

# The AP<sup>OSTLE</sup>

Lent 2020

*“In many cultures there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year’s income to some holy use. For Christians, to observe the forty days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year’s days. After being baptized by John in the river Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent forty days asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, Christians are supposed to ask one way or another what it means to be themselves.”—Frederick Buechner, Lent Reflection*

We find ourselves once again in the winter months and inching toward spring. Within our walk of seasons in the church year, we are approaching the season of Lent. Lent is a time of reflection, self-examination, study, preparation and renewal for once again walking our yearly pilgrimage through Holy Week and Easter. I love what Frederick Buechner says in the quote above. In particular, when I think about how Lent is 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the days of our year, it gives me perspective for giving our spiritual life and relationship with God and neighbor my fullest attention.

There are lots of ways to do this important work:

- **Recommit to weekly attendance at church** as well as the Holy Week offerings. Each service is carefully crafted with the Lenten themes and ways to grow deeper in relationship with God.
- **Practice daily reflection** through scripture and prayer. There are several resources available for this including online, like the *Forward Movement*.
- **Commit to giving up** something for the season of Lent. This should be something you desire or want regularly. Part of the journey occurs when that desire arises in you, you instead focus on prayer or other aspects of your spiritual life.
- **Take on something new!** This may be a needed habit or simply a recommitment to something that will be life giving and bring you closer to God.
- **Commit to acts of service or charity.** Doing for others out of the abundance of your life (yes, there is always an abundance!). Reaching out and making a difference can help us put things in perspective and lead to spreading love in the world.
- **Reconcile with another person.** This is always the opportunity to work on broken relationships in our lives. Maybe the season is spent preparing for this work and looking for some way to reach out and reconnect.
- **Make your Confession.** You may not know that this is available in the Episcopal Church; you can meet with any priest and ask for the rite of reconciliation of the penitent. I suggest you meet with one first to get ready and find out the work you can do. In the process you open up to God by way of working with a priest in the liturgy. Anything shared in the context of confession is strictly confidential.

These are just a few ways of using this special time as a way of getting closer to God and neighbor during Lent. I hope you also check out our different programs and offerings that are coming up.

Lent blessings,

GARL

## FOOTNOTES

### *Lenten Musical Journey*

As we travel through our liturgical years, certain pieces of music give us a temporal flashback. Have you heard a song and been mystically transported to another place and time? It is as if you could instantly recall where you stood and what your surroundings were at that time as you replayed the music in your mind.

We musicians count on it, as well. Recurring seasonal music brings balance and continuity to our lives. This year both the praise services and the traditional services will recall superb compositions in the Lenten musical offerings: *Jesus Christ Superstar* by Andrew Lloyd Weber and Tim Rice; *Godspell* by Stephen Schwartz; and *The Crucifixion* by Sir John Stainer.

During Lent, the praise band will feature selections from the musicals that particularly correspond to the reading in the lectionary for the Sundays in Lent. We will use the instrumentation that best creates the musical atmosphere required by the piece, be it acoustical, acapella, or the more aggressive electric guitar and bass. In addition to music from *Superstar* and *Godspell*, the season is well served in the music of the Spirituals. The praise musicians look forward to revisiting the songs of the anonymous bards who labored in the fields and could only tell their stories through music.

The children will learn appropriate songs for the season for use on their *Walk Through Holy Week* on Palm Sunday. In addition, the youth musicians will work on music for the Maundy Thursday service.

The traditional choir will present *The Crucifixion* by Sir John Stainer, and the work will be accompanied on the new organ. This is most appropriate since Stainer was an accomplished organist; in fact, the first organ method book that I used was written by Stainer. He is also recognized as being one of the first musicologists; some texts even call Stainer, the Father of Musicology. At any rate, he uses the patterns of earlier Passions—the role of Christ is sung by a bass; the narrator is sung by a tenor; the choir sings movements commenting on the action. Many new chorale/hymns are included in the work. Many of us will readily recall *God So Loved the World* which is sung by the choir, and the hymn *Cross of Jesus, cross of sorrow* is included in the *Hymnal 1982*.

Please consider joining one of our ensembles for the season. The Praise Band practices at 8:10 on Sunday mornings; the traditional choir rehearses on Wednesday evenings at 7:30. Children sing during the services at the Children's Chapel choir; the youth group will work rehearsals on Sunday afternoons near their regular youth meeting time. I hope that you can find the time to sing a note or two. And I hope that you have fun revisiting spirituals, songs from Holy Week, the Stainer *Crucifixion*, as well as *Godspell* and *Superstar*.

—Beth

Dr. Beth L. Elswick,  
Director of  
Music  
Ministries



## Shrove Tuesday



Begin your Lent with a celebration by coming to our annual Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup> from 5 -7 pm. Free Will offering.

## Lent begins!



**Services**  
**7:00 am and Noon**  
**Imposition of Ashes**

**6:00 pm**  
**Imposition of Ashes and**  
**Children's Liturgy**

**7:00 pm**  
**Imposition of Ashes and Holy**  
**Eucharist**

**Nursery care will be offered**  
**from 6-8 pm – for ages birth**  
**through 3 yrs.**

## REFLECTIONS

***What is eco-justice?***

For the past two summers our young people have been on mission trips to help with clean up from major hurricanes in Texas and North Carolina. They saw first hand the impact that our changing climate is having on the most vulnerable populations. In Texas our junior high youth delivered emergency food kits to seniors and people who are disabled. Houston floods happen so regularly now that often people are stranded in their homes for days and their regular Meals on Wheels cannot get to them. Both in Houston and rural North Carolina we also helped rebuild low income homes that had been damaged by the storms. Incredibly by the time we got there, the storms had happened almost a year earlier. But because they lacked the resources to help themselves, people were either living in their damaged homes or in FEMA trailers.

This year we will focus our energies “upstream” if you will. That is, we want to learn about how vulnerable communities are addressing the climate crisis themselves. We will be traveling to Los Angeles to work with organizations that address urban farming, urban green spaces and water clean up. We will also have an opportunity to hear from a former diocesan youth now living in LA where he is a chemist working on developing biofuels.

We also felt it would be unhelpful to hop on a plane and add carbon dioxide to the atmosphere just to learn about how to help save the planet! So, our youth are working on how to calculate what our carbon footprint will be on this trip. We will be planting trees right here in Kansas City to help negate the carbon we will be spending.

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, we will be hosting our annual silent auction dinner and trivia night. Please mark your calendars now for that always fun event and watch *Tower Talk* for more information as we get closer to this event.

As always, on behalf of our youth community, I want to thank the larger St. Thomas community for its unwavering support of our young people.

*—Mather Kelly*

*The Rev. Kelly  
Demo,  
Assistant  
Rector*



## WARDEN'S WORDS

Dear fellow parishioners and friends,

St. Thomas had another exceptional year in 2019. Our continued growth over the last decade allowed us to become number one in the Diocese of Kansas in both membership and weekend attendance. Our unparalleled growth is achieved by your ongoing commitment to providing both a welcoming environment as well as providing the wherewithal that funds our very existence. St. Thomas is really a special place of worship that embodies our mission to “Come, Grow, Serve and Make a Difference.” We should all be quite proud of our achievements.

Our recent Stewardship campaign was a success; your pledges will allow St. Thomas to continue its broad outreach and a wide array of programs across age groups. The importance of you fulfilling your financial commitment is vital to our ability to operate within our budget. We must strive to avoid deficit spending or sadly, because of pledge shortfalls, the necessity to curtail facets of our outreach or activities. Let’s be attentive to what we can control.

Gar, Kelly, and our entire staff are financially responsible and operate efficiently within a tight budget. Our membership growth in 2019 of 26 new pledges will compensate for those lost through the natural attrition of our membership. A real sign of our vitality is the “net” gain in membership we have experienced for years.

When things are going very well, and we have been on a nice “roll,” it is easy to grow complacent. Complacency is probably the most looming threat that could jeopardize St. Thomas. I’m bolstered by our past and optimistic that as a parish, we will not falter. We have the blessings of strong clergy and your unwavering support of St. Thomas.

I am grateful for your support and have considered it a privilege to serve as your Senior Warden. **George Phillips** will serve us very well in that role as we continue our journey at St. Thomas together.

Faithfully yours,

*—Bruce*

*Bruce  
Henricks  
M.D., Senior  
Warden*



## OUTREACH MINISTRIES

# JoCo Interfaith Hospitality Network Changes at St. Thomas

A number of years ago, St. Thomas became a “Support” congregation for the IHN ministry at First Christian Church of Olathe. During those years, our St. Thomas volunteers traveled to First Christian and aided them by volunteering in the positions that covered their building from 5 pm until 6:30 in the morning. We also provided drivers, laundry and supplies.

In 2018, First Christian decided they could no longer act as a Host church. IHN asked St. Thomas to consider becoming a HOST congregation and allow the IHN guests to reside in our church for one week four times a year. With the approval of Father Gar, the Vestry and support from the staff, St. Thomas became an IHN HOST church in August 2018.

First Christian Church is a small congregation with a few dedicated IHN volunteers. They will continue to volunteer at St. Thomas during our February Host week. After February, the First Christian volunteers will become volunteers at Overland Park Christian Church during their IHN Host weeks.

St. Thomas will continue to receive the great HOST week support we have been receiving from The Church of Jesus Christ (LDS), and from a small group of “chefs” from OP First Assembly of God Church.

In July 2020, St Thomas will have an IHN training here in our building (date TBD). The training will give us an opportunity to add to our volunteer group. Training is open to all and no congregation affiliation is required.

St. Thomas and First Christian have aided each other in the IHN ministry for many years. We thank First Christian Church for their constant, compassionate support during HOST weeks at St. Thomas and wish them well as they continue their IHN ministry with Overland Park Christian Church.

—Dola McNow

Invite/Welcome/Connect  
(IWC)

**in•vi•ta•tion** *n* - **1 a:** the act of inviting **b:** an often formal request to be present or participate.

We know it as the written or spoken form with which a person is invited to a dinner, a party, or to join a group. These are things most of us like and want to be included in them.

**What about inviting someone to church? Does that get you excited or intimidate you?**

Consider the ways St. Thomas has been a blessing to you and imagine how you can share that blessing with others. We say that people are the ‘church’ not the building. Think of your friends from church that you would love to introduce to a family member, a neighbor, or co-worker. Make it happen. Extend the INVITATION to come to our church. It could be to a worship service or to any of our St. Thomas events.

*Be sure to invite a friend to our Lenten Lunch speaker series on  
Wednesdays at noon  
during the season of Lent.*

—IWC committee—

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

## Lent for Families

Lent is hard. Lent is hard for grown-ups. Lent can be really hard for families with young children. Although the miracle of the risen Christ at the end of our Lenten road is just as exciting as the end of our Advent road with the miracle of the Christ Child, the Lenten journey takes us through some places and events that can be very hard for children to connect with and understand.

Barbara McCall,  
Director of  
Children's  
Ministry



When paired with the idea that they often hear of having to “give up” something they enjoy, Lent can be a season that children (of all ages) often approach with a sense of dread or apprehension.

Yet Lent provides a valuable opportunity for children to begin to understand self-reflection and self-discipline as they grow in their life in Christ and begin to develop an understanding of the miracle of the cross. Although a Lenten sacrifice or taking on a new discipline for the Season can be a very special way to prepare for the events of Holy Week, the idea of sacrificing or taking on a new practice for forty whole days can also be overwhelming.

An alternative for anyone who struggles to feel success when it comes to keeping up a Lenten practice for the full forty days, is to try a WEEKLY discipline instead. This can be anything that is meaningful to you personally and helps you feel closer to Christ during this season. One of my favorite children's ministry blog sites, “Worshipping with Children,” has some great ideas that might get you started:

- **Say The Lord's Prayer** for one day each week. (Our children in Ms. Dola's class work hard to learn this prayer each year.)
- **Take a moment as a family to talk about the blessings** you experienced or shared each day for one week. (This is a great dinner time discipline!)
- **Be intentional about Passing the Peace** to each member of your household each day for one week – no matter what happened that day! (We do this so well with our church family each Sunday, but it's something we often forget to do with those we live with.)
- **Light a special candle** each evening for one week and while it's lit, offer prayers for those in need – whether they are known to you or known to God. If you have a candle damper or blow the candle out gently, watch intentionally as the “light changes” and our prayers rise to God along with the smoke. (Our 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Grade Godly Play Sunday schoolers can tell you all about the changing light.)

On the first Sunday of Lent, we will take time to make special prayer tools that you can use to engage in these or other practices throughout the Lenten Season at our “Lent Beginnings” workshop. These tools can be used for one week at a time, or can be set in a special “prayer space” in your home for use anytime you feel called to work with them. A sample prayer space will be available for your viewing and your use throughout the season in the Narthex. A weekly prayer moment will also be offered online via the St. Thomas Facebook page.

I also hope to see you at our very special Ash Wednesday for Families service at 6 pm on February 26<sup>th</sup>. This service is open to all, but especially offers our families the opportunity to begin the season with scripture and songs easy to connect with, and a special explanation of the Lenten Season and our practice of wearing ashes as we begin our walk to Jerusalem together.

Blessings,

*Ms. Barbara*



We never hibernate at St. Thomas!  
We've stayed busy  
by serving the community & having fun!

Celebrating the feast of the Epiphany



Celebrating the feast of the Epiphany, our Sunday School kids could dress up like the Magi. Some played 3Kings Bingo with **Mr. J.D.** (John McCall) and others made drawings with chalk.



Winter ROTC—Elementary Group helps out at Turnstyles Thrift Store in Merriam, KS

Seventeen children in grades 3, 4, and 5 participated in our Winter ROTC community project at Turnstyles Thrift store. In 2.5 hours, they unloaded an entire trailer of new donations from local Catholic parishes and sorted unsold clothing from 14 racks for fabric recycling. Their work for one day will bring roughly enough money to feed 20 families for a month!



Taking a well-deserved break from a morning of community service, our Children and Youth group leaders relax at the afternoon party at Dave and Buster's. From left are **Jillian Hardeman**--Youth & Children's intern, **Rachel Hall**--former intern, **Matt Allen**--Youth Leadership team member, **Reverend Kelly Demo**--Associate rector for Youth and Children's ministry, **Brian Gordon**--Youth Leadership team member, and **Ami Tevis**--Children's ministry parent.

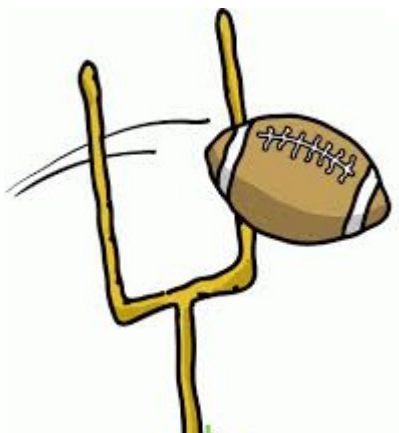
## Super Bowl Sunday



Members attending the 8:45 service wore RED to show support for the Chiefs!



**Jacob McCall** makes a Chief-themed Prayer Candle; it was lit at the beginning of the fourth quarter. Isn't that when the Chiefs came alive and won the game? Hmmm....



**Allison Phillips** decorates a cookie for the Super Bowl party.



## PARISH NOTES

### *Baptisms*

On Sunday, February 16, the following children were baptized:

**Brian Daniel Walter**, son of *Bryce & Ann Walter*.

Brian was baptized during the 8:45 service;

**Colin William Redlien**, son of *Parker & Melissa Redlien*.

Colin was baptized during the 10:45 service.

*Welcome to the household of God.*

### *Deaths*

The St. Thomas family extends its heartfelt sympathy to the family members of the following persons who have passed on:

**Richard Krupka;**

**Sue Sandilos;**

**James Stines,**  
father of *Josh Stines*;

**Mark Ash,**  
father of  
*Michael, Jacob, & Chris Ash*;

**Carol Vaughn,**  
mother of *Steve Connelly*;

**Jay Dooley**  
husband of  
*Becky Cropper*;

**Craig Christie**  
husband of  
*Janet Christie*.





**Our  
regular 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)

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The next deadline for the  
**APOSTLE** is  
**March 22, 2020**

**NEW VESTRY  
ELECTED**

**Congratulations  
to**

**Andy Carter  
Donna Kopp  
Vance Lamb  
Kari Wold**

**George Phillips,**  
Senior Warden

**Bruce Henricks,**  
Junior Warden

**Wednesday Lenten Luncheon Series**

**The Final Word Lenten Lecture Series** will welcome prominent Kansas Citians to let us know what they would say if this were their last time to ever get to speak to an audience.

What is important to them?

What do they want us to know?

The lectures will be from 12-1 pm and we will have a simple soup luncheon offered.

**March 4** *Bill Tammeus*, author

**March 11** *Sly James*, author, former KC mayor

**March 18** *Gordon Docking*, author

**March 25** *Janee Hanzlick*, Johnson County commissioner

**April 1** *Evelyn Tilzer*, speaker and child of two Holocaust survivors

