

# St. Thomas' Episcopal Church



## ANNUAL REPORT

165<sup>th</sup> Annual Parish Meeting

January 26, 2020

# ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## OFFICERS AND STAFF

**Rector:** The Rev. Canon Lisa Smith Fry

**Deacon:** The Rev. Abby Pettee

**Senior Warden:** Carlos Mello

**Junior Warden:** Edmund Hartt

**Treasurer:** Terry Mello

**Clerk of the Vestry:** Shirley Fierro

**Minister of Music:** Clarissa Brown

**Office Manager:** Susie Crawford

**Sexton/Groundskeeper:** Jon Elwell

**Nursery Care:** Ella Johanson

## VESTRY

### Outgoing Vestry Members:

Eileen Morelli (*completed 2-year term*)

Suzanne Scott

Haunani Wallace (*resigned, Term End 2022*)

### Terms End 2021:

Fred Bucklin

Sarah Groman

Elizabeth Moran

### Terms End 2022:

Barbara Lawrence

Br. Donovan Bowley

### Nominees for Vestry:

Bill Freeman

(to complete 2-year Term ending 2022)

Dean Jackson (Class of 2023)

Jen Johanson (Class of 2023)

Eileen Morelli (Class of 2023)

## 2019 PARISH STATISTICS

Communicants in Good Standing: 225

Average Sunday Attendance: 96

Parish Marriages: 3

Burials: 3

### New Members:

Paula Beth Adams

Virginia, George and Olivia

Vicki Boetsch Harriman

Lance, Kathleen, Declan and Teague Buchanan

Susan Flynn

Benjy Lawry and Shelley Gallender

Bill and Dee Gambill

Elizabeth Hoffman

Patricia Hopkins

Chris Huggins

Frank and Laura Mundo

Linda and George Renner

Melinda and Dana Wildes

### Deaths in the Community:

Marya Allen

Jean Harper

Jean Pierre LeGloahec

Martha McIntosh

Ed Shindle

Janan Vaughn

*Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord;  
And light perpetual shine upon them.  
May they, and all the departed,  
through the mercy of God,  
Rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.*

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## **MEETING AGENDA**

1. Call to order
2. Opening prayer
3. Video and Slide Show
4. Comments from The Rev. Canon Lisa Smith Fry
5. Comments from the Senior Warden
6. Comments from the Junior Warden
7. Report of the Clerk and call for approval of minutes
8. Presentation by the Treasurer of the 2019 Financial Results and the 2020 Budget, as approved by the Vestry
9. Goodbye to outgoing Vestry, and Introduction and election of Jr. Warden and Vestry members
10. Questions and answers from the floor for the Rector
11. Closing prayer and adjournment

## 2019 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES

### Call to order by the Reverend Lisa Smith Fry

### Opening Prayer

### State of the Church

- 12 new members in 2017;
- Child and Adult Classes;
- Ongoing Repairs to the Church Facility-Window repair is complete;
- Second Service changed to 10:00 am;
- Development of 4 Acolyte Teams;
- Blessing of the animals-Camden public ceremony;
- Youth led service first Sunday of every month.

### Looking forward in 2019:

- Upgrade the sound and light systems in the church;
- Biographies of the Vestry;
- Newcomer Packets;
- More attention to Ideas and voices;
- Additional Laity involvement;
- Wednesday evening Rite 3 Service for all but especially folks not familiar with a Sunday Service Setting to include the Eucharist;
- Theatrical group for children in a church setting.

### Outreach slide show:

- Budget for outreach in 2018 was \$13,309.00;
- People are very generous. The Parish gave an extra \$2,000.00 in outreach in 2018.

### Report from the Senior Warden, Carlos Mello:

- Discussion of the recent Parish survey-still available for completion.
- Results: Respondents 53:
- Out of Six Categories the Parish valued:
  - 90% Pastoral Care and Worship
  - 80% Administrative and Christian Education
  - 70% Christian Community and Outreach.
- Parishioners indicated the following desires:
  - More Parish wide engagement;
  - We are one parish equaling two Sunday services;
  - It is important for the parish to be good stewards.

### Priorities:

- Grow Membership;
- Increase parish engagement;
- Expand adult Christian Education;
- Increase presence in the community;
- Vestry transparency.

*(Minutes continued...)*

**Report from The Reverend Abby Pettee, Deacon**

Suggested reading by The Very Reverend Stephen Lane, Bishop of Maine, "The Rebirth of God" by John Phillip Newell. Includes information regarding how to welcome people within a sacred tradition.

- Wednesday evening service will hopefully bring to the foreground the needs, concerns and hopes of God's people;
- Our Baptismal covenant-we all commit to work together and serve the Lord helping to broaden the Episcopal experience;
- During the warmer months-outdoor worship service with other traditions;
- *Ashes to Go* on Ash Wednesday in downtown Camden;
- Pastoral Ministry at Pen Bay – Eucharistic visiting ministry at the Hospital;
- Giving Voice and space for advocating for the marginalized;
- Prayer as a congregation has a deep experience of welcoming all.

**Report from Treasurer-Terry Mello**

- Treasurers report given today will appear on the website and this will occur every month going forward;
- Five Year Analysis displayed;
- Scheduled debit from the endowment in 2018 was \$39,000.00-actual was \$21,000.00 due to increased giving;
- Operating Expenses reduced due to only one person requiring Health Insurance;
- A large portion of the operating expenses are due to fuel consumption. Additional conservation efforts are now in place.

**Question:** Why is the diocesan assessment higher?

**Answer:** Diocesan assessments are always two years behind and any allocation from the endowment accounts are included in the base amount that is assessed. To date assessment rate is 15%.

