

ANNUAL REPORT



St. Thomas' Episcopal Church
171st Annual Parish Meeting
January 25, 2026

ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

OFFICERS. STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Interim Rector: The Rev. Paul R. Briggs II
Deacon: The Rev. Kristen Burkholder
Deacon Emeritus: The Rev. Dr. Rosalee Glass
Senior Warden: Elizabeth Moran
Junior Warden: Donovan Bowley
Treasurer: Terry Mello
Clerk of the Vestry: Anne Rogers-Popejoy
Minister of Music: Clarissa Brown (*Vacant as of June 2025*)
Parish Administrator: Kayla Clay
Sexton: Tony Coyne
Communications: Terry Mello
Office Volunteers:
Grayce Sivigny
Jan Lyle
Diane Kirkman

2025 PARISH STATISTICS

Communicants in Good Standing:
Average Sunday Attendance:
In-Person: 73
Online Viewing 2025:
Livestreaming: 64 (Avg. Views 54)
Sunday: 58
Other: 6

Holy Baptisms: 3
Marriages: 2
Burials: 3

Deaths in the Community:

The Reverend David A. Edman

Marilyn Smith

Polly Chatfield

Fredrick Chatfield Jr.

Virginia Johns

Carolyn Moore

Glenn Mitchell

*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. Gathering and Call to Order
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3. Approval of Minutes
4. Nomination and Election of Vestry Members
5. Election of Diocesan Convention Delegates
6. Elizabeth Moran, Senior Warden
7. Br. Donovan Bowley, Junior Warden
8. Comments from Committee Chairs
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10. Interim's Remarks and Table Conversations
11. Recognition of Outgoing Vestry Members
12. Installation of New Vestry Members
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2025 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

January 26, 2025

170th Annual Meeting

Fr. Paul Briggs appoints Anne Rogers-Popejoy as clerk.
Calls the meeting to order at 10:50am.

Edmund Hartt moves to approve the minutes of the 2024 Annual Parish Meeting, second Shelly Gallender.

Introduction of current vestry and parish officers; expression of gratitude for service.

Sarah Groman, vestry nominating committee announces the nominees for the new vestry: Bill Freeman, Kelli McGuire, and Anne Rogers-Popejoy. Each nominee gives remarks regarding what they are most excited about in their new terms.

Clerk casts a ballot for the slate of vestry nominees. All elected.

Sarah Groman, vestry nominating committee announces the nominees for Diocesan Convention Delegates: Br. Donovan Bowley, Kelli McGuire, Derek Reed.
Alternates: Sarah Groman and Jan Lyle, both nominated from the floor. (motion Anne Rogers-Popejoy, second Bill Freeman).

Clerk casts a ballot for the slate of 2025 Diocesan Convention delegates and alternates. All elected.

Remarks from the Senior Warden: Elizabeth Moran: gratitude to the parish and interim rector in our 100th year.

Junior Warden, Br. Donovan Bowley is absent in person. Interim rector notes that he named Bill Freeman acting Building and Grounds Committee chair in 2024 in light of the extended absence of the junior warden. See report.

Treasurer's Remarks and Presentation of the 2025 Budget: Terry Mello.

- Mello shares 2024 results and 2025 budgeted. See report;
- Reports that finances are in good shape; total assets total approximately \$3.3M and investments are doing well;
- The 2025 budget reflects a half time rector without benefits. Moving to a full time model would increase those expenses by approximately \$30,000.

Questions from the floor about fundraising plans/events in the next year. Encouragement to speak with a member of the vestry.

Interim rector expresses gratitude for Terry's diligence and commitment.

Interim rector's remarks: Fr. Paul Briggs

- Includes visioning and connection activities;
- Discussion of core values.

Interim rector recognizes outgoing vestry members: Sarah Groman, Kendra Watkins, Anne Rogers-Popejoy.

Installation of new vestry members: Kelli McGuire, Bill Freeman, Anne Rogers-Popejoy.

Questions and discussion from the floor including comments on how to best connect, success and reports on events, use of the physical space, and prayers for members of the parish.

Fr Paul Briggs closes the meeting at 11:50 in prayer and congregational song.

INTERIM RECTOR

Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Today we mark the one hundred and seventy-first year that the members of Saint Thomas Church, the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement, have gathered to take counsel together and seek the mind of God's Spirit.

Take that in: for one hundred and seventy-one years this community of faith has been place of hope, a beam of light, a sign of God's in-breaking reign right here in Knox County. Today, I want us to focus on the call our Lord has issued to us, not just our call, but the call, God's call, God's call to each and every one of us. But first let me recount areas of the Spirit's movement in our midst.

This past year has been one of significant growth and change for St. Thomas's. We began experimenting: We "tried on" having one combined service at 9:30 during the season of Epiphany. The experiment was met with a relatively high degree of enthusiasm and so this year we extended the experiment from Advent through Lent. At the same time, I invited a small cadre to be trained to lead Morning Prayer on the fourth Sunday of each month; again this has been met in some quarters with a degree of enthusiasm. Part of the reason for this shift is to better manage the resources and energy we have. These experiments keep us nimble and flexible, open to the Spirit's movement, as we ask ourselves "what gives us life?". On Palm Sunday, we welcomed a newly ordained deacon in the person of the Rev. Kristen Burkholder. We are grateful to God for Kristen's many gifts, particularly her heart for intercessory prayer and song, her compassion for the hurting, the marginalized and vulnerable, and her enthusiasm and spunk! Her work among us grounds us all in the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Our outreach efforts continue to expand and become more clearly focused and I am grateful to Gwen Prosser, Rebecca Vogt, Deacon Burkholder, and so many others who are being Christ's hands and feet and heart in the world.

