footprint in our community.

“Being the Church” is something we talk a lot about. When I reference this in a sermon, it is usually with a challenge for all of us to go a little deeper in our own places in being disciples where we are. Diana Butler Bass writes about this very idea in her book called **Christianity for the Rest of Us**. I really think we are called as a community to more fully embrace the idea of “being church” by being more and more a “village church” as Diana writes.

We live in a world of more and more disconnect. If you are tech savvy, you can now do all of your banking without seeing a person. You can order your groceries, clothes, even arrange for car repair, and never have to set foot in a store. Insurance companies are even setting up “online” doctor offices where you simply log in and see a doctor via a camera on your computer. While I think the church needs and should be offering options for people to engage online, I think our real gift to the world is to run counter to this movement. We are called to be real people in real places exhibiting a very real presence of God’s love through our relationships.

We are about to celebrate Easter, and it is a time when many people will attend church. Some out of habit, others out of obligation and still others out of curiosity. What happens when we transform our congregations into places that see themselves as critical to the neighborhood? As critical to the greater community? As critical to society at large? When that happens we may find ourselves in the midst of the struggles and joys of the community we are already in. The church that will thrive in today’s world can’t be insular or hidden; rather we are called to be beacons on the hill and a light to the world!

If we want to do this I think we need to hear God saying to us: “I need your help. I need to you to show up more and risk being those kinds of disciples. I need you to come with eager expectation of making a difference in the world. I need you to be present in the excitement and the difficulties of the world around us. I need you to be the church.”

St. Thomas has a very bright future. God is certainly at work in our congregation and community. How will you be a part?

*—Blessings,  
Father Jar*

## FOOTNOTES

*“Where two or three are gathered in His name...better sing a round.”*

Dr. Beth L. Elswick,  
Director of  
Music  
Ministries



By the time this edition of the Apostle graces your mailbox, we will be well into Holy Week. The energy will be palpable, and the drama will be intense. The people of St. Thomas will be engaged in activities and moving in high gear. The Scripture, the music, the drama and the worship services will all have a common focal point. In an age when our culture seems perpetually fractured, the community and common goals of our Lent/Easter worship are a welcomed relief—a Godsend in every sense of the word.

Yet, for Christians, Easter is both a wonderful point of arrival and also a significant point of departure. For the musicians of St. Thomas, we will CELEBRATE Easter!

After Easter Sunday, what will you do? *“Where two or three are gathered. . . .we will?”* We must move ahead and plan to grow our ministries. We have a very good idea of our musical, creative, artistic, and worship abilities.

Believe it or not, choir members do take vacations. Sure, singing rounds is fun, but the end of the liturgical year is light years away. Small ensembles can sing unison and two-part anthems. While we cannot sing the Masterworks like the Rutter Requiem or the Hallelujah chorus every week, we can surely have intermittent wonderful goals between now and Advent.

SOOOOOO — join the choir, praise ensemble, Children’s choir, VBS or Arts Camp in order to satisfy your creative craving and support the music ministry at St. Thomas.

Do you have creative talents that you wish to share? We look forward to supporting the services for Mother’s Day, Rogation Sunday, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, Father’s Day, July the Fourth, Rally Day, the Blessing of the Animals, All Saints’ Day, Confirmation, Thanksgiving, and more. We have the energy, the talent, the Scriptural call to make music, and the healthy support of the congregation, vestry, clergy, and staff at St. Thomas to do so. *“Where two or three are gathered in His name, recruit.”*

With a little league and farm club, we have set the ball rolling for another generation of fine musicians. The children’s choir and youth musicians are making noteworthy contributions to our services.

Go, St. Thomas!

*—Beth*



**St. Thomas  
Newcomer Lunch  
April 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Are you new to St. Thomas church? We want to welcome you to our faith community by inviting you and your family to our next Newcomer lunch on Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 12:15pm in Parish Hall 2.

Come learn more about our St. Thomas leadership, staff, ministries and outreach opportunities. We look forward to seeing you then.

For more information or if you can attend the lunch, please contact **Jean Adam** at 913-530-9097 (cell) or [jean\\_adam2004@yahoo.com](mailto:jean_adam2004@yahoo.com).



REFLECTIONS

# Mission trip will serve victims of Harvey



The Rev. Kelly Demo,  
Assistant Rector

As of September 5, 2017, Hurricane Harvey damaged 203,000 homes, of which 12,700 were destroyed.

One of those homes belonged to a wealthy attorney. After completing the required paperwork, this attorney was granted \$2500 from the government for restoration. However, because he had access to a computer, personal assistant, and could sit at his desk working while on hold with the agency, he was able to work the system to appeal and up his benefits to \$25,000.

Yet, in a different part of town an 80-year old woman living alone in poverty, who didn't have access to a computer, was trying to receive help from the government and navigate the complex system by handwriting letters.

For several years the youth of our parish have learned about the complexities of poverty in our country. They have seen how systemic racism and generational poverty stack the odds against individuals, and they have learned that they have the power to help.

This summer we will be looking at a different aspect of poverty when we take our mission trip to Houston, TX to help with hurricane clean up.

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, five adults and 20 youth will fly to Houston for a week to help clean and rebuild homes.

I was just there visiting friends and looking at the church where we will be staying; everyone I talked to was so grateful that we were coming.

There is still an overwhelming amount of work to do. It will be

several years before many neighborhoods get back to normal.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, we will be having our annual silent auction and fundraiser for the mission trip. We want to encourage everyone to come that evening to have some wonderful Tex-Mex food and bid on exciting items.

All of the proceeds from the event will go towards covering the costs of the trip. Also, if you or your business has items or services to donate to the auction, please contact Mother Kelly Demo to arrange pick up.

So, mark your calendars for April 28<sup>th</sup>. The auction starts at 6 pm and dinner will be served at 6:45 (after the 5:30 service). Thank you for supporting the youth of St.Thomas.

*Mother Kelly*



Images of hurricane devastation are taken from the internet news services.

## MINISTRIES: OUTREACH

# St. Thomas becomes an IHN HOST CHURCH!

Excitement fills the halls at St. Thomas the Apostle Church! After prayerful consideration and in keeping with the mission of our church to help those less fortunate, our Outreach ministry has agreed to have St. Thomas become a Host church for *Interfaith Hospitality Network*.

This means that, whereas St. Thomas has long been a Support church for First Christian Church in Olathe, we will now be the home for the situationally-homeless families and single women in the IHN program for a week at a time.

First Christian Church in Olathe has served as a Host church since the inception of IHN 13 ½ years ago; at this time, they are needing to step down which gives St. Thomas an opportunity to fill the role of Host church. St. Thomas volunteers will be assisted by volunteers from other congregations as we provide our guests with evening meals, compassionate friendship during the evening, overnight shelter, and transportation to/from necessary locations.

Host week takes place for each church in the network for one week approximately four times per year. This is our chance for greater involvement in serving situationally-homeless families and single women in Johnson County.

Being a Host congregation will require the continued support of the generous volunteers at St. Thomas, and will call for commitment from additional volunteers. Any volunteers who interact with IHN families and single women need to have attended a two-hour training session; these trainings are held every other month at an IHN member church.

The next training session will be held at St. Paul's United Methodist Church on May 15, 2018; St. Paul's is located at 7740 Lackman in Lenexa.

What a great way for the parishioners at St. Thomas to fully live out the mission of our church! There are thirty-six congregations of different faiths that participate in the IHN network; consistency among these houses of worship gives guests stability so they can work on life skills including budgeting skills, inter-relational matters, parenting skills and more, and work to get back on their feet. IHN serves small numbers at any one time with intensive social services and loving hearts; the goal for each guest is to regain their place in society with new skills, independent housing, and the ability to attain long-term success. St. Thomas is privileged to have the opportunity to accompany these families and single women on their journey.

—Margaret Walkenshaw and Dola McNown  
IHN Primary Co-coordinators  
St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church



All photos from IHN website

## MINISTRIES: OUTREACH

*IHN AUCTION UPDATE*

**It's less than 3 months away!**

**Yes, the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual IHN Dinner Auction is  
June 14<sup>th</sup> at the OP Convention Center**

The evening includes:

- \* fun, adult games (putting contest, wine toss and more!);
  - \* a variety of silent and exciting live auction items appealing to singles, couples and families;
  - \* appetizers, delicious dinner + includes 2 top-shelf beverages;
  - \* **Joe Lauria** *in person*,
- and the popular **Nigro Brothers Auctioneers**.

Tickets are \$75.00 per person and can be purchased online at  
*[www.jocoihn.org/auction](http://www.jocoihn.org/auction)*.

Your participation helps support the continuing work of  
**JoCo Interfaith Hospitality Network**,  
serving homeless families and single women in Johnson Co.

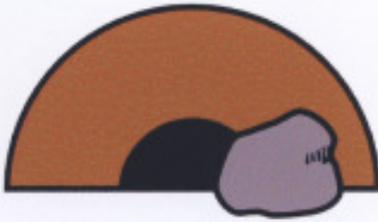
In addition to attending the event, there are other ways to help make this annual fundraiser a success:

- 1. Sponsorships- individual or company**
- 2. Volunteer to procure items, help during the auction, donate an item, or**
- 3. make a financial donation.**

Contact auction co-chairs with any questions:

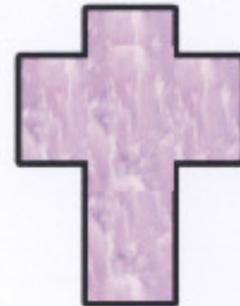
**Margaret Walkenshaw** (897-4766) or **Dola McNown** (526-3573)

# Easter Crossword



## Word List:

bread    cross  
sacrifice    love  
stone    hosanna  
empty    risen  
slept    thorns



### Across

1. Taking this during the last supper symbolized Jesus' body.
4. Jesus was forced to wear a crown made of these instead of a crown meant for a real king.
7. The angel told the women, "Don't be afraid, Jesus isn't here; He has \_\_\_\_!"
8. Instead of praying the disciples did this when Jesus went off to pray by himself.
9. The main reason that God gave His only son, Jesus to die for each of us.

### Down

2. On Sunday the two Mary's didn't find Jesus but a tomb that was \_\_\_\_.
3. The word people shouted to Jesus that means blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord
5. Jesus became the \_\_\_\_ for us, so we could be forgiven for our sins.
6. Jesus was meant to die on this.
8. This was put in front of the tomb so nobody could steal Jesus' body.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

# From Empty Tomb to Easter Eggs: Connecting the Sacred to the Secular during the Easter Season



Barbara McCall,  
Director of  
Children's  
Ministry

It's about that time...time for the staff to gear up for a week full of services to take us from Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, to his passion on the Cross, to the miracle at the Empty Tomb on Easter...and a week later to a great Celebration Sunday Brunch and Easter Egg Hunt for the kids (April 8<sup>th</sup>—mark your calendars). But, have you ever wondered how exactly did we get from the Empty Tomb to Eggs?

With a pre-teen in the McCall house who is attempting to get this “life” thing all figured out, we've gotten a lot of questions lately about how our sacred traditions have anything to do with the secular ones. I'm gonna be completely honest, I had no answers to some of his questions. So, I set out to find some. With help from our friends at Building Faith at Virginia Theological Seminary ([www.buildfaith.org](http://www.buildfaith.org)), here is what I found out about Eggs and Easter:

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:<sup>[a]</sup> The old has gone, the new is here!”*  
(2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV)

For millennia, eggs have been a part of spring rituals and traditions as a sign of new life. So, it stands to reason that as we celebrate the “new life” that we have in the risen Christ, eggs would be an appropriate symbol. The chicks and ducks that emerge from those eggs are also a symbol of that new life, along with other baby animals that typically arrive in the spring (BUNNIES!). Some consider that a chick hatching from an egg is representative of Christ emerging from his tomb. Others find the chocolates, candies and other “surprises” found inside plastic eggs during an Easter Egg Hunt symbolize the surprise (but maybe not so much the shock or fear) experienced by the three Mary's who visited Jesus's tomb only to find his body was no longer there.

For those throughout history who took on a Lenten fast that often included not only refraining from meat, but also dairy and eggs, the return of eggs at Easter represented a welcome end to the fast of Lent and the joy of the Easter feast. (I can only imagine this would be especially true if they were CHOCOLATE eggs!)

Certain stories of biblical figures of Jesus' time have also linked eggs to Easter. There is a story, that has in some years been shared in our Sunday School classes, about Mary Magdalene traveling to Rome to share the news of Christ's resurrection. As Mary addressed Emperor Tiberius, holding an egg in her hand she proclaimed, “Christ is risen!” to which the Emperor responded that Jesus had as much chance of rising from the dead as that egg in her hand had of turning red. Guess what happened next????

Final Question: What about decorating those eggs? Answer: “PACE EGGS”

Pace Eggs were the eggs – hard boiled and dyed with strongly colored vegetables and plants such as beetroot, spinach and tea – that would be handed out to children in the Middle Ages who would travel from house to house singing on Easter morn. The word “Pace” comes from the French word “Paque” meaning Easter.

So, as you decorate those boiled eggs, stuff the plastic ones and prepare for your Easter celebrations with your family, rest assured that there are PLENTY of good connections between our sacred Easter feast and the egg hunts that come with it!



—Ms. Barbara



## Our normal service hours

### Saturdays

5:30 Holy Communion

### Sundays

8:45 Holy Communion  
*with praise music & band*

10:45 Holy Communion  
*with traditional music*



St. Thomas the Apostle Church  
12251 Antioch Road  
Overland Park, KS 66213  
• phone: 913-451-0512 •  
• fax: 913-451-1966 •  
[www.stthomasop.org](http://www.stthomasop.org)

**NON-PROFIT ORG.**  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
KANSAS CITY, MO  
PERMIT NO. 82

Return Service Requested

The next deadline for the  
**APOSTLE** is  
**April 22, 2018**

## Parish Notes

The sympathy of the St. Thomas family is extended to **Donna Fye**, **Douglas Fye** (Natalie Gietschen), and **Lilly and Lorelei Fye** on the passing of their loved one, **Donald Fye** on January 29, 2018.



Chalkboard mural created by our Sunday school classes.

photo/Barbara McCall

## Easter Week in brief

- 3/25: Palm Sunday**
- 29: Maundy Thursday**, service at 7 pm
- 30: Good Friday**, services at noon and 7 pm.
- 31: Easter Vigil at 7 pm**
- APRIL:**
- 1: EASTER SUNDAY** services at 6 am, 8:45 & 10:45 am and 5 pm Easter service with incense.
- 8: ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT!**