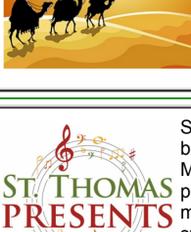




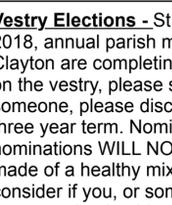
St. Thomas Episcopal Church



THE EPISTLE January 4, 2018



Our Epiphany celebration (with bonfire) will be held Saturday at 6 PM. We are collecting Christmas trees and wreaths in the South parking lot. Join us in the church for a Service of Light, followed by a procession to the parking lot for the Burning of the Greens. We will conclude the evening by feasting on King cake (originally eaten on Epiphany and not Fat Tuesday) and hot chocolate as we bring the Christmas season to a fitting close!



St. Thomas Presents will have a delightful classical offering before our Epiphany Service on Saturday at 4 PM. Sisters, Maeve (piano) and Linnea (violin) Brophy from Nashville, TN will perform works to include Shostakovich and Rachmaninoff for a memorable concert. Their musical talents have been shared in symphonies and recitals throughout the U.S. and abroad. We are very excited to have them here for your enjoyment.

Vestry Elections - St. Thomas will elect four new Vestry members at the January 14, 2018, annual parish meeting. Kathleen Brewer, Gus Davis, Garry Griffith, and Kathie Clayton are completing their terms. If you or someone you know is interested in serving on the vestry, please submit the name in the yellow box in the Narthex. If you nominate someone, please discuss it with that person first to be sure they are willing to serve the three year term. Nominations will be closed on January 10. Please note that nominations WILL NOT be accepted from the floor at the meeting. A good Vestry is made of a healthy mix of newer members and longtime members. Please prayerfully consider if you, or someone you know, may be called to serve our parish in this important leadership role.

- Eligibility requirements for nominees:
- ✓ The person is known to the treasurer.
 - ✓ The person has consented to be nominated.
 - ✓ The person is a regular participant in the life and worship of St. Thomas.
- Vestry responsibilities include:
- ✓ Attending vestry meetings on the third Monday evening of each month.
 - ✓ Attending vestry retreat, an overnight at Camp McDowell in January each year.
 - ✓ Supporting Invite - Welcome - Connect events.
 - ✓ Serving on task forces or ad hoc committees as required throughout the year.
 - ✓ On a rotating basis, two vestry members count the offering and secure the building each Sunday after the end of our services.
 - ✓ Vestry members cook, serve and clean-up breakfast on a rotating schedule one Sunday per month. Usually, each vestry member signs up for breakfast four times a year.

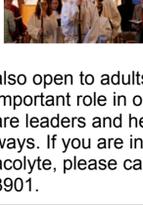
**You are cordially invited to our annual Parish Meeting
Sunday, January 8
immediately following the 10:30 service.
2018 Budget Presented and new vestry members elected.**

***Lunch will precede our meeting. The church will provide fried chicken, rolls, drinks and dessert. Please bring your favorite salad or side dish (enough to share with others) as we enjoy some food and fellowship prior to our meeting.

**Due to the Parish Meeting we will not have an 8 o'clock service,
breakfast or Sunday school next Sunday!**

**Readings for the First Sunday after the Epiphany;
The Baptism of Our Lord
Jesus Christ**

**Genesis 1:1-5
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11
Psalm 29**



Would you like to be an Acolyte? - Children in grades 3 and higher may be trained as torch bearers, crucifers, servers and in other acolyte duties. This year the acolyte program is also open to adults. Acolytes play an important role in our worship service. They are leaders and helpers to the clergy in many ways. If you are interested in becoming an acolyte, please call Kristi Boyer at 256-508-3901.

Theological Gumbo - On Sunday, January 7, at 9:30am in the Parish Hall we will gather for Theological Gumbo. We will talk about baptism and the Baptismal Covenant: hear where it came from, and share what it means to us in our daily lives. Join us!

Confirmation is Coming!

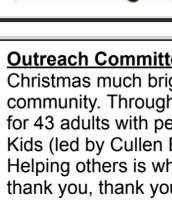
Youth, grades 8 - 12, interested in being confirmed. A Confirmation Retreat will be held February 2 - 4, 2018 at Camp McDowell concluding with the service of Confirmation in St. Francis Chapel. The cost is \$50.00. An on line registration link can be found on the Diocesan web-page. Call Jeannie Randall or Katherine Harper for more details.

Please Pick Up Your Envelopes - Pledge Envelopes are available in the Narthex for those who ordered them. If you have any questions, please contact Terri Good at finance@stthomashuntsville.org

Adults interested in being confirmed should call the church office or email at stthomas@stthomashuntsville.org. Bishop Kee will be visiting St. Thomas on April 29 for confirmation.

The Monday Morning Book Club - The Doughnut Tree by Catherine Knowles is the book we're reading right now. We'll meet Monday, January 8 at 10 AM in the Parlor. You're welcome to join us!

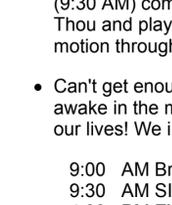
Servant's Closet - With such bitter cold and being the first of the month, please consider donating food for the Servant's Closet ministry this Sunday. All packaged and canned items will be accepted. Please think about struggling families with little time to prepare meals. Help us share our wealth when it is really needed. Thank you!



Hand Bell Choir Revival - Music at St. Thomas will "Ring in the New Year" with Hand Bell Choir rehearsals, beginning on Sunday evening, January 14 from 4 PM until 5 PM. Any one from ages 12 and older may join. Music training helpful but not required. For more information, you may contact Melanie Payne at 256-337-3448 or payneme67@gmail.com.

Outreach Committee - Many, many thanks to everyone who helped make Christmas much brighter for some less fortunate people in the Huntsville community. Through Operation Santa Claus (led by Susan Smith) we provided gifts for 43 adults with permanent mental disabilities, and with Friends of 400/Shellie's Kids (led by Cullen Brown) we provided gifts for 51 kids from low-income families. Helping others is what Christmas and Christian living are all about. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!

God in the Natural Sciences - John Hanson will lead a discussion of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a paleontologist and geologist who took part in the discovery of Peking Man, this Thursday evening in the conference room. In his study of fossils and the emergence of life, and thought, Chardin refused to exclude the Divine as a scientifically relevant factor imbuing evolution with meaning and direction. Abrahamic Prayers meets from 7 to 9. RSVP to meisterp@uah.edu is helpful for seating and required for handouts.

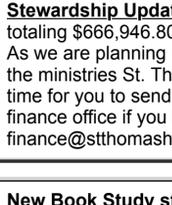


Youth & Children's Ministries

- January 7th - Youth and Children Christian Formation and EYC Resumes
- Youth (Grades 6-12) - We are beginning a new chapter in our program Discovering God in Everyday Places. Join us for the month of January as we explore language and how we communicate with God and others. January 7 we will feature our program Discovering God in Everyday Places. During Sunday School (9:30 AM) come discover the movement of Baptism, O' Brother Where Art Thou and play Biblical Charades. During EYC (4-6 PM) we will continue the motion through skating, followed by discussion and compline.

- Can't get enough of us? Come hang out with us as we eat, struggle to stay awake in the mornings, and always naturally discovering how God is part of our lives! We invite all youth (6th through 12th Grade) to Join us!
- 9:00 AM Breakfast in Youth Room
9:30 AM SIM (Saints in the Morning)
4:00 PM EYC (Youth Group) *Ends at 6PM
We invite all youth and their friends every Sunday for something new! Expect the unexpected!

- THE PARISH is INVITED!
Have you been looking for a niche to call your own? Do you like children? Have you ever read a book, cut with scissors, or have experience using glue or crayons? If you answered yes to one or more of these questions Children's Sunday School might be right for you! You can help a little or a lot. Not sure? No need to consult a doctor, come check us out every Sunday morning at 9:30 AM in Hiers Hall.