Bill Freeman reactivated the Building and Grounds Committee in the past year which developed a prioritized list of items that needed attention and chipped away at them. (The list still grows). A major Spring cleaning resulted in the clearing out of several rooms and storage areas that had become cluttered with unused or obsolete items. We are grateful for his organizational leadership in this important area.

Finding Portland to be a “bridge too far”, our Director of Music of the past five years, Clarissa Brown, resigned in June. We continue to advertise to fill this key staff position. In the meantime, God is good. Seemingly out of the blue, Jim Higdon, Chris Dawson, Lizzie Danchi, Scott Dyer, and others have stepped in to fill the gap. We are grateful to Jim Higdon for overseeing necessary repairs to our organ. In September, he offered a world class performance to a packed house with his “Paris in Camden” concert.

We are blessed at St. Thomas to have a number of young families and we are beginning to develop ministries that will nurture the spiritual life of this new generation. Thank you to Avery Reed for her work with Children’s Chapel and organizing parents and youth to assist weekly. The chapel program is intended for the youngest members of our congregation and we will have conversations to see what we need to put in place next to develop spiritual growth of children as they enter primary grades. I am grateful to Terry Mello and others who have worked to make safe church training available. We all want St. Thomas to be a safe environment for children, youth, and vulnerable adults. All vestry members and staff are expected to be certified in safe church as well as anyone who works with these populations. Thank you, too, to those who worked to prepare for St. Nicholas visit in early December and specifically to Anne Rogers Popejoy and Becca Berry for organizing our spectacular Christmas pageant and to this year.

In December, the vestry contracted with Holy Cow! Consulting to conduct a Congregational Assessment Tool (C.A.T) Survey because our congregation has changed significantly since we took the survey two years ago. In addition, Holy Cow! will conduct listening sessions in mid-March to help us understand more clearly the needs and desires of our congregation. The third part of this consultation will result in a leadership retreat with vestry and staff in late Spring. I can’t help but remind you that your participation in the CAT survey (which ends this coming week) and the listening sessions in mid-March are essential in obtaining an accurate picture of our congregation that will help us to keep moving in a positive direction.

Holy Cow! also suggested that we pause making a final decision about whether we restore or remove the bell tower until the survey work is completed. We have revisited the project of the bell tower. Barba + Wheelock Architects (funded by an anonymous donor) provided us with four proposals: A) to restore the tower B) restore the tower with an added hip roof C) remove the tower and retain chapel with plaster and timber exterior walls D) remove the tower and retain the chapel leaving the exterior wall as they exist.

While it may seem like nothing is happening, we continue to have conversations and gather information. Building consensus around a project of this magnitude is no easy task but I am confident that God will show us the way forward.

And so what’s all this have to do with our “call”? Jesus proclaims the coming kingdom of God and invites those listening to turn around (repent) to receive this kingdom. He then begins gathering disciples and shows us the nature of the kingdom he’s been proclaiming through his teaching, preaching, and healing. God’s call permeates the gospel passage today: The call to John the Baptist, even though it leads to imprisonment. Jesus’ withdrawal for an intentional time to listen and respond to God’s call. Jesus’ call to the crowds to become a part of God’s in-breaking kingdom, followed by his call to a few specific fishermen to catch up all kinds of people in the net of God’s amazing grace. There are different kinds of callings, yet each is from God. We need to hear that. In many people’s minds, the idea of “the call” is reserved for the ordained. I’m sure that many of you have a hard time seeing a direct connection between what you do and what you

believe...which is why most of us don't feel called. I wonder if calling is less about what we do than who we are. Think about it: God's call isn't simply to do something, but rather to be something, a child of God. Maybe being comes before doing. Maybe being makes doing possible.

Is that what made it possible for John to proclaim the coming Messiah and challenge the powers that be, even when it meant his imprisonment? He knew God had called him to be the forerunner. Is that what summoned the response from Peter and Andrew, James and John, that they felt called to be more than they had imagined? They probably have no idea what being "fishers of people" meant, but they do know that Jesus sees something in them, something of value and worth. They have no idea where they will go, or what they will do, but they do know that Jesus is calling them to be his disciples, and they trust that the rest will become clear in time.

We are all called to be children of God. Even if you don't quite know what being a child of God means exactly, you know that God values and honors and loves and you. If we are open to being God's daughter or son, you will learn over time what it means and find all kinds of things to do in response to God's call. Maybe the "doing" will come through your work or volunteering. My guess is that most of our "doing" (living out our calling) will come through our relationships. In whatever way God uses us, it's important to remember that before God calls us to do anything, God first calls us to be something: God's own beloved children and knowing this, we can trust that the rest will follow.

What's more, this calling isn't only for individuals, it's also for our congregation of St. Thomas. I invite us to consider what one need our congregation can meet and allow that sense of calling to shape the year to come. And perhaps before figuring out what we are called to do as a congregation, we can remind each other what we are called to be. God is calling our congregation to be the gathering of God's beloved children. God is calling St. Thomas to be a place of welcome and acceptance. God is calling our congregation to be a sanctuary where God's word is taught, the good news of the kingdom is proclaimed, and all find healing. I understand, we want to get going and do something. But if we can first focus on being – just being – God's beloved children, and let that grace-filled identify seep into the deepest parts of ourselves, I have little doubt that those things we are called to do will become clear in time.

The Rev. Paul Briggs
The Third Sunday After the Epiphany 2026

DEACON

It is with joy that I write my first deacon report -- ever -- and that I am writing to you all. When I was ordained on April 6th, 2025, I was heartened by having some of you there: strangers, then, but dear friends now. When I considered serving at St Thomas as my first parish assignment, I was terribly nervous and worried: I now feel the gratitude one might have upon leaping from a great height and rather than landing on hard ground, landing on a cushy mattress! This has been a great start for me, and I can't say enough about how grateful I am for your love, support and generosity towards me.

Last year, 2025, was mostly a time of building relationships, getting to know the lay of the land, finding my rhythm and seeing what's possible. I preached once a month, supported Outreach as best as I could, helped us say farewell to Clarissa with a song I rewrote the lyrics to, and prayed with anyone who wanted it, whether it was in the Lady Chapel or the parish kitchen. I coordinated with the copious music supply staff we've had since June, making sure they were

comfortable and understood the flow of the service. I trained some acolytes!

I participated in Holy Week and Christmas services, attended Convention, and I keep the church Facebook page fresh and up-to-date. I like to go out in the community with my clergy attire on, and if it's appropriate, letting folks know I'm the deacon "at the Episcopal church here in town, St. Thomas." Some of the most important conversations I had last year were in the Antique Mall, and standing in line at Zoot for my matcha latte!

As for 2026, we're already off and rolling. Here are three things I'm thinking about (and I'm sure there will be more to come...)

- All Hands Outreach meetings, happening every 6 weeks or so. There are many ideas and much out-pouring of the Holy Spirit among us, galvanizing us to act in Knox County for the betterment of all of our neighbors. It's good for us to gather and talk about what we're doing, so we can pray together and help each other think!
- Volunteering at the Camden Food Pantry once a month on Saturday will be a game-changer for me. Developing relationships there is super important. Who knows, perhaps by the end of the year I'll have one or two of you volunteering along with me!
- "If you do outreach, you gotta do inreach!" said Rev. Dr. Fred Ericksen. In tandem with our efforts out in the community, are we nourishing ourselves spiritually, strengthening our relationship with our Triune God for the challenging days ahead? Everything we do "out there" must be grounded in prayer and seeking God's will. How are we doing this with each other? If it's already happening, let's lift it up! If we're not doing it, I'm passionate about us finding ways to do "inreach" together!

"Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21

The Rev. Kristen Burkholder

SENIOR WARDEN

As we look back on 2025, St. Thomas' Church continued to move forward blessed by the Holy Spirit and guided by our Interim Rector, Rev. Paul Briggs. With our Vestry, Deacon and a very active group of parish leaders, our worship services and parish life have been reinvigorated.

Our congregation continues to grow in part led by our young families attending Children's Chapel. Financial support continues to be robust and volunteer opportunities are thriving. We are fortunate to have an engaged Vestry and hard-working committee leadership. An example is an amazing Outreach Committee led by Gwen Prosser that has expanded into new areas to help those in our larger community who are in need. Although our talented organist, Clarissa Brown will be missed, we continue to have beautiful hymns at most of our services including a special organ concert by Dr. Jim Higdon.

The Senior Warden is known as the 'Rector's Warden' with the responsibility of advising the Rector at his/her request on matters of parish policy. In that role, much of this past year was devoted to compiling any information about the Bell Tower of St. Thomas. Such information was needed by the Interim Rector and Tower Committee as they discussed the repair of the historic tower. Working with Rosalee Glass, we were able to compile the history and maintenance record of the tower. This was done by reading approximately 120 Years of Vestry minutes, letters from

the then Rector, Father Ralph Hayden, correspondence from the architect and suppliers of construction materials and accounts from members of the Building Committees over the years as to any maintenance work done on the tower. This was done to provide the current Building Committee and architect information on the Bell Tower maintenance over the years. The Interim Rector asked for information and he got 120 Years Worth!!!!

This past year more attention was given to the grounds/gardens. We finally replaced the evergreen garden that had been removed when the “east elevation wall” was repaired a few years ago.

Altar Guild continued to be revitalized by seeking out and training new members. In 2026 we need to do an inventory of the many “treasures”/memorial gifts for insurance and record-keeping purposes. Also the Esther Hotchkiss Library needs to be reorganized and the resources arranged for use by the parish.

On behalf of our Parish family, I would like to give a heart-felt thank you to our Interim Rector, Paul, who carefully guides us in this transition process.

With enthusiasm and love throughout our Parish Family, we will continue to move forward in this next chapter in our life together. We are thankful for our many blessings here at St. Thomas that so enrich our lives together within a strong and vibrant community of faith.

In Christ’s Love,

Elizabeth Moran

FINANCIALS

2025 Financial Review

As we begin our journey together in 2026, let us first give ourselves a big round of applause for the support you have given to St. Thomas’ throughout the year. We ended the year with an Operating Budget surplus of almost \$37,000 – and that is without withdrawing any funds from our Endowment. Your donations to Outreach totaled \$11,000 which helped: The Camden Rockport Middle and Elementary Schools, Loaves and Fishes, Camden Area Christian Food Pantry, St. Thomas’ Feeds Families, Assistance for the L.A. Wildfires and Texas Flood Relief, The Treatment Recovery Court, Camp Bishopswood Scholarship, and other areas of need in our community. St. Thomas’ received \$6,100 of interest from the Victor Edman Trust for Needy Children – these funds were sent to El Hogar (<https://elhogar.org>) and The Trinity Church Uganda School Project (<https://www.trinitychurchportland.org/uganda-school>). In 2025, we awarded Richard I Thomas Scholarships to two students to help with their higher education expenses and the Sarah Davenport Fund helped two parishioners with their Christian education journey.

Our financial position is healthy. Thank you all for your support of St. Thomas’. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to Fr. Paul, our Wardens, Vestry, and the Finance & Endowment Committee for their unwavering support and steadfast trust.

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” – Helen Keller

2026 Budget Projection

Each year the Treasurer, Vestry and Finance Committee work together to develop a responsible budget for the current year. It was decided the for 2026 we would aim to have a “budget in balance” which means no surplus/deficit. For the first time in many years, we have included funds to help Outreach in our budget. We have also included a line item known as “Reserve Funds” to cover any unanticipated expenses.

It is important to understand that this budget is not sustainable going forward as it is based on our current situation – a half-time rector with no pension or insurance expense budgeted. It is important to take the below scenarios into consideration as St. Thomas’ moves forward in the discernment process.

Additional cost for Pension and Single Health Insurance:

- **Half-Time Rector:** \$18,930 – resulting in a \$1,350 deficit.
- **Three-Quarter-Time Rector:** \$48,100 – resulting in a \$30,520 deficit
- **Full-Time Rector:** \$78,400 – resulting in a \$60,800 deficit

The cost would increase for covered health insurance for spouse (15%-18%) or family (29%-34%). The above scenarios do not include using any income derived from the Endowment Fund to cover operating costs.

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:1-2, NRSV

Faithfully,
Terry Mello

Financial Reports can be found on the last pages of this report.

FINANCE AND ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

Current members of the Finance and Endowment Committee are Phil Groman (chair), Bill Freeman, and Cheryl Reif. Ex Officio members are Paul Briggs (Interim Rector), Terry Mello (Treasurer), and Elizabeth Moran (Senior Warden). The need for an additional voting member still exists. If this committee is of interest to you, please contact any member for more information.

Meetings are held quarterly primarily to monitor our investments, review financial reports, and at year-end assist in developing the annual budget for approval by the Vestry. On a monthly basis Terry shares a detailed analysis of our financial situation by email.

Representatives from Allen Insurance and Financial attend our meetings twice yearly to provide an update on the financial markets, review our investment performance, and recommend any changes should any be necessary. Investment-wise, in spite of a great deal of initial uncertainty our portfolio yielded strong returns.

Once again we ended the year with a surplus in our accounts and, as had been budgeted, no withdrawal from our Endowment funds was necessary.

Respectfully submitted,
Phil Groman

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

The Parish Administrator and the office volunteers enabled St. Thomas' office to be open five days a week, Monday through Friday. Kayla Clay on Monday, Tuesday and Friday, Grayce Sivigny on Tuesdays, Jan Lyle on Wednesdays, and Diane Kirkman on Thursdays. They worked to ensure that St. Thomas' was a welcoming church, and that parishioners and visitors had access to any needed information and services.

The church was opened when the office was open; answered the phone and emails; greeted visitors; helped manage Realm which included the service-assignment schedule, recording giving contributions, inputting/updating address' for parishioners, stewardship campaign; and assisting the

Treasurer with Realm Accounting (printing checks), handled weekly deposits; edited Tidings; mailed Tidings to shut-ins without Internet service; proofed, posted, printed, and folded the bulletins; scheduled events; emailed readings and prayers of the people to readers; ordered supplies; made signs; kept the calendar updated and posted; helped the Treasurer (Terry Mello) keep the website updated; assist the priest in a variety of activities; and performed all the other tasks that any office administrator might be asked to handle.

Kayla Clay

FLOWER GUILD

The flower guild is responsible for the flower arrangements in the church, chapel and narthex on a weekly basis throughout the year, except during Lent and Advent. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the Sun Room for giving donations for memorial flowers and the name(s) of those being remembered is included in the Sunday service bulletin.

Generous donations from the congregation were received for memorial flowers at Easter and Christmas for Easter lilies, Christmas greens and poinsettias and a small number of people gave donations for flowers at other times during the year.

Easter 2025 marked a beautiful way to integrate the Sunday school ministry for our young people into the work of glorifying God in His temple. Under Avery Reed's direction the children created individual Easter gardens with foil trays, moss, pebbles, metallic butterflies and crosses made from twigs, and these were proudly displayed on the church steps leading up to the choir stalls.

For more information, to make suggestions, or to express interest in joining the flower guild, please contact sarahgroman57@gmail.com 207-956-3592.

The other current members are Connie Bock, Kate Jackson, Kay Lehr, Kelli Mcguire, Avery Reed, Oksana Shelemei and Grayce Sivigny.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Groman

ALTAR GUILD

Altar Guild Enjoy a time of peace and calmness, a bit of time in the church with no hustle and bustle, a spiritual time. This is time that the members of the Altar Guild enjoy. Members take care of the Sanctuary, set up communion for each service and take care of the vessels and vestments after the church service. Currently there are 7 full time members, men and women and 2 members in training. Set up for the Sunday service takes place Friday or Saturday working in teams of 2 or 3. On Sunday after the service everything is washed and put back in it's place. Working in teams usually results in being on a schedule once a month. The Altar Guild is in need of more members. For most weekends the time involved is a maximum of 1 hour on Friday and 1 hour on Sunday. That is 2 hours a month per team. The biggest need at this point is for members to join who attend the 8:00 service. That responsibility entails cleaning, refilling and replacing the communion vessels for the 10:00 service. Please join us, men and women, 8:00 or 10:00, training is provided, no one works without a partner. To learn more please contact: Haunani Wallace (941) 894-2928 Susan Freeman 236-2396

Susan Freeman

CAMDEN AREA CHRISTIAN FOOD PANTRY

St. Thomas' is one of the five churches supporting the Camden Area Christian Food Pantry. Others in the group are Chestnut Street Baptist, First Congregational, John Street Methodist, and Our Lady of Good Hope. While our primary focus has always been the families living in the areas of Appleton, Camden, Hope, Lincolnville, Rockport, Searsmont, Union, and Washington, food and personal care items are provided to any person who comes to the Pantry seeking assistance. All in need are welcome.

Unsurprisingly, the number of people who have come to the Pantry in the past twelve months has increased – from 261 in January to 426 this past December. As a result of this increase and from input received from clients, starting in February we will expand our opening days to include the first and third Saturdays.

As was done last year, clients were given Hannaford gift cards during Christmas and Easter. Gift cards were also provided to the Camden Hills Regional High School at Thanksgiving for the families of students facing food insecurity. In December we began providing Maritime Farms gas cards to clients (one card per month) and this we project will continue throughout 2026.

Additional information can be found on our website –www.camdenareachristianfoodpantry.org.

All this has been possible through the generosity of donors whose number, and contributions, have increased to help those who are suffering from the reduction of benefits available from federal funding.

During 2025 the Pantry received \$2,501 in cash donations from the members of our congregation as well as a voluminous increase in non-perishable groceries and personal care items.

Thank you for your continuing generosity.

Respectfully yours,
Phil Groman, Carlos Mello, Rebecca Vogt

OUTREACH

1. Meals on Wheels- \$400
2. Treatment Recovery Court- \$1050
3. Comfort Food Dinner- raising funds for Teacher Appreciation Dinner, Middle School
4. Middle School- personal care items and snacks, donated by parishioners
 - \$600 in gift certificates for summer clothing
 - Christmas stockings and Wal-Mart
 - Gift cards from Willis Knowlton fund
5. We continue to support Loaves and Fishes
6. Bishopswood camp scholarship
7. Over \$3000 each to El Hogar and the Uganda project from Victor Redman Fund for third world children

We are expanding Outreach to include St. Thomas Feeds Families. Several other programs are in the works. What a great year thanks to a great Committee.

Gwen Prosser

STEWARDSHIP

The 2026 Stewardship Campaign commenced in October. The theme for this year's campaign was Tell Out My Soul. A number of parish-wide activities were held throughout the campaign. A full and delicious pancake breakfast prepared by Carlos Mello kicked things off; Ministry Minute speakers (Rebecca Vogt, Becca Berry, Cheryl White, Terry Mello, Amy Frankel, Yuliia Chompyska, and Sandy Lyle) shared stories of how God had inspired and blessed their lives; markers and cut outs of fall leaves were available in the pews for parishioners to write their thoughts, inspirations, and thanksgivings and these were attached to a vine on the sanctuary walls; and, finally, an abundant spread of pies concluded the campaign at a Harvest Pie Celebration.

There were 46 pledges totaling \$180,574. The Stewardship Team (Shelly Gallender, Phil Groman, Terry Mello, Derek Reed, and Cheryl Reif) would like to thank all the staff, volunteers, speakers, chef and bakers, those who pledged, and all the St. Thomas Community for a successful 2026 campaign.

Cheryl Reif

ALL SOULS' MEMORIAL GARDEN

Annual Meeting of the All Souls' Memorial Garden Committee
June 4, 2025, 12:30 p.m.

The meeting began with prayer for those buried in All Souls' Garden Fr. Briggs will take the plaque to Belfast Jewelry to have the name of Marilyn D. Smith engraved.

The committee reviewed the Guidelines as approved by Vestry in May. Term limits for members of this committee are for three years; the rector will appoint a new member(s) at Annual Meeting to replace outgoing members. It was determined that the membership currently consists of Bill Freeman ('26), Sarah Groman ('27), Lucy Ebbert ('28), Br. Donovan Bowley, Junior Warden, Fr. Paul Briggs, Interim.

The committee will investigate designs and cost estimates of appropriate exterior markers and make a recommendation to the Vestry in September 2025. Donovan will speak to Bruce Libby at Maine Monument in Appleton and Sarah will contact PenBay Hospital about the stone and bronze marker at the main entrance.

The committee conducted a visual inspection of the garden noting the need for significant pruning and weeding. Bill Freeman will speak to Lucy Ebbert to determine if the Camden Garden Club is able to do this work.

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 1:20 p.m. with a prayer led by Br. Donovan.

ST. THOMAS' LEGACY SOCIETY

St. Thomas established a Legacy Society to encourage planned gifts to benefit the parish in the future. Those who have already included St. Thomas in their estate plans are considered members of the Legacy Society. We meet annually for a shared meal, speaker, and fellowship. Last August we were treated to a gourmet dinner and an informative talk on the basics of planned giving by Audrey Klein-Leach of Camden National Bank and parishioner at St. Margaret's, Belfast.

Our parish would have a much different story to tell if it were not for the bequests of previous generations. Planned gifts differ from annual giving in that they typically come from one's total lifetime assets that might include equities, life insurance, real estate, personal property, retirement plan or cash.

Making a planned gift is a commitment to St. Thomas's long-term vitality because it helps ensure the parish will have the resources necessary to meet whatever the future holds. Such gifts – regardless of size – are something anyone and everyone can do.

To find out more, contact Ron Zdrojeski to learn how you can enhance St. Thomas' future with a planned gift. The following individuals have given permission to use their names as members of St. Thomas' Legacy Society: George and Joan Gray, Jeffrey M. Conrad, Andrew and Elizabeth Moran, Doc and Haunani Wallace. Thank you and stay tuned for a gathering in 2026!

VESTRY AND CONVENTION NOMINEES



Haunani Wallace (Vestry-3 year)

Haunani was born in Hawaii, and lived on the west coast of British Columbia with her family where she met and married Doc. They moved to the east coast in 1983 and were very active in St. James Episcopal Church in Farmington, Connecticut, where she and Doc served as a team - Haunani served as treasurer for several years while Doc served as Senior Warden. After a career teaching middle school in Connecticut and New York, she and Doc retired to Vermont, where they enjoyed travelling, skiing and gardening. In 2010 they moved to Sarasota, Florida to care for her mother, Ada who was suffering from dementia.

Like many others in the midcoast, Haunani and Doc began vacationing in Maine in the 1980s. And, like many others, they looked forward to moving to Maine when life allowed. They purchased a condo in Rockport in 2013 to escape summers in Florida. In 2017, they moved to Rockport, and three years ago moved to Camden where she is only a few blocks from church.

Haunani serves as co-chair of the altar guild and as a reader. She continues to embrace the new spirit that is spreading throughout the St. Thomas community as it grows in numbers. She looks forward to continuing her service on the vestry.

Haunani enjoys knitting, gardening, reading, kayaking, skiing and all that the mid-coast has to offer.



Becca Berry (Vestry-3 year)

Becca Berry is honored to be nominated for the Vestry of St. Thomas. She has been an active member of the parish since 2022/2023 and values St. Thomas' commitment to worship, community, and service.

Becca currently serves on the Board of Directors for Children's House Montessori School, where she brings experience in leadership, stewardship, communications, and community engagement. Most recently she has served on the Board of Directors for the Junior League of San Francisco, and Sutro Stewards amongst others. She looks forward to offering her skills in support of the Vestry and the continued growth and vitality of St. Thomas.

Becca lives in Camden with her husband, Coburn (Skip) and their two young children, Coburn and Harriet. She is grateful for the opportunity to serve the St. Thomas parish and the greater community.



Sam Cotton (Vestry-3 year)

Sam was born in southern Connecticut and has fond memories of growing up in a Congregational church attending services with his three older sisters and parents every week.

Spending summers in Maine as a child Sam fell in love with the coast and the great outdoors. He is very grateful to now live on the mid-coast with his wife Sarah and daughter Frieda.

Between receiving a Bachelor degree in sculpture at Colorado College and a Master degree in industrial design at Pratt Institute Sam studied furniture making at the College of the Redwoods Fine Woodworking program (currently known as The Krenov School) in Northern California. Sam is a cabinet maker who practices woodworking professionally for a local cabinet shop in his town of Hope, as well as a hobbyist in his shop at home, and he is happy to enjoy his work.



Derek Reed (Vestry-1 year)

Derek joined St. Thomas in early 2024 along with his wife, Avery, and kids, Claire and Elliott. They moved to Camden in 2022 after fifteen years in New York City, where Derek served on the vestry of the parish of Calvary St. George's. He works as the editorial director of Convergent Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House that publishes leading thinkers on faith and spirituality. At St. Thomas, he serves as a children's chapel volunteer, a lay leader for Morning Prayer, and a eucharistic minister.



Benjy Lowry (Junior Warden)

Benjy has been a member of St Thomas' since moving to Maine in 2019. Most recently of New Orleans, Benjy received his undergraduate degree in medieval studies from Tulane University. His final course of studies focused on the Old

English Gospels. After graduating he found little trade peddling knowledge of forgotten tongues and feudalism, so instead he took a position teaching high school English. After his one millionth time reading *Lord of the Flies*, Benjy chose to tack in a different direction and undertook medical studies, again at Tulane. Along the way, in microbiology if you can believe it, he met Shelly, and recognizing her as a much kinder, smarter, and lovelier person than himself, he quickly proposed. Shelly had always wanted to visit to Maine, so they moved to Portland where Benjy finished his training in emergency medicine. After this northern exposure, they returned to New Orleans and started a family. But as the children started to grow, Benjy and Shelly realized how much they missed the opportunities afforded in the mountains and seas of Maine. Hoping to share with the children the many joys of the midcoast, Benjy took a position at Pen Bay hospital and they began looking for a church. When the children saw the Godly Play room at St Thomas' they fell in love, remembering fondly the youth ministry at their previous church Trinity in New Orleans. Since joining the St. Thomas' Benjy has served as lector and Vestry member. He remains especially committed to fostering a spirit of inclusivity and community within the church, both locally and at large. If he's not shuttling the children between activities or reading a book, Benjy can be found climbing mountains and skiing back down them. An amateur baker and even poorer theologian, Benjy likes to think that though man cannot live on bread alone, a little sourdough can't hurt.



Anne Rogers-Popejoy (Convention Delegate)

Anne Rogers-Popejoy is a vestry member and serves as vestry clerk. During 15 years in the Diocese of South Dakota, Black Hills Deanery, she served as a vestry member, senior warden, clerk, Diocesan Council member, election delegate, and cantor. She has worked with young adults living in intentional community in the Episcopal Church, with Thunderhead Episcopal Center, and is the secretary of the board for *Earth & Altar*, a publication for and by catholic and reformed Christians of all denominations who see an expansively conceived credal orthodoxy as fully compatible with LGBTQ inclusion, gender equality, and racial justice. Anne became an Episcopalian while attending Kenyon College and was raised in the United Church of Christ in Connecticut. Her professional career has been dedicated to working with and for non-profit organizations in small communities, delving into education, administration, and development. An ardent supporter of the arts and education, Anne worked with the Historic Homestake Opera House, Boys & Girls Clubs, and Northern Hills Alliance for Children in advocacy and fundraising. She is now the executive director of the Strand Theatre in Rockland. Anne, Jamie, and Ronan (7) relocated to Maine in the fall of 2021 and began attending St. Thomas. They can be found exploring outdoors, enjoying the arts, or cozy at home with their dog and cat.



Br. Donovan Bowley, BSG (Convention Delegate)

Donovan has been a member at St. Thomas for the past 17 years, since retiring back to Maine, where his father's family has been since the 1740s. Here at St. Thomas', he has been a choir member, Eucharistic Minister/Acolyte, Worship Leader, and Eucharistic Visitor and Pastoral Associate, as well as serving on the Vestry as Junior Warden. He convenes the Wednesday Bible Study group, and after taking the Education for Ministry course led by Rosalee Glass, assisted her in EfM for several years.

He is a life-professed member of the Brotherhood of St. Gregory. Its members are not monks living at one location together in community but are individual friars dispersed throughout the United States, and in the Philippines and Australia. He served several years as the Provincial of their New England Province.

After some 22 years at the Church of the Advent, he worked with St. John's Parish, Charlestown, Massachusetts; then joined the Parish of the Messiah in Auburndale, Massachusetts, serving there as Vestryman and Warden, coming to St. Thomas' Church from there.

He is a biologist and holds a Ph.D. in Biology from Boston University, where he taught on the faculty for the last three years of graduate school. He has been a forest ranger, a regional planner, an environmental analyst, and managed the Technical Services section of the Massachusetts Drinking Water Program, retiring to Maine in 2007.

His current interests include local Maine history, and he works with several local historical societies as well as assisting as needed at the Walsh History Center at Camden Public Library.



Derek Reed (Convention Delegate)

Derek joined St. Thomas in early 2024 along with his wife, Avery, and kids, Claire and Elliott. They moved to Camden in 2022 after fifteen years in New York City, where Derek served on the vestry of the parish of Calvary St. George's. He works as the editorial director of Convergent Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House that publishes leading thinkers on faith and spirituality. At St. Thomas, he serves as a children's chapel volunteer, a lay leader for Morning Prayer, and a eucharistic minister.



Kelli McGuire (Convention Alternate)

Kelli McGuire was born in Oklahoma and went to college at Oklahoma State University, earning a degree in Journalism. It was while she was at college that she met her future husband in the parking lot of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, where she sang in the choir and was an active member of the youth group.

Kelli and David were married at St. Andrew's and joined the Foreign Service after college. Their first tour was in the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, where Kelli did contract work for DEA, as assistant to the head of the intelligence analysts.

Their next tour was down under, in Melbourne, Australia. While pregnant with her first child, Kelli did volunteer work and was solicited to make a television commercial. Kelli and David left their two-year tour in Melbourne with two baby boys and continued on to their next posting in Bamako, Mali. In Bamako, Kelli worked in the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy, issuing visas to foreign nationals and making passports for U.S. citizens. While Kelli and David's older son Sam was attending a French pre-school, their younger son, Sebastian, spoke his first words in Bambara — the local language that their gardener and housekeeper spoke with one another.

Next was Managua, Nicaragua where Kelli worked as the Community Liaison Officer, planning Congressional Delegations, serving on embassy committees and devising ways to boost morale among embassy employees and their families. Kelli and David spent the next 3 years in the mountains and beaches of Costa Rica before moving to Buenos Aires, Argentina where Kelli again took the position of Community Liaison Officer — this time, in the United States second-largest embassy.

After 4 years in Argentina, Kelli accompanied her boy's home to Virginia to get one packed off to college and the other one enrolled in Fairfax H.S. As often happens, things change and Kelli began looking for a house in Maine — a place she had always loved visiting as a child. She did find the house of her dreams and the first thing she did upon arrival was to start attending St. Thomas' Episcopal Church. She has participated in the Flower Guild, Outreach Committee and the choir and considers her St. Thomas' family to be an integral part of her new life here in Maine.

Kelli's favorite pastime is DANCING... followed by traveling, hiking, reading and singing.



Jan Lyle (Convention Alternate)

I have been a member of St. Thomas' for about 25 years. My husband Sandy was in the U.S. Coast Guard and we moved alot. I am a lifelong Episcopalian, baptized and confirmed in Ketchikan, Alaska. Since my time here I have been a member of the vestry, a Sunday school teacher, an office volunteer, usher and reader. I have also been involved with the community Thanksgiving dinner for several years. I have attended Convention several times. It is a great privilege to attend convention as a member of St. Thomas'. At the 2025 convention I was appointed the Earth Keeper for St. Thomas, tasked to care for our creation.

Statement of Financial Position
As of 12/31/2025 and 12/31/2024

	2025	2024
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Unrestricted Accounts	86,315	60,842
Restricted Accounts	355,451	325,866
Investments	1,555,480	1,223,749
Account Receivables	5,823	1,291
Other Current Assets	1,729	7,209
Total Current Assets	2,004,799	1,618,957
Fixed Leasehold Assets (Net of Depreciation)		
Building	1,426,129	1,434,799
Other Property	100,000	100,000
Equipment	23,158	25,216
Total Net Fixed Assets	1,549,287	1,560,015
TOTAL ASSETS	3,554,085	3,178,972
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	5,200	2,675
Other Current Liabilities	18,183	32,051
Long-Term Liabilities		
Other Long-Term Liabilities	-	-
Total Liabilities	23,384	34,726
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted Net Assets	1,619,297	1,591,193
Restricted Funds		
Investment Accounts	1,512,373	1,336,136
Building Funds	179,444	171,960
Restricted Donations	154,875	136,014
Donor Designated Funds	59,370	58,305
Outreach Funds	5,343	11,394
Total Net Assets	3,530,702	3,305,003
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	3,554,085	3,339,729

2025 Statement of Activity

	Net Assets without Restrictions	Net Assets with Restrictions	Total
Revenues, Gains and Other Support			
Unrestricted Income	243,854	-	243,854
Income on Long-Term Investments	-	185,927	185,927
Outreach Donations	-	16,717	16,717
Capital Improvement Funds	-	65,690	65,690
Special Donation Accounts	-	17,351	17,351
Other Income	1,868	14,174	16,042
Total Revenues, Gains and Support	245,722	299,859	545,581
Expenses and Losses			
Total Operating Expense	(206,890)	-	(206,890)
Capital Improvements Expense	-	(58,206)	(58,206)
Outreach Disbursements	-	(22,769)	(22,769)
Scholarships from RI Thomas and Sarah Davenport	-	(9,690)	(9,690)
Net Change in Leasehold Assets	(10,728)	-	(10,728)
Other Expenses	-	(11,599)	(11,599)
Total Expenses and Losses	(217,618)	(102,264)	(319,882)
Change in Net Assets	28,104	197,595	225,699
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	1,591,193	1,713,810	3,305,003
Net Assets at End of Year	1,619,297	1,911,405	3,530,702

2025 Results and 2025 Budget

	2025 Budget	2025 Actual	2026 Budget
Operating Income			
Pledge and General Donations	205,200	205,965	219,300
Rental Income and Facility Use I	35,040	37,773	36,300
Fundraising Income	3,000	-	-
Other Income and Donations	320	116	170
Total Operating Income	\$243,560	\$ 243,854	\$ 255,770
Operating Expense			
Salaries and Benefits	107,180	86,334	104,980
Diocesan Allocation	36,100	35,513	30,000
Church Facilities Expenses	44,700	45,489	49,740
Administrative Expenses	28,620	31,118	32,270
Discernment Expenses	9,000	930	10,000
Reserve Expense Fund	-	-	17,580
Other Operating Expenses	5,600	7,506	11,200
Total Operating Expense	231,200	206,890	255,770
Net Operating Income/(Loss)	\$ 12,360	\$ 36,964	\$ -