- The bare bones sum to fund the parish weekly is \$5,300.00.
- Pledges are \$16,000.00 short of completely funding the budget for 2019.
- Endowment and Finance Committees make the decisions on investments.

**The Reverend Lisa Smith Fry once again took the podium:**

Election of New Vestry Members utilizing Roberts Rules of Order:

- Nominees:
  - Brother Aidan Donovan Bowley, BSG
  - Barbara Kent Lawrence
  - Haunani Wallace

Unanimous vote to elect all three nominees accepted.

- 2018 Minutes were accepted and approved.

Next year the Annual Meeting may be held between the two Sunday Services. Please give Mother Lisa your thoughts regarding this suggestion.

2019 Annual Meeting closed with all those in attendance reciting the Lord's Prayer.

Prayerfully Submitted,  
Shirley F. Fierro

## RECTOR

I don't know about you, but I thought 2019 was both exciting and exhausting. This year, I'm hoping for way more of the former and less of the latter. But let's just take a look at what happened in 2019. It was a very good year. The kids all grew a foot, there were heartbreaks and breakthroughs, and we all came through it together.

### What happened in 2019?

- We welcomed 25 new members this year—our congregation is growing. That's twice as many people as we welcomed last year.
- We've continued classes for the children and adults and ADDED a children's choir!
- Last year I said we'd completed our building project – spoke too soon on that one. But we did finish phase one. Now we step it up and address the remaining parts. We are now building for the future members of St. Thomas'. We will be remembered for this.
- We changed the time of the 2nd service to accommodate more class time. Most are happy with the change—the classes are going well, but we need to talk about what is happening in the summer.
- We now have 3 teams of acolytes with a crucifer, torches, and server at each service at 10am. Soon all acolytes will be trained in the time-honored tradition of Sanctus bell ringing. We also may be adding a 4<sup>th</sup> team shortly.
- We had a Blessing of the Animals on the Camden Village Green in an ecumenical service which included the John Street United Methodist Church and the First Congregational Church of Camden. About 44 pets and their people had a great time. Medals and dog treats were given liberally.
- We now have a monthly youth-led service, and it has gotten noticed around town. We have had several families join us because we have programming, the youth service, acolyte opportunities, and the choir for our children.
- Lights will soon be replaced, adding much needed brightness to many parts of the congregation where many loyal parishioners have been sitting patiently in the dark.

### But there are still opportunities:

- A poster board on a stand with pics and bios of our Vestry, (selfies, just fine) in a visible place, so parishioners and newcomers can see who our parish leaders are. *We didn't get this done last year. I need a volunteer that likes a good short-term project.*
- Newcomer “packets” to hand out to newcomers when we meet with them. New members Sundays hosted regularly to meet and greet our newest parishioners. *Again, I need to work on this with a volunteer that likes a short-term project and has mad computer skills.*



*(Rector continued...)*

- I am excited that this year we will be having opportunities to come together and determine the direction of all things ‘St. Thomas’—including renovation of the buildings, re-imagining ongoing and future ministries, and offering a symposium in March on *Civil Discourse*, offered by the League of Women Voters and special facilitators. This latter offering will primarily be about having civil discourse in our homes, with our friends and in one on one situations with people in our lives.
- I would like to start a small theatre program this year—with kids, or kids and adults. This would give me a chance to share my love of working on a project that uses every part of us as we bring truth to the world.
- I’d like to try and add a few new ideas for raising funds for Outreach, while at the same time giving us more opportunities to get together doing fun things. Like a night of dancing to a jazz band. Or a community dinner to make meals (and freeze them) for the hungry. Are you with me?
- Would anyone like be part of a team to take on Morning *or* Evening prayer during Lent? We’ll mutually decide which we would like to offer to the community of Camden.
- THIS IS IT! I’ve stopped moving from house to house, and moving my parents to a senior apartment complex, Abby is BACK—and **this is the year we begin the mid-week service!**

This is our vision: it will be for anyone who doesn’t feel comfortable in a more traditional Sunday church setting, it’s for LGBTQI people, it’s for people in recovery, it’s for people who have mental and physical challenges they struggle with—and it’s for anyone who yearns for more freedom in their worship, who wants to hear more voices speak, and who comes to be healed on any level. Abby and I would like to work with any of you who might truly be excited by this vision. Email us.

Now a word from a wise person:

*“Life is much more spacious now, the boundaries of the container [us] having been enlarged by the constant addition of new experiences and relationships...because such people have built a good container, they’re able to “contain” more and more truth, more and more neighbors, more and broader vision, more and more of a mysterious and outpouring God.” Richard Rohr, Falling Upward*

That’s us, folks. We are the people who have been formed by God in this place, and now it is our joy to open up all the doors and share our joy with others. We can do it. To me—life here at St Thomas’ is all about doorways: doorways to the past, doorways to our potential, doorways to the future. They’re all here, and they’re all open. Let’s walk through each of them together.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa+

## DEACON

“The deacon reminds us of the grace of Jesus himself, that he is humble and in solidarity with human need, present in the midst of suffering and difficulty.”

These words, shared with me when I was in formation for ordained ministry remain an ongoing invitation for me today. I ask day by day for the grace to listen for the wisdom and “voice” of the Holy Spirit. And then I pray in humility and trust that I will be led to God’s people in need, so that I can share the gospel of our Lord’s healing, redemptive love—in word and through acts of service.

Sometimes it’s through my healthcare chaplaincy—other times in quiet conversation with a St. Thomas’ parishioner, or the offering of Holy Communion from our reserve sacrament on behalf of one of our members who is unable to get to church. But always from a ‘place’ of love within me—love that is rooted and grounded in Christ.

Within the parish I deeply value being part of pastoral care ministry, under the guidance and direction of Reverend Lisa. I support lay Eucharistic Visitors in their call to bring consecrated bread and wine from our altar to the sick and homebound. I preach from time to time, which is truly a privilege, and often participate in the life-giving, authentic conversation that happens in the Rector’s forum.

And always I’m on the lookout for ways that I can help ‘take the church out’, on behalf of our neighbors who yearn to know they are the beloved of God. Often on Sundays I take the Sunday lectionary passages and the goodwill of the St. Thomas’ community to the inpatient psychiatric unit at Pen Bay Medical Center. My call is to seek and service Christ in all persons—especially vulnerable folks who find themselves suffering with mental illness, addiction and other forms of trauma.

Within the wider life of our church I give thanks for our Bishop, the Rt. Reverend Thomas Brown. I believe we have a faithful, wise shepherd in this caring man of God. I continue to serve on the Commission on Ministry, an appointment that has helped me learn and grow. I am taking a class on Jesuit spirituality that meets in Portland and also involves individual spiritual direction. It is called The Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life, and it lifts up the teachings of St. Ignatius.

One of my favorite spiritual writers is Parker Palmer, a Quaker. Recently the On Being Project included some of his newer writings in which he described how darkness *and* light enable us to be whole people. Life in Christian community gives us rich opportunity to companion one another and to stay present in times of suffering and in times of rejoicing.

May it be so, with God’s help.

Rev. Abby Pettee

## SENIOR WARDEN

In Bishop Brown's New Year's Message, he shared the words given by Father Cary, SSJE to the Sisters of St. Anne-Bethany soon after their founding in 1910. These words are now on a banner in their chapel and give encouragement to all who journey there:

*Catch the Vision. Hold it in trust.  
Preserve it. Carry it on.  
You have always to be looking further,  
opening doors and going through them.  
All before was but a preparation  
for something further.*

I am moved by Father Cary's gift: the importance of our faith; the foundation it provides; our ever journey forward; and the preparation for something further.

Our Vestry offers the following principles to guide this journey together as a Christian community. We will:

- Welcome all in our greater community; those who worship traditionally, as well as those who are searching, or have been unable to attend traditional services
- Be true to our Christian Episcopal foundation
- Embrace all; nourish spiritual growth and not be judgmental
- Evolve and grow to meet the needs of our parish and the greater community
- Encourage all members to participate in ministries which align with their spiritual journey; if a ministry is currently not available, members will be encouraged to start one
- Ensure continued relevance to our members and the greater community, by growing and renewing our parish leadership

These principles guide our goals. We will:

- Provide ministries and opportunities for growth and fulfillment
- Encourage and welcome others to join us in this journey
- Grow the resources for St. Thomas' to achieve its mission

In support of these goals, we will undertake the following activities in 2020:

- Form an ad hoc committee to take a fresh look and revitalize our parish ministries
- Hold ministry fairs to build awareness and encourage participation
- Provide an evening service for those unable to attend traditional services
- Develop a three-year building and grounds renovation plan
- Launch a capital campaign to support these renovations
- Implement a long-term giving strategy to support our parish

I look forward to discussing this direction, sharing your guidance and wisdom, and garnering your support.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Carlos R. Mello

## **JUNIOR WARDEN**

A year ago in my report, I told you that we would learn more about what repairs are needed to the stone work of the church. Now we know what is needed:

- We have learned that the bell tower is in dire need of rebuilding. It is rickety enough that we were told by our engineers to not use the bells. They have also explained that the slate roof is at the end of its life, and that the chimney needs rebuilding.
- The vestry, upon recommendation from the Building and Grounds Committee, chose to have the tower wrapped in a waterproof covering. This will allow us some time to decide exactly what to do next. Some of the options are:
  - rebuild the tower just as it is
  - rebuild it with different materials, yet to look the same
  - change the design to be less susceptible to water
  - or remove the tower all together.
- In addition to learning about the choices and deciding what to do, we will need to raise the money to pay for the project. Having the wrapping in place will give us time to do that.

While the tower repair is a lot to take in, there have been other building and grounds issues this past year:

- We have replaced the washer, dryer, and disposal in the apartment over the office.
- I removed one of the planters on the Wood Street side of the church, to allow for the replacement of the sill cock. There are eight wheelbarrows of dirt in each planter.
- Other plumbing repairs include a new faucet and trap in the lavatory upstairs by the old office.
- We reviewed and updated the regulations for the All Souls Garden.
- We also reviewed the parking lot lease with Camden National Bank, and recommended that it be renewed, which it was.

Respectfully submitted,  
Edmund Hartt

## FINANCIALS

### 2019 Financial Review

Once again, our parishioners answered the call to support St. Thomas'. With your help our Net Operating Income for 2019 was \$4,344. Your support for Outreach in 2019 enabled the St. Thomas' Outreach Coalition to send **\$11,592 to charities** – ranging from the Camden Area Christian Food Pantry, Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen, Meals on Wheels, local charitable organizations and other special needs of our community and abroad. Following are two reports for your information – *2019 Statement of Activity* and *Statement of Financial Position as of December 31, 2019*.

### *2019 Statement of Activity*

#### 2019 Income Received (Excludes Bequests and Capital Improvement Donations)

Total Operating Income	\$ 264,813
Outreach Donations	12,981
Income from Investments for Scholarships	3,500
Other Restricted Donations ( <i>Flowers, All Souls, Music, etc.</i> )	5,092
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>286,386</b>

#### 2019 Expenses (Excludes Capital Improvement Disbursements)

Total Operating Expense	(260,469)
Outreach Disbursements ( <i>Includes A/P of \$4,900</i> )	(11,592)
Scholarships and Educational Grants ( <i>Disbursed from RI Thomas Scholarship and Sarah Davenport funds</i> )	(3,500)
Other Expenses ( <i>Flowers, All Souls Garden and Music Expense</i> )	(2,153)
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>(277,714)</b>

#### 2019 Bequests Received and Capital Improvement Donations

Vera June Hill Bequest	114,000
Capital Improvement Donations ( <i>Building Fund, East Elevation, Tower</i> )	37,716
Jean Harper Bequest	10,000
Final Distribution of Stone Marital Trust Bequest	538
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>162,254</b>

#### 2019 Funds Disbursed and Accounts Payables for Capital Improvements

Tower Inspection and Wrap Expenses ( <i>Includes A/P of \$59,772,50</i> )	(181,640)
Capital Improvements	(4,133)
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>(185,773)</b>

Net Investment Earnings/(Losses)	172,541
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Change in Net Assets	\$ 157,693
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*Statement of Financial Position*  
*As of December 31, 2019*

**ASSETS****Current Assets**

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 148,756
Investments	1,402,384
Account Receivables	24,046
Other Current Assets	<u>4,744</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>1,579,929</b>

**Fixed Leashold Assets**

Building	1,729,090
Other Property	100,000
Equipment	<u>2,656</u>
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b><u>1,831,746</u></b>

**TOTAL ASSETS** **\$ 3,411,675**

**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS****LIABILITIES****Current Liabilities**

Accounts Payable	\$ 64,715
Other Current Liabilities	37,738

**Long-Term Liabilities**

Expected Capital Campaign Income	19,361
Other Long-Term Liabilities	<u>444</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>122,258</b>

**NET ASSETS**

Restricted Funds (Non-Operating)	1,472,622
Restricted Funds (Operating)	41,984
Restricted Funds (Outreach)	2,931
Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>1,771,880</u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b><u>3,289,417</u></b>

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS** **\$ 3,411,675**

**2020 Operating Budget**

When the Stewardship campaign began, we identified 3 objectives that we were hoping to achieve: 1) Normal operating costs would be funded from pledges/donations, rental income and facilities donations; 2) Endowment and building fund income would not be in the Operating budget; and 3) Fundraising income would be used to support special Parish projects and community outreach needs. Unfortunately, we were not able to achieve these goals. However, in developing the budget we were able to: 1) reduce the amount of Endowment funds needed by \$6,000; and 2) only \$1,500 of Fundraising income would be used for Operating. Our rational was that the fundraiser should help with the costs associated with holding the event at St. Thomas'. With a lot of thought and careful consideration, we have been able to develop a balanced budget again this year. The *2019 Results and 2020 Budget* report are below.

As always, thanks to Pat Ayers and Joan Bennett, our faithful Receiving Treasurers; Susan Fockler and Haunani Wallace, who work diligently getting the bills paid and deposits recorded; and the Finance and Endowment Committee members. I appreciate all of you.

***2019 Results and 2020 Budget***

	<b>2019 Budget</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>	<b>2020 Budget</b>
<b>Operating Income</b>			
Pledge and General Donations	190,550	189,677	193,000
Endowment Income used for Operations	39,000	39,000	33,000
Rental Income and Facility Use Donations	33,400	30,272	32,200
Fundraising Income	7,500	5,149	1,500
Other Income and Donations	2,350	715	300
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	<b>272,800</b>	<b>264,813</b>	<b>260,000</b>
<b>Operating Expense</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	165,200	159,241	158,100
Diocesan Allocation	44,800	44,746	41,600
Church Facilities Expenses	37,400	31,949	33,600
Administrative Expenses	17,000	19,715	21,100
Other Operating Expenses	8,400	4,819	5,600
<b>Total Operating Expense</b>	<b>272,800</b>	<b>260,469</b>	<b>260,000</b>
<b>Net Operating Income/(Loss)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,344</b>	<b>-</b>

**A Personal Note**

My term as Treasurer ends January 2021. After much prayer and discernment, I have decided not to stand for reappointment as your Treasurer. If you have any interest in volunteering for this position, please talk to me, Lisa+ or any Vestry member. Being your Treasurer has enabled me to meet so many wonderful people; thank you all for your support over the past 5 years! ~~  
Terry Mello

## ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

The Endowment Committee members are Robert Knapp, Suzanne Scott and Lucy Ebbert. Ex Officio members are Rev. Canon Lisa Smith Fry, Rector, Carlos Mello, Senior Warden and Terry Mello, Treasurer.

The committee's primary goal this year was to perform a competitive review of investment advisors. St. Thomas' longtime advisor has been Cleveland-based Key Bank. This portfolio includes both restricted funds (RI Thomas Scholarship Fund) and unrestricted funds totaling slightly over a million dollars.

Beginning in early summer the committee compiled a list of investment advisors in the state. Criteria were established, including historical performance, transaction fees, commissions, customer service and investment and endowment consulting. After further review, the committee decided employee-owned Allen Insurance/Financial Services (AIF) should replace Key Bank. As further due diligence on AIF, three references were contacted by members of the Finance Committee. Maine's Department of Securities also verified that there were no outstanding complaints or actions against the firm. After completion of the above process and further discussion with AIF, the committee sought and received vestry approval to make the change. Shortly thereafter documentation was executed with AIF and our treasurer began transferring the funds from Key Bank to AIF.

The goal for 2020 is to work with AIF to develop an investment and legacy strategy. If this is of interest to you, please consider joining the committee. We meet on a quarterly basis.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lucy Ebbert, Chairman

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee members consist of Susan Fockler (Chairperson), Chris Glass, Elizabeth Moran and Leamon Scott. Our Ex Officio members are Rev. Canon Lisa Fry, Carlos Mello (Sr. Warden) and Terry Mello (Treasurer). The majority of our meetings this year involved developing a Gift Acceptance Policy. This policy was presented to the Vestry and was approved at the August 2019 meeting. We monitor the Baird investment funds, work with Terry reviewing the monthly financial reports and assist in creating the yearly budget. If you are interested in joining this committee or would like additional information, please contact Susan Fockler.



## MINISTER OF MUSIC

As one of the 'new' people on staff this past year, I would like to thank all who worship at St. Thomas' for your welcome and for your support. I have been searching for a church home for a very long time—you have made me feel part of the family, even though I only started in August.

Things that have not changed:

- We continue to offer music at the 7:30 AM Rite I service.
- Our senior choir continues to gather at 8:30 AM on Sundays to prepare for worship.
- Senior Choir rehearsals are on Thursdays from 5:00 – 6:30 PM. We would welcome anyone who would like to join us. Please consider becoming a member of the choir!
- For Christmas Eve there were two services, the earlier family service at 4:30 with pageant, and the later one at 10 with special music and full eucharist.
- Special anthem music is part of the mix—please let me know if you would like to contribute.
- St. Thomas' continues a ministry at Quarry Hill every few weeks. I will be helping with that in 2020.
- The organ is still without the Choir manual because of the water damage from last year. The organ was tuned in the beginning of December, and a damaged pipe repaired. The Choir manual will be missing for the foreseeable future.

Things that have changed:

- We now have a Youth Choir! We rehearse on Sundays after worship at approximately 11:15. We have already sung twice in church and my plan is for us to sing as often as we can—I hope for once a month. If you have children who would like to join us, please come to rehearsal!
- This year is St. Thomas' turn to host the Great Vigil during Holy Week. We will have a choir made up of members from area churches, with Tony Antolini as choir director. I will be the organist.
- I celebrate our Senior Choir members now with birthday parties about once a month. This is one small way to show my appreciation for the choir, who work extremely hard. They continue to sing almost every Sunday of the year. Even though the work can be challenging, it is so rewarding to be in creative fellowship. Youth Choir will also have parties; our time is limited so we will not have them as often.

Starting in March, the annual Lenten Music series will continue. I am looking for musicians who might like to participate. Please contact me if you are interested or know someone who might be. I am hoping to bring students in from our local high school.

Thank you all for your kindness and encouragement. I am looking forward to the coming seasons with great anticipation.

Clarissa Brown, AAGO MM

## OFFICE MANAGER

Since coming to St. Thomas' in June, I've enjoyed getting to know the clergy and parishioners, all of whom have been kind, helpful and patient while I learned about my job, the workings of the church, and the requirements for holding three services and religious education classes every week, as well as the many secular activities that go on here.

I've kept the calendar and juggled meetings of church committees and other activities: Over the summer, the Camden Shakespeare Festival used the Parish Hall as a primary location for a production, "Hamlet," and the hall was a rain-date venue for "The Taming of the Shrew."

The Camden Garden Club has been a frequent guest, holding board meetings here every month, selling tickets on the lawn for their annual summer garden tour, and making wreaths for the town's lampposts at Christmas time. I helped collect donations for the lively "Summer Farewell" auction and party in August and September, and made flyers and signs.

In October, the Camden International Film Festival held a four-day forum for filmmakers to pitch their works to industry professionals. CIFF loved our space and will be coming back this October.

In November, the church hosted a well-attended community Thanksgiving Dinner, and the year wrapped up with the ever-popular Christmas Fair.

I had a front-row seat as the tower was encased in scaffolding for a few months while contractors assessed the work to be done on it. It now has been "bubble wrapped" while the church considers its options. In between those events, I put out the alarm one day when high winds began blowing the metal planks off the scaffolding. Edmund Hartt made an emergency call to the contractor, who sent someone from Augusta to tie down everything.

As office manager, I scheduled several supply organists until our new music minister joined us in August. Here and there, I've scheduled supply priests while the rector was away.

I scheduled and/or dealt with electricians to arrange to change the lights in the church to more cost-effective LED bulbs, as well as fire alarm inspectors, fire extinguisher inspectors, stove repairmen, roofers to replace shingles on the rental building (see windstorm, above), plumbers to repair a leaking sink upstairs in time to stop it dripping on parishioners at the coffee hour the next morning, and sales reps bidding to replace the office photocopier with a better-but-cheaper model.

I've placed press releases and ads for events, including the Summer Fair, Christmas Fair, Thanksgiving Dinner and the Blessing of the Animals service.

I've ordered supplies for the church, changed the hanging candle a few times, and assisted in refilling the candles on the altar. I've hauled Christmas trees up from the basement for the Christmas Fair, carried vases to and fro for the flower guild and baked countless apple crisps to remediate the bumper harvest from the tree next to the parking lot. I only ate one in three.

Throughout, I've been putting out the weekly bulletins and Tidings newsletter, every week vowing that this time they'll be perfect. Well, there's always next week!

Susie Crawford

## CHRISTIAN FORMATION

- **Godly Play** continues for the children ages 4-9 with Karen Colburn. They study bible stories, discover the church year cycle, pray and sing. It's a well-rounded class ensuring our youngest members spiritual growth.
- **Church the Bible and Me** led by Rachel Bickham and was developed for youth ages 10 and up. It's geared toward the development of older children and delves more deeply into our faith and how it affects our lives. This class meets irregularly until we find another volunteer to assist with teaching. Email the rector at [rector@stthomascamdenme.org](mailto:rector@stthomascamdenme.org) if you're are interested.
- **Rector's Class** — This class is facilitated or taught by the rector and others. Topics have included current church affairs, angels, the Aramaic Lord's Prayer, the book A Bigger Table, and several series. All classes are open to everyone, even if you haven't been "keeping up". No judgement: join us, and join in.
- **Bible Study** — Brother Donovan Bowley –Wednesdays, after the 9.30 am service from 11am-12pm in the Sun Room. There is a Fellowship hour with tea/coffee/cookies at 10 am before the bible study starts. All are welcome.
- **EfM (Education for Ministry)** — Co-mentors: Brother Donovan Bowley and the Rev. Dr. Rosalee Glass. Wednesdays, conference room 4:00-6.30pm. A 4-year course in Holy Scripture, Church History and Theology offered (now in its 19<sup>th</sup> year) at St. Thomas's and provided by the School of Theology at Sewanee, University of the South. Good course for those who have the interest but do not want to take a degree in Theology. **Forum/Book Studies/Classes** — Forum 11:00am-12:00pm, Guild Room, convenes on an ad-hoc basis when there is interest, or a timely topic.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Smith Fry

## BIBLE STUDY

Come join us on Wednesdays for an informal Bible Study and discussion on Wednesdays at 11:00 am to noon, following the 9.30 am healing service Room. There is a Fellowship hour with tea/coffee/cookies at 10 am before the bible study starts. We meet in the Conference Room in the colder months and the Sun Room in the warmer months. All are welcome.

Brother Donovan Bowley

## EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY

We meet on Wednesday afternoons, September to June, in the Conference Room 4:00-6.30pm. This is 4-year course in Holy Scripture, Church History and Theology offered (now in its 19th year) at St. Thomas' and provided by the School of Theology at Sewanee, University of the South. This is a good course for those who have the interest but do not want to take a degree in Theology. Graduates do receive a Certificate of Completion from the School of Theology at the University of the South.

Co-mentors: The Rev. Dr. Rosalee Glass and Br. Donovan Bowley

## ACOLYTES

*"An acolyte's purpose is rooted in our love of God, our faithfulness is seen in our willingness to serve responsibly, and our loyalty is determined in how carefully we carry out our duties. – A Manual for Acolytes (Michno)*

An acolyte's role is critical within each service. These dedicated youth and adults ring the sanctus bells, light the candles, carry the cross and torches, help the priest or deacon set the Lord's table, move sacred items from place to place, and occasionally help the priest when the inevitable unexpected things happen.

- This year's adult acolytes: JoAnne Ryan, Sandy Lyle and Pam Bardon
- This year's youth acolytes (3 teams): Freya Johanson (*team leader*) Lola Black, Hettie Bickham; Kavan Kibler (*team leader*), Kingston Kibler, Tom Roberts; and George Bickham (*team leader*), Charlotte Watkins and Poppy Johanson.

We are about to train more acolytes, and be able to have four teams of 3 acolytes, and here's what they do: 1<sup>st</sup> Crucifer, Torch/ Server and Torch/ Sanctus Bells.

We welcome new acolytes to be trained. Any child, 7 and up, who would like to acolyte, please email the Rector at [rector@stthomascamdenme.org](mailto:rector@stthomascamdenme.org).

Respectfully submitted,  
Joe Kulick  
The Rev. Canon Lisa Fry

## ALTAR GUILD

### Ministry is....

*Listening, when you'd rather fix the problem.  
Searching for the joy, when it's easier to say "it's not fair."  
Helping, when you feel like your the one who needs the help.  
Telling God, " use me," when you'd rather ask to be rescued.  
Encouraging, even when you don't understand Gods reasoning.  
Hugging when it feels awkward.  
Saying "let's pray right now." Instead of I'll pray for you.  
Serving when in doubt you have anything left to give.  
Comforting, by being the flicker of light in others dark caverns.*  
*Author Unknown*

I'd like to invite you to join the Altar Guild, a service ministry that prepares the table for God's Eucharist. Through retirement the Altar Guild is diminished; we have 2 active members and several helpers. Help revitalize this important ministry by offering your time and talent to the care and spirituality that comes from serving God in peace and grace.

JoAnne Ryan

## FLOWER GUILD

Beautiful arrangements grace the altar and the chapel weekly due in part to the Flower Guild. Thank you all—past and present—who prepare the flowers and who take such pleasure in honoring God. We encourage everyone to sign up to be a Flower Guild member—no experience required. Members will be available to instruct.

Flowers may be given in memory of something or someone, or in thanksgiving. There are three ways to give flowers:

- Bring your own garden flowers
- Purchase flowers
- Write a check for \$50 and flowers will be purchased

Donations are being accepted now to give flowers throughout 2020! Sign up to donate flowers in the binder in the Sun Room

Thank you all again—for old members, new members and donations in 2019!

Have a blessed year!

Kate Jackson

## LAY EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEM's) assist with communion by administering the chalice. Sometimes the LEM's do extra duties when necessary and can sometimes be seen being Crucifer or Acolyte as well. They are dedicated, versatile team players.

Our 7:30 LEMs are: JoAnne Ryan, Pam Bardon, and Sandy Lyle, and our 10:00 LEMs are: Kristian Kibler, Jeff Conrad, Roy Gilley, Jacqueline Recht, Dean Jackson and Bill Freeman.

We could use additional people who would like to serve at the altar of God. Please let the Rector or Pam Bardon know if you are interested.

## LECTORS

We appreciate the dedication of the members who each Sunday are responsible for reading the lessons and leading the Prayers of the People. During 2019 we were delighted to have youth members of the church continuing to read on the first Sunday of each month at the 10am service. We are always interested in having new parishioners who would be willing to serve the church in this important ministry. Please contact Terry Mello for reading at the 7:30 a.m. service or Bill Freeman (236-2396) for the 10 a.m. Service.

Our 7:30 a.m. Lectors are: Pat Ayers, Pam Bardon, Edmund Hartt, Diane Kirkman, Jan Lyle, Sandy Lyle, Terry Mello, Andrew Moran, and JoAnne Ryan.

Our 10 a.m. Lectors are: Anna Black, George Bickham , Br. Donovan Bowley, Polly Chatfield, Jeff Conrad, Millie Crocker, Kathryn Dermarderosian, Bill Freeman, Roy Gilley, Chris Glass, Sarah Groman, Sydney Hall, Dean Jackson, Kate Jackson, John Mattern, , Doc Wallace, Haunani Wallace, Sally Williamson and our youth: Freya Johanson, Hettie Bickham, Bea Bickham, and Charlotte Watkins.

*Thank you for your faithful service to St. Thomas'.*

Respectfully submitted  
Bill Freeman  
Terry Mello

## USHERS

### 7:30 a.m. Service

The ushers at the 7:30 service do a wonderful job of greeting those who come out early to attend Rite 1 worship. Our group consists of: Isa Babb, Jean Cox, Peggy Daniels, Edmund Hartt, Jan Lyle, Carlos Mello, Bert Ryan and Marilyn Smith. Please contact Terry Mello, or any 7:30 Usher, if you are interested in this ministry.

*Thank you for your faithful service to St. Thomas'*

*(Ushers continued...)*

**10:00 a.m. Service**

Ushering at St. Thomas' is an easy way for parishioners to serve our parish. Over the years we have been fortunate to have a core group of volunteers for the regular 9:30/10:00 AM services and occasional special services. We are also fortunate to have a number of summer residents who regularly serve when they are in town.

During 2019 our group included Joan Bennett, Dean Jackson, Bill Freeman, Roy Gilley, Leamon Scott, Phil Groman, Ed Williamson, Mike Moore, Scott Chrysler and Lucy Ebbert. We were also pleased to have Ted Conlon rejoin the group.

Additionally, we are pleased to have the children serve! This has been one of our group's objectives, and I am glad to say that in 2019 we have been especially successful in meeting this objective. We regularly ask our young to offer the oblations and to, as one of them likes to say, "do the money". Their participation helps bring them closer to our worship services. Their positive feedback, along with that of their parents, has been much appreciated.

Moving into 2020, please remember that you do not have to be asked to join our group. We can use additional volunteers, especially in the winter months. If anyone, including our youngest members, is interested in serving they should feel free to approach anyone in our group.

Ushering is not hard to do and is a wonderful way to serve St. Thomas'. And it comes with one bonus most jobs do not offer—no one is ever fired.

Sincerely,  
Jim Ebbert

## **LOAVES AND FISHES MINISTRY**

On the third Saturday of each month St. Thomas' is responsible for providing a community lunch at St. Peter's, Rockland between the hours of 11:00 and 2:00. Our team provides a full hot meal plus coffee, snacks, and desert for approximately 30 people. We make enough of the main dish so that guests can usually take home enough for another meal or to serve a home bound relation.

Our core team consists of four or five volunteers from both services, and we are always open to new recruits, or to parishioners who would like to make a soup, main dish, or dessert to feed 20. These donations can be frozen or refrigerated at our church and I can be notified at 236 2421 for pick up or to provide information for those interested in possibly joining this ministry. There is no long-term commitment – come and help when you are able. St. Peter's provides meals on weekends, and the Catholic church in Rockland, St. Bernard's, provides free community lunches each weekday. No Questions are asked of guests, all who arrive are served.

It is important to remember that any one of us could find ourselves in a position where a daily free meal would greatly help us through a hard time.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pam Bardon

## OUTREACH COALITION

Mission: we have a unique calling: Christ calls us to create opportunities for compassion, faithful education and means us to be connected to others in the work of the gospel and in building strong cooperative relationships.

- Camden Area Food Pantry, serving residents in Camden, Rockport, Lincolville, Hope, Appleton, Union, Washington and Searsmont. By providing financial, and physical presence we are able to serve our community by providing healthy food for those in need. For the year 2019 we donated \$3,545 to the Food Pantry.
- Habitat for Humanity and Knox County Homeless Coalition were recipients of \$135 each raised by our Zumba fundraiser.
- Hospitality House and Knox County Homeless Coalition, we are connected in partnership to participate in acts of charity. This past year St Thomas' adopted 10 families for Christmas gifts. We were also able to provide gift cards for those in need. We also donated \$250 raised at our Flatbread pizza fundraiser.
- Loaves and Fishes, we participate in the preparation and serving of meals every third Saturday at St Peters Episcopal Church for those in need of a healthy meal. This is a community program that provides meals daily through community churches.
- Sussman House, members of the St Thomas' community volunteer through direct client interaction, or by answering phones, welcoming families and by participating in special events.
- New Hope for Women working each day towards the goal of eradicating domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. By our donations we are able to provide them with the means to provide victims of abuse direct services and the services they need. We were able to donate \$250 raised at our Flatbread pizza fundraiser.
- Thanksgiving Day Dinner, dinner is offered free to the greater community. Dinner is prepared in the St Thomas' kitchen and served in the parish hall.
- Meals on Wheels, a National program of assistance to home bound people at nutritional risk. This service supplies 5 nutritious meals per week. We were able to donate \$795.00 to provide hot meals to members of our community. This was raised at the Farewell to Summer event.
- El Hogar in Honduras, we support this school by providing tuition scholarships for at risk children in Tegucigalpa Honduras.
- Episcopal Relief and Development, we provide support and awareness of the international compassionate response to human suffering on behalf of the Episcopal church.
- Camp Bishopswood, by providing tuition scholarships to Maine children to participate in active recreation, explore spirituality, and to meet new people. We also provide volunteers to camp Bishopswood.

Our goal this year is to continue providing services and monetary donations to charities in our community. We are currently planning fundraiser events for this year. We thank you all for your continued support and participation in Outreach events.

JoAnne Ryan



## WEBSITE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

This past year we have been working on the St. Thomas' website with a goal to give it a fresh look and have it be the vehicle that parishioners and visitors would use to get information about St. Thomas'. The website contains a vast amount of information and if you have not visited it in a while, we invite you to take a look – [www.stthomascamdenme.org](http://www.stthomascamdenme.org). The website doesn't just have the weekly Tidings Bulletins and Sermons; you can find information about your Vestry members, Vestry minutes and quarterly financial statements, information about the Kneelers and Windows at St. Thomas' can be found in the "About Us" page. – these are just a few examples of what our website has to offer. If there is anything you would like to see on the website or changes made to it, please feel free to contact Terry Mello. We are always looking for suggestions!

Every week we send out a weekly e-mail with information about what is going on at St. Thomas' and a link to the Tidings newsletter. If you are not receiving a weekly e-mail from us and would like to be put on the distribution list, please let Terry Mello know and she will add you to the list. Please be assured, we will not share your information!

## MEET YOUR NOMINEES

### JUNIOR WARDEN:

**EDMUND HARTT** grew up in Wilabraham, a town near Springfield, MA. His family were



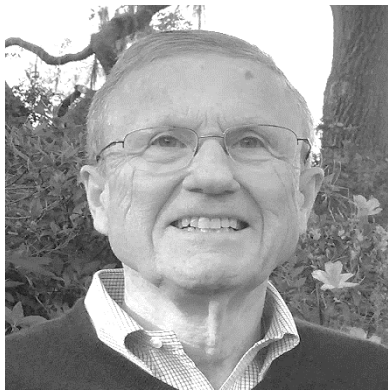
members of the Church of the Epiphany, where his father served as a member of the vestry and Edmund served as acolyte through his college years. He graduated from Kenyon College with a BA in drama.

Edmund moved to Maine in 1979 to work as a camp counselor at Camp Chewonki in Wiscasset. In 1983 he moved to this area to work on wooden boats. He has lived in Lincolnville, Islesboro, Searsmont, and Camden. In 1991 he bought and rebuilt a house in Lincolnville.

He makes his living as a boat builder, carpenter, and cabinet maker. He has served on the Lincolnville School Committee, the CSD Board and the Region 8 School Board.

**VESTRY:**

**BILL FREEMAN** came to Maine with his wife Susan in 1988 as a summer resident. In 2002 they moved from Lancaster Pennsylvania to Rockport permanently. Bill retired after 34 years as a Marketing Manager with Armstrong World Industries in the Flooring Division. For the last 20



years he has been working as a consultant for the Resilient Floor Covering Institute. He has been attending services at St Thomas' for the past 32 years. In Lancaster Bill and Susan joined with 9 other couples to form the first new Episcopal church in 25 years, St Edwards, in the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania. Bill was a member of the St Edwards Vestry for 12 years, Chair of the Building Committee and Co-Leader of St Edwards Youth Fellowship. He currently serves on the St Thomas' Outreach Committee, Board of the Camden Area Christian Food Pantry,

scheduler for the 10AM service readers for the past 10 years and is an usher at St Thomas'. Locally, Bill has been a member of the Rockport Budget Committee and currently is a member of the Rockport Town Investment Committee and the Rockport Board of Assessment Appeals. Bill is the immediate past President of Megunticook Golf Club in Rockport.

**DEAN JACKSON** graduated from Iona College with a Bachelor of Arts degree. After graduating, he became a customer service representative for Grolier International Corporation in New York. Marrying wife Kate, in 1979, Dean held corporate food service managerial positions



at Brocks, Hartford Insurance, and Macy's: all in Connecticut. For 5 years, Dean was the Food Service Director for Shoreline Estuary Council, and Meals on Wheels.

Moving to Maine in 1987, Dean has worked as a public health inspector for the State of Maine, inspecting restaurants, school, food trucks ( even those at Common Ground Fair), and hospitals throughout the state. Recently Dean was awarded his 30 years pin for his service.

Dean is quite interested in genealogy and is Deputy Governor General for *Society of Colonial Wars* (Maine), and is also past Lt. Governor of *Founders and Patriots* (Maine). Being a 20-year member of St Thomas' Church, Dean has helped in many ways: as Master of Ceremonies, Usher, Lay Eucharistic Minister, Lector, and also as chef extraordinaire during various events! He looks forward to serving the St. Thomas' community.

**JEN JOHANSON** lives with her husband, Erik, and their three daughters, Ella, Freya & Poppy, right here in the heart of Camden. Her family moved to Maine from Florida in 2016 and they have made it home.



Jen is a busy mum, but also works full-time as the Executive Officer of the Mid-Coast Board of REALTORS. She also runs a vacation rental business during the busy summer months.

Jen is from the UK, and her family lived overseas for many years when Erik was Active Duty in the USAF.

**EILEEN MORELLI** lived in Camden, Maine, for the past 4 years. She and her husband, Paul, have 3 children and 7 grandchildren. Her daughter Licia lives in Camden, and her two sons, PJ and Tom, live in Boston and Baltimore. Her grandchildren range in age from 7 years to 13 years old.



She has also lived in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Colorado, and Birmingham, England.

She began her career in Education as a Second Grade Teacher in Hobart, Indiana, and retired as a Professor of Literature and Language Arts at Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania. Eileen was also a Curriculum Supervisor for the Denver Public Schools and an Executive Assistant to the President

of the Community College of Allegheny County in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She is a certified Reading Specialist in Maine and four other states. Currently, she works with children who have reading difficulty.

Eileen has always been an active member of her church and feels that this participation enhances her life's purpose. In her service to the church, she has served as a teacher, member of the church council, and chair or co-chair of various fundraising activities.

She feels it is important to continue to learn about her own spirituality, reach out to others, and encourage younger people to participate in knowing God through their own religious education.