Financial Peace University Coming January 24th - Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University is coming to St. Thomas! Come and learn what the Scriptures teach about personal financial management and responsibility in this nine-week course held on Wednesday evenings. Childcare is provided and scholarships are available. Contact Gayle or Bryan Dodson or Cooper Green for more information!

Stewardship Update: Pledges for 2018 - To date, we have received 160 pledges totaling \$666,946.80. Thank you for your generosity. Thank you for your generosity. As we are planning next year's budget, please know that your pledge is important to the ministries St. Thomas offers as we share Christ's love in the world. There is still time for you to send in your commitment for the coming year! Please email the finance office if you have any questions about your pledge at finance@stthomashuntsville.org.

New Book Study starts in January - Change in start date due to National Championship Game! We will start Monday, January 15 at 7 PM. The author Phyllis Tickle recorded an exceptional overview of the history of change in the Christian Church. In her book The Great Emergence, she recounts how culture, political governance, technology, literacy, church governance, and other factors, inspire a reformation of the Christian faith and church organization every 500 years. Tickle posits that we are in one of these reforming episodes today. Come join us in reading this book and discussing your thoughts, research and opinions. Copies of The Great Emergence will be made available for the discussions. There is space for 15 participants. Reserve yours today! Contact Tim Davis at 661-618-2978 or tadavis@earthlink.net.

WORSHIP TEAM for JANUARY 7, 2018

Celebrant	The Rev. Katherine Harper, Curate
Preacher	The Rev. Paul Pradat
Deacon	The Rev. Jeannie Randall
Organist	Melanie Payne
Choir Director	Donna Clark

8:00 AM	
Eucharistic Ministers	Mark Dixon, Kathie Clayton
Lectors	Brenda & Horton Smith
Acolyte	Nick Pawluk
Ushers	Robert Willisson, Garry Griffith
Greeters	Kay & Dick Strobel

10:30 AM	
Eucharistic Ministers	Bob Hardison, Jocelyn Wright-Dempsey
Lectors	Bill Stevenson, Emily Naderi
Acolytes	Erin Slagle, Griffin Anderson, Vincent Moore, Cade Atkins
Ushers	Angie Pradat, Richard Thompson
Greeters	John & Linda Hanson, Linda Anders

Vestry on Duty	Genie McCoy, Gus Davis
Altar Guild	Brenda & Horton Smith, Gretchen Mauldin, June Curtis, Pat Stueck
Breakfast	Greg Albur, Kathleen Brewer, Gus Davis, George Harriman, Trish Caraway, Kim Cantrell

This Week at St. Thomas

Thursday, January 4
5:30 PM Grief Group, Parlor
7:00 PM Men's Spirituality Group, Youth Room
7:00 PM Abrahamic Prayers, Parlor

Friday, January 5
8:30 AM First Stop Breakfast

Saturday, January 6
4:00 PM St. Thomas Presents - The Brophy Sisters Concert
Nursery will be available
6:00 PM The Service of Light & Burning of the Greens
Nursery will be available

Sunday, January 7
8:00 AM Holy Eucharist, Nave
Nursery Available
9:00 AM Breakfast, Parish Hall - Vestry
9:30 AM Christian Formation Classes
Children's Sunday School, Heirs Hall
Lecturing Bible Study, Conference Room
Centering Prayer, St. Anne's Chapel
Youth Classes
Theological Gumbo, Parish Hall
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Nave
Nursery Available

Monday, January 8
10:00 AM Book Club, Parlor
6:30 PM Adult Christian Formation Planning, Library

Tuesday, January 9
6:00 PM EFM, Conference Room

Wednesday, January 10
9:30 AM Bible Study, Conference Room
9:30 AM Parents' Morning Out - drop-off
11:00 AM Healing Service, St. Anne's Chapel
Noon Bible Study, Conference Room
12:45 PM Parents' Morning Out - pick-up
6:00 PM Holy Eucharist, Nave
7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal, Choir Room

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