

Youth Confirmation Class begins Sunday, April 11, 5:00pm

Sundays: April 11 - May 16
Apostle's Garden (weather permitting)

* Youth may wish to bring a lawn chair, or the brick wall & benches will be available. In case of inclement weather we will move into Parish Hall 1.*

The Sacrament of Confirmation allows youth (in grades 8 and up) to make a personal statement of, and commitment to, their faith after having been baptized at a young age. Confirmation Class is an important chance to explore our Christian Faith and Episcopal Traditions to assist youth in making the decision to take part in this sacrament of the church. If your youth is interested in this opportunity, please contact Barbara McCall (bmccall@stthomasop.org) or Kelly Demo (kdemo@stthomasop.org). Bishop Cathleen Bascom will join us for Confirmations at the 11am service on Sunday, May 23.

Yard Sale Drop-Off Changes!!

We will start collecting items for the Yard Sale on

Saturday, April 17 from 2:00 - 5:00pm

Tues, April 20—6:30 - 8:30pm

Thurs, April 22—6:30- 8:30pm

If you're unable to come on those days and times, please reach out to Kelly Demo—913-451-0512, X224

Here is what we need for donations:

- we need to borrow some tables that we can display items on. Card tables, folding tables, etc.
- we need plastic or paper bags that people can use to shop.
- we need items to sell! **household items, yard/gardening items, sports/exercise equipment, and you name it! We will take it!**



Items that don't sell will be donated to one of the organizations we work with for ROTC. If you have large items that you want a particular price on please indicate that when you drop it off. Clothing is fine, we will take it, but it does not generally sell very well at yard sales.

Thank you all for your support of our youth!!

Youth Fundraiser Yard Sale—APRIL 24 & 25

Summer @ St. Thomas 2021 Camp Signups are AVAILABLE NOW <https://stthomasop.org/summer-st-thomas-2021/>

We will continue to use Covid-safe protocols, including masks and social distancing, to offer our highly popular summer camps including Reaching Out to the Community (for grades 3-High School), Vacation Bible Camp (preschool-5th grade) and Arts Camp (1st-5th grades), as well as the St. Thomas Youth Mission Trip! Visit our website, or contact Barbara McCall (bmccall@stthomasop.org) or Mtr. Kelly (kdemo@stthomasop.org) for more information!

Congratulations to Children & Youth

Email any special news about your child or youth to Barbara—bmccall@stthomasop.org or Kelly—kdemo@stthomasop.org so that we may add it to our newsletters!

St. Thomas Family Forum on Facebook—

<https://www.facebook.com/StThomasOPFamilies>

Stay connected with other St. Thomas families with children & youth via our new page! We hope this can be a source of connection and community until we can be together again. The church is here to support our families! If you have any needs please reach out to Barbara McCall, Dir. of Children and Families, 913.909.7318, or bmccall@stthomasop.org or via call/text to let the church know how we can support you.

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Teacher Appreciation Week

May 2 – May 8

St. Thomas's New Mental Health & Wellness Ministry would like to celebrate Teachers and Educational Administrators

Join us in honoring these professionals from both our St. Thomas Family & the Comanche Elementary Community by writing notes and cards of appreciation. **(Please sign all cards "From the St. Thomas the Apostle Community")**

Notes/cards may be dropped off at the church and placed in the designated container located on the pick-up table in the Narthex. Please have all notes/cards turned in by Sunday, May 2.

Questions? Please contact:
Margaret Walkenshaw mwalkenshaw@kc.surewest.net
or Deacon Fran Wheeler fwheeler@stthomasop.org



TOWER TALK

APRIL 10 & 11, 2021

- Worship this Week -

Sat, 5:30pm—Holy Communion in Sanctuary & Pkg Lot

Sun, 9:00am—Holy Communion (online)

11:00am—Holy Communion in Sanctuary & Pkg Lot

Monday—Thursday, 8:00pm—Compline—Online

In-person services will be available to watch afterward on both YouTube and Facebook. <https://www.youtube.com/c/stthomasop> and <https://www.facebook.com/stthomasop>

Visit our website <https://stthomasop.org> for bulletins for the weekend services. To watch services LIVE click here:

<https://stthomasop.org/livestream/>

Register for all in-person services by clicking this link: <https://rsvp.church/r/e2dW8tj0>

- Sunday Christian Education -

Adult Forum at 10:00am on Zoom. This Sunday we will return to the *Spiritual Practices* class by The Rev. Christopher Martin. Links to follow and details will be sent in an email later in the week. Join us for a brief study and lively discussion on Sunday mornings!

Zoom Sunday School—April 11

9am Pre-Grade 3: Faces of Easter 7 - is this really the END???? See how Jesus' journey to the cross gave us a story that HAS NO END!

9:30am 4th-8th: Jesus appears to the Disciples...we'll dig into the Lego Bible to learn more about how Jesus appeared to his disciples following his death and resurrection!

Join us on Zoom! <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81733038170>
Meeting ID: 817 3303 8170

Next In-Person Family Worship: Sunday, April 18 @ 11am in the Parish Hall

Saturday, April 10: Music Recording sessions TBA, 9:30-11am Nave; Holy Communion, 5:30pm Sanctuary & Pkg Lot; UMKC Brass Ensemble Reh, 7pm Nave

Sunday, April 11: Children & Youth Sunday School, 9am & 9:30am on Zoom; Holy Communion, 9am online; Adult Forum, 10am on Zoom; Holy Communion, 11am Sanctuary & Pkg Lot; Youth Confirmation, 5pm Apostles Garden or PH 1; Youth Group, 6:30pm online and in person

Monday, April 12: Thom's Helpers, 10:30am-1:30pm PH; AA, 6:30pm LL; Journeymen, 6:30pm online; Compline, 8pm online

Tuesday, April 13: PEO mtg, 9:30am PH 1 (Roller); Neighborhood Grp #12, 7pm location TBD; Compline, 8pm online

Wednesday, April 14: Thom's Helpers, 10:30am-1:30pm PH 1/Kitchen; Staff mtg, 1:30pm PH or lobby; Music recording session, 5:30pm; UMKC Brass reh, 7:30pm Nave or PH; AA Fellowship-7:30pm LL; Compline-8pm online

Thursday, April 15: Bible Study, 10am online; UMKC Recital Recording, 6:30pm Nave; Explorers Sm Grp, 7pm PH 2; PEO mtg, 7pm Asbly Rm (McCall); Young Adult Sm Grp, 7pm PH 1; Al-Anon Family Grp, 7pm LL; Compline, 8pm online

Friday, April 16: BKSM staff retreat, 10am-2pm Outdoor Altar & PH 3 (Wheeler); Thom's Helpers, 10:30-1:30, PH/Kitchen; UMKC Recital recording, 7pm Nave; AA, 8pm LL



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Recent Graduate Alert!

Are you a recent graduate? Do you know someone who is? Send us their name! St. Thomas will be recognizing all recent graduates (high school, college, trade school, etc.). Help us by sending the name of any recent graduates to Mthr. Kelly—kdemo@stthomasop.org.



The church office will be open 9am-4pm Mon-Thurs and 9am-12pm Friday, but limited to staff. We ask that you continue to contact us by phone or email (stthomas@stthomasop.org)

St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church
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913-451-0512

email address: stthomas@stthomasop.org
Visit us on the website: www.stthomasop.org
Facebook: St. Thomas Episcopal OP

Mental Health Awareness

May is Mental Health Awareness month. St. Thomas recently began an initiative to raise awareness about mental and behavioral health and wellness in our community. Hopefully, you've noticed articles from several of our Mental Health and Wellness Team previously published in both the Tower Talk and St. Thomas "Connecting with You" weekly E-news updates. As we continue to bring about awareness and share our thoughts, it is our intent to also provide education, resources, and topics for conversation that will help us all grasp a better understanding of the various ways Mental Health and Wellness impact our lives and the lives of others.

During the month of May we have invited a few professionals to lead us in a few short lectures, presentations, and conversations about Mental Health and Wellness. We invite you to join us online for the following short lecture series happening in May:

Tuesday, May 4, 7:00pm to 8:00pm What is mental and behavioral health and wellness?

Guest Presenter: Kari Wold, MA, LMLP

Kari Wold will launch our lecture series by presenting: Mental health (a broad overview); Information on mental health and resources; Tools you can access for yourself or loved ones.

Kari has been working in mental and behavioral health for the past 15 years, working with youth, adolescents, and young adults with various psychological, behavioral, and developmental disorders. She completed her master's degree at Washburn University in Clinical Psychology. She became Clinical Services Supervisor & Manager in the Spring of 2018 at her current place of employment. She specializes in administering various psychological and diagnostic assessments, interfacing with insurance and various companies, oversight of clinical staff and their cases, provides training and feedback, and works with youth and adolescents with developmental disabilities, anxiety and mood disorders, OCD and various phobias, and behavioral disorders. She also sits on a number of advisory and advocacy boards and committees across the state of Kansas.

Tuesday, May 18, 7:00pm to 8:00pm Guest Presenter: Megan Clark, BA, CPP

The Pandemic has left people feeling more isolated and lonelier. It is more important now than ever before to focus on mental wellness and taking care of ourselves. Megan will cover topics such as: How to normalize feelings; the impact of the pandemic on mental health; local resources and how to access care.

Megan currently serves as a Prevention Coordinator for Johnson County Mental Health Center. She has over eight years of experience in working collaboratively with the community on prevention efforts addressing suicide prevention, substance abuse prevention, and mental health promotion. Based on a local spike in completed suicides in 2012, Megan, along with various community partners, worked to establish a Johnson County Suicide Prevention Coalition. The Coalition has grown to over 450 members and she currently serves on the coalition leadership team.

Megan earned her Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice with a minor in Sociology from the University of Missouri – Kansas City in 2011. In addition, she maintains an internationally recognized credential as a Certified Prevention Professional (CPP).

Be sure to join us with a few more additional lectures happening in the month of June. Details coming soon, including a Zoom link.

STRESS

Submitted by Dr. Margaret Walkenshaw
Mental Health and Wellness Ministry

We are living in stressful times. The Corona Virus has placed stress on us regarding job stability, financial security, overall health, and many other factors. This current stress is added to the pressures of everyday living as we balance our jobs, family responsibilities, general health, and making financial and emotional ends meet month after month.

Everyone experiences stress. What's important is to recognize when you're feeling stressed and taking steps to relieve the tension. Left untreated, stress can take a major toll on your health. It can lead to weight loss or weight gain, cause headaches, and create sleep troubles.

One of the best ways to help reduce and manage stress is with exercise. Exercise often serves as a sort of timeout from your problems – you tend to focus on the immediate task at hand and not on the tensions of the day. As you exert your body, your mind senses a feeling of calm and control.

We all need to control stressors in our lives whenever possible. If you're having difficulty controlling the stress in your life, don't be afraid to seek professional help. Your doctor can connect you to appropriate individuals trained in stress management.

One method that therapists often use to help manage stress is called cognitive behavioral therapy. It focuses on identifying specific factors that contribute to your stress, learning how to change your thoughts and emotions, and developing strategies to manage stress. Meditation and yoga can be tools for combating stress. Medications may also be helpful.

According to the world-renowned Mayo Clinic, here are two simple techniques that you can try whenever you begin to feel stressed.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

This technique involves relaxing various muscle groups one at a time. First, increase the tension level in one muscle group, such as a leg or an arm, by tightening the muscles. Then relax those muscles. Focus on slowly letting the tension subside. Then, move on to the next muscle group and do the same.

Deep Breathing

Stress typically causes rapid, shallow breathing from your chest. Deep, slow relaxed breathing comes from your diaphragm. Deep breathing means your abdomen, not your chest, moves with each breath.

Here's an exercise to help you practice deep, relaxed breathing. Rehearse it throughout the day until you can automatically apply it when you feel stressed:

1. Sit comfortably with your feet flat on the floor.
2. Loosen tight clothing around your abdomen and waist.
3. Place your hands on your lap or at your sides.
4. Close your eyes if it helps you relax.
5. Take one hand and place it on your chest. (This helps you become aware of your breathing.)
6. Breathe in slowly through your nose while counting to four. Notice your abdomen expand as you breathe in.
7. Pause for a second and then exhale at a normal rate through your mouth.
8. Repeat steps 6 and 7 until you feel more relaxed.