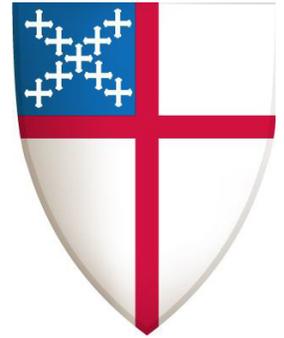


The NewSpirit

Being a Light to the World: Worship • Youth • Discipleship
St. Thomas Episcopal Church Battle Creek, Michigan
September 2019



The Renewal of Your Minds

by the Rev. Brian Coleman

I started teaching an *Introduction to Religion* class at Olivet College this semester. The person who was scheduled to teach the class fell off his roof and was seriously injured, so I was asked to cover the classes he was not going to be able to teach. Thankfully he is on track to make a full recovery, and should be back in class by the spring semester. In the meantime, I have 20 students in my class title: *Religion, Culture and Society*, and so far I am holding my own as a college professor.

I'm actually really looking forward to learning more about

religious studies - they say the best way to learn is to teach, and I expect to learn a lot this semester. I plan to read several books during the course of the class along with my students, including the textbook that I have assigned. The topics we will cover are wide-ranging and diverse, including philosophy, psychology, ethics and more.

St. Paul wrote to the Romans: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."
(Rom 12:2)

and practical. Why not take a class on religion every so often? Why not join Bible study, which meets every Friday in the Lounge at 11:00 a.m. Why not take part in the iBelieve Classes offered at St. Thomas on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.? There will be even more opportunities coming up in the future with the Advent Study Series, Iconography classes, the Mystery Book Club, Companions in Christ (meets every Thursday at 10 a.m.), and more.

I don't even think that the intellectual endeavors that we engage in have to be explicitly religious to renew our minds in faith. Any learning has the potential to deepen our understanding of God and neighbor for the development of our faith. So, professional development, continuing education and kids returning to school at the end of the summer can open us up to opportunities to learn, develop, grow and be transformed.

God will use them, I'm sure of that.



Fr. Brian Coleman in Berlin, Germany. He and spouse John Moore celebrated 20 years together this summer with a trip to London, Sheffield, Berlin and Prague, as well as a week with friends and family at a beach house in Cyprus.

I have always interpreted this passage as encouragement to exercise our minds in the practice of our faith. In other words, the faith experience should be intellectual as well as emotional, psychological,

Musician's Summer

by Dr. Stephen White, Music Director

What a summer this has been! It started with two amazing weeks of continuing education with the Association of Anglican Musicians Conference in Boston, and then a week visiting the cathedrals in Quebec City, Montreal and Toronto to engage with their musicians on ways to bridge the gap between countries through repertoire and collaboration.

Perhaps my biggest take-away from my time in Boston was the importance of being intentional about the music that is selected for worship, not only in choosing repertoire that is theologically-sound, but also music that represents the broad nature of the church from a gender and racial balance. Stay tuned for how this will come to fruition here at St. Thomas.

The second exciting part of my summer was my trip to the United Kingdom to perform at Truro Cathedral, visit friends/colleagues, and get some vacation in. If you followed my travels on Facebook, then you will know that there wasn't much rest. There was, however, a great deal of architecture, history, and music encountered during my journey. I was particularly delighted that Graham Keitch, a composer who has written several pieces for our choir, and his wife drove 2.5 hours to hear my concert in Truro (see photo). It was delightful to reconnect with them, discuss our musical collaborations, and dream about future work.

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A lovely review of my program appeared on an international organists page from fellow organist Terry McLavey who was in attendance. It reads as follows:

**Truro Cathedral, Cornwall .UK
Lunchtime Recital Friday 2nd
August 2019**

Dr. Stephen White

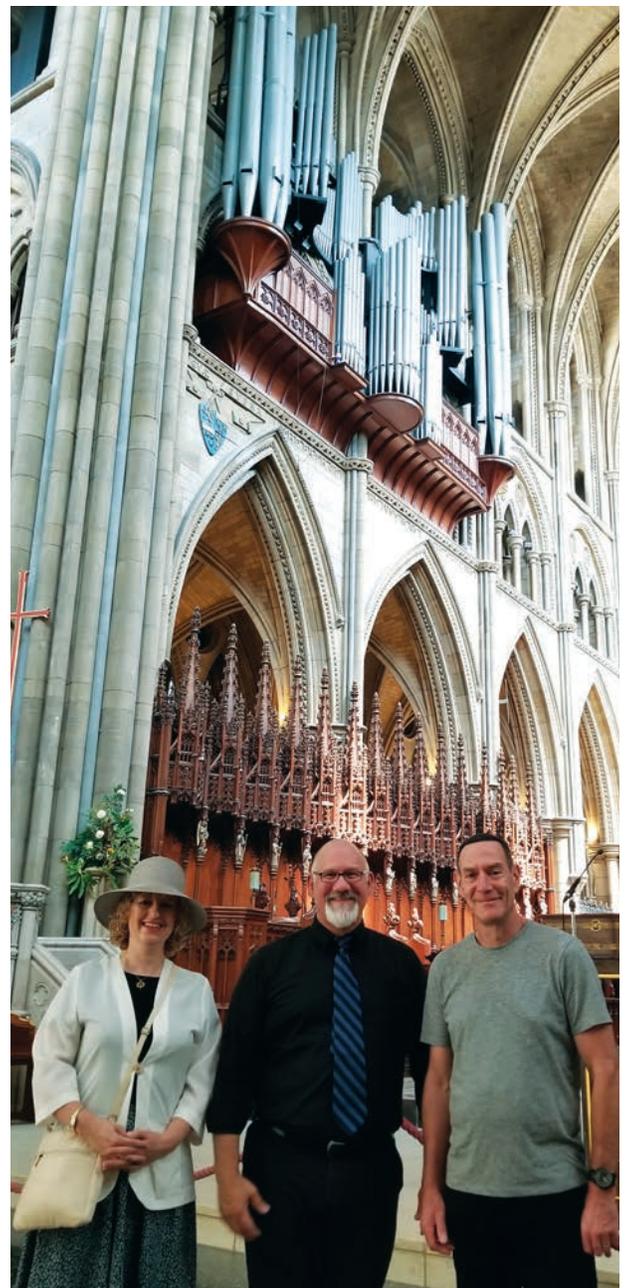
A really enjoyable recital for me today, 6 items, I knew three of them and the unknown three were a delight. I love squishy jazz chords so the Shearing arrangements were very enjoyable. Stephen White's registration throughout was minimal and very clear. The Truro organ has many beautiful quiet stops and a lot were used today, interestingly the Solo Clarinet and the Choir Corno- di - Bassetto alternating for the Aria's theme. In fact full organ wasn't heard until the last chord of the final piece - a refreshing change.

And now, it's time to settle back in for the work at hand .

I am excited for the choirs to return and for the program year to

begin. I begin this new program year - a year full of exciting opportunities - with a renewed perspective on my vocation, a sense of purpose, and a head full of ideas waiting to be realized.

Soli deo gloria!



Parish Event Vol_nteer

All that's missing is "u"

by Lori Kiess

Events and churches have long gone hand-in-hand because churches are very special places and events held at church add a deep spiritual significance to gatherings such as weddings, funerals and other events.

God's blessing provides joy or comfort to life events, and serving the community by allowing groups to meet at church is an excellent means for demonstrating our welcoming nature and creating outreach opportunities, as well as possibly generating revenue.

For St. Thomas to be successful hosts for events held at church, a group of very special volunteers is being created to serve as Parish Event Facilitators. These are essentially hosts or hostesses

from the congregation, acting unobtrusively, to open the building as needed, welcome visitors, aiding them in navigating the premises, ensuring church policies are adhered to and securing the building at the close of the event.

Ideally, there would be two hosts or hostess serving at one time at these events and spouses are encouraged to consider this opportunity.

If being a host or hostess interests you, please contact Father Brian, Kathy and Ross Dingwall or the office staff.

Additional information will be provided to you once the group has been organized.

The St. Thomas Annual Chili Cook-off



**Friday, October 11, 2019
From 5:30-7:30 p.m.
for chili tasters**

To enter the contest, stop by the parish office to get a registration form and rules sheet. \$10 to enter. First, second and third prizes, and People's Choice Award



Lori Kiess (back row, far left) and her husband Tom Kiess (front row, second from left) attended the Kiess-Williams Family reunion, near St Ignace/Mackinaw Island in August 2019.

Pledge Update

Budget: \$145,161.29
Actual: \$144,123.88

Send *NewSpirit* articles, ideas and photos to editor Karmel Addis at kpuzzo@sbcglobal.net or karmel@bcppg.com by September 19th.

Church Security Training with Mt. Zion AME

Offered by Battle Creek Public Safety September 21, 2019

Church congregations routinely prepare for natural disasters, have fire drