

* UP NEXT *

Saturday, Feb 12: Holy Communion, 5:30pm Nave

Sunday, Feb 13: Holy Communion, 8:45 & 11am Nave with Children's Church during each service; **Christian Education 10-10:45am**—Children & Youth in PH 1, 2. Youth in Bsmt Asbly Rm; Adult Forum, in Asbly Rm; No evening Youth Group this week.

Monday, Feb 14: Thom's Helpers, 10:30-1:30 PH/ Kitchen; AA Fellowship, 6:30pm LL

Tuesday, Feb 15: Troop 2687, 5:30pm PH 1; Book Club, 7pm PH 1; Contemplative Prayer Sm Grp, 7pm Nave; Sword Guild practice, 7-9pm PH 2

Wednesday, Feb 16: Wednesday Study Grp, 10:30-12 Zoom; Thom's Helpers, 10:30am-1:30pm PH1/Kitchen; Staff Mtg, 1:30pm Lobby; Praise Band practice, 6:30pm Nave; Choir rehearsal, 7:30pm Nave; AA Fellowship, 7:30 LL

Thursday, Feb 17: Old Testament Bible Study, 9:45am online; Explorers Sm Grp, 7pm PH 2; PEO mtg, 7pm Asbly (B McCall); Al-Anon Family Grp, 7pm LL

Friday, Feb 18: Thom's Helpers, 10:30am-1:30pm PH/ Kitch; SCA, 7pm PH 1; AA Fellowship, 8pm LL

Church office hours: Mon.— Thurs. 9am to 5pm; Fri. 9am to Noon

To view the church calendar go to our website, <https://stthomasop.org/calendar/>. All mtgs and events must be cleared with Meribeth in the church office. mrise-big@stthomasop.org or 913-451-0512.

Worship Services

Sat, 5:30pm; Sun, 8:45am, 11:00am (Masks required)

Children's Church (program geared toward children ages 3-10) is offered during the "Liturgy of the Word" during each Sunday Service.

All services will be live-streamed and available to watch afterward: www.youtube.com/c/stthomasop and www.facebook.com/stthomasop

"Almost Daily" Reflections with Fr. Gar

This video series typically posts Monday-Friday at 7am and includes a reflection along with Scripture and/or other resources as a daily dose of spirituality and encouragement. Follow along each day on the St. Thomas Episcopal OP Facebook page or You Tube channel (link shown above).



Mark your calendars now for some fun youth and family events!

- March 1 will be our drive through Shrove Tuesday/ Mardi Gras Pancake Event!

- March 27 we will bring back Taste of Youth Group! This year we will be adding in a Taste of Camp Wood!

This evening will be for all of our 3-5th grade friends. They will get to see what youth group is all about AND we will introduce them to what a week looks like at our diocesan summer event, Camp Wood!

- April 23 we will bring back Parents Night Out! A chance for parents to sneak away and drop their kids off here to be cared for by their older St. Thomas friends in the youth group.

Celebrating Our Children & Youth

**** CONGRATULATIONS to Micah Evans who recently won the Snowball Book Blitz for his 3rd Grade class by being the student to read the most pages and the most books in the month of January! Way to go, Micah!**

We know your kiddos are up to GREAT THINGS! We want to hear and celebrate with them! 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!

How You Can Help with Youth Mission Trip

This year we have a unique opportunity to travel to San Francisco for our mission trip! We will be doing work with the homeless population there as well as learning the history of the city and its efforts around creation care. What can you do to help?

1. Mark your calendar now for the return of our fundraising dinner!! April 2 we will have our dinner and auction. Which leads me to...
2. Do you have any goods or services you can donate to our auction? Talk to a youth or Mthr. Kelly!

Thank You!

Dear St. Thomas family,

Thank you very much for the amazing love, prayers and care you have given to our family throughout my knee replacement recovery. You fed us scrumptious food, checked in on my mom while I was in rehab, if you were going out called to see if we needed anything, brought fruit, helped solve rehab at home issues, and loved us as Christ loves us. Father Gar says it best, "Love your neighbor, as yourself." You do. Thank you.

Deep peace,

Susan Strom, Leila Potts, and Jeff Strom

TOWER TALK

FEBRUARY 12 & 13, 2022

Christian Education this Sunday—10:00am

Adult Forum - will meet in the Asbly Room & Zoom.

PreSchool, Elementary & Middle School—in the Parish Hall

This week is a Valentine's Edition "Serving Others Sunday" in our Sunday School! We will meet in the Parish Hall (as usual) for a time of service projects, an Acts of Love BINGO Game, and the story of The Beatitudes. Children in Elementary/Middle School will have the opportunity to earn 1 hour of community service for this activity - if collecting those for school.

**Please note: Sunday (February 20) our 4th-8th Grade students are invited to gather in Parish Hall 2 and then support our Interfaith Hospitality Network "Host Week" by helping Ms. Dola and her team to set up the rooms that will host our guests for the week. This will be an additional 1 hour community service opportunity.*

High School/Giving Project—Basement Assembly Room



Join us for an Ash Wednesday Service as we prayerfully enter into the season of Lent.

Ash Wednesday Services—March 2
7:00am, Noon, 6:00pm, 7:00pm

All services will include the imposition of ashes on the forehead, the "Litany of Penitence" (or list of things to repent of), and the liturgical invitation in the themes of a holy Lent. The 7:00pm service will include Holy Eucharist.

The 6:00pm service is a shorter, interactive service designed for families with children of any age, and the questions they often have regarding the use of ashes (Are they hot? Will they burn?), what Lent is all about, and the coming Mystery of Easter.

Volunteers & Donations of Food & Supplies Needed for IHN Host Week—See SignUp Sheets on Narthex Display Board



St. Thomas Host week serving situationally homeless families and single women will be February 20-27, 2022. As an IHN Host congregation St. Thomas will convert our classrooms to provide shelter during evenings and overnight. IHN trained volunteers will be present at all times providing support to our guests. Untrained volunteers are also needed for setup and takedown of classrooms.

JoCo IHN consists of 36 congregations of many different denominations. The families and women we serve are not required or pressured to profess faith or attend services at any church. JoCo IHN requires that all guests aged 12 and older must be fully vaccinated to be accepted into the program.

Sign up on the display board in the lobby or contact one of our coordinators with questions or to help: Dola McNown 913 526 3573 or 913 541 9226 or dolamcnown49@gmail.com; Margaret Walkenshaw 913 302 2018 or 913 897 4766 or mwalkenshaw@kc.surewest.net; Connie Snider, laundry coordinator, 913-709 1431 or conniesnider@hotmail.com 913 709 1431

LENT MADNESS is COMING!!

Weekdays (and one Saturday) from March 3 thru April 13 - ONLINE!

Looking for a fun and unique Lenten study discipline? Then join in the "Saintly Showdown". Each weekday in Lent (excluding Sundays and most Saturdays) beginning Thursday, March 3, check in online for a NCAA "March Madness" style tournament match-up of two saints - read about each, ponder their work to bring about the kingdom, vote for your favorite and see who comes out on top! Follow through the season to find who makes it on to the "Saintly Sixteen," "Elate Eight," "Faithful Four" until the field is narrowed down to the "WINNER OF THE GOLDEN HALO!" You can find a printable calendar, bracket AND signup for the nearly-daily emails here: <https://www.lentmadness.org/bracket/> (the email signup is slightly hidden near the top right, but it IS there) OR simply follow along with the posts that will be shared on our St. Thomas Facebook Pages!

*** A note to families with older elementary children and youth - this is a FUN way to engage with your young people in a Lenten discipline! As you know, however, many of the earthly lives of God's Saints came to unpleasant ends (martyrdom). While this is valid and important information, if engaging as a family, Ms. Barbara recommends a parent preview of the daily writeup for each Saint making adjustments to the wording as needed to best suit what you feel your children are prepared to hear as needed.*



So, just what exactly *is* in that "Little Black Box?"

Lay Eucharistic Visitors are lay ministers who take communion from our Sunday service to shut-ins, primarily people in assisted living facilities/homes, hospitals, and others who cannot be with our parish family for service due to illness or special circumstances. The Lay Eucharistic Visitor tradition dates back to the earliest years of the Christian church serving the homebound and invalid. Our Lay Eucharistic Visitors are trained at St. Thomas and licensed by the Bishop. Each week they go forth and carry the sacraments of bread and wine to those they visit so that those they visit may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood. "We who are many are one body, because we all share one bread, one cup." Lay Eucharistic Visitors care and tend to those they visit both spiritually and emotionally, and often reflect on the readings and/or the sermon. In addition, they share with one another what is currently going on in the life and community of St. Thomas, the world, and within our personal lives, enabling a growth in relationship with one another and with Christ.



Next LEV Training Class:

Sunday, February 20 (Part 1) & Sunday, February 27 (Part 2). Training will take place between services 9:50-10:30am in Rm #137.

If you are interested in becoming a Lay Eucharistic Visitor and would like to attend the training, or would like to hear more about this ministry, please contact Deacon Fran Wheeler. Email: fwheeler@stthomasop.org

How do I make a Prayer Request?

- In our Prayers of the People during services we read aloud names of those to be prayed for. We invite you to add to this list by contacting the church office 913-451-0512 or stthomasas@stthomasop.org. Give us your name and the name of the person(s) you request prayers for, and we will include it during services. They will be included for three weeks unless notified otherwise.
- For an immediate prayer you may make a request through one of our messengers or the office for the St. Thomas Prayer Chain. Deb McArthur (themcarthur4@gmail.com or 913-620-2426); or Diane Monteen (monteendiane@gmail.com or 913-268-7788). If leaving the information on their phones, please include your phone number in case they have any questions.

**"LAST WORD" Lenten Lecture Series
Most Wednesdays thru Lent—begins March 9!
Noon—1pm**

We will again be hosting a lecture series during Lent. The theme is "Last Word" and will be modeled after Carnegie Mellon University's The Last Lecture Series. *Please join us the following Wednesdays of Lent.*

March 9: Toriano Porter is a national award-winning opinion writer for the Kansas City Star Editorial Board. A native of St. Louis, Toriano has called Kansas City home since 2007. He is a three-time author, distinguished motivational speaker and dedicated mentor to young people in the metropolitan area.

More featured speakers...

March 23: Barbara Cawthorne Crafton is an Episcopal priest, spiritual director and author. She was rector of St. Clement's Church in Manhattan's Theatre district. She was also a chaplain on the waterfront of New York, and served both historic Trinity Church, Wall Street and St. John's Church in Greenwich Village. She was a chaplain at Ground Zero during the recovery effort after the WTC bombing.

An actress, director and producer, she has worked for many years in combining the lively arts and the life of faith. Her books, articles, and radio scripts have won many awards, including numerous Polly Bond Awards from Episcopal Communicators and the coveted Gabriel Award for religious broadcasting. She is seen frequently on television both as a preacher and as a commentator on Hallmark's "New Morning" and "America at Worship," and has been profiled extensively in electronic and print media throughout the world.

Michael Kleber-Diggs (KLEE-burr digs) (he / him / his) is a poet, essayist, and literary critic. His debut poetry collection, "Worldly Things", won the Max Ritvo Poetry Prize and is a finalist for the 2022 Minnesota Book Award. His essay, "On the Complex Flavors of Black Joy," is included in the anthology "There's a Revolution Outside, My Love: Letters from a Crisis". Another essay, "There Was a Tremendous Softness," is forthcoming in "A Darker Wilderness: An Anthology of Black Nature Writing". Among other places, Michael's writing has appeared or is forthcoming in *Great River Review*, *Water~Stone Review*, *Poem-a-Day*, *Poetry Daily*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Potomac Review*, *Hunger Mountain*, *Memorious*, and a few anthologies. Michael is a past Fellow with the Givens Foundation for African American Literature, a past-winner of the Loft Mentor Series in Poetry, and the former Poet Laureate of Anoka County libraries. Since 2016, Michael has been an instructor with the Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop. He also teaches Creative Writing in Augsburg University's low-res MFA program and at Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists. His work has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net and has been supported by the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Jerome Foundation, and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council. Michael is married to Karen Kleber-Diggs, a tropical horticulturist and orchid specialist. Karen and Michael have a daughter who is pursuing a BFA in Dance Performance at SUNY Purchase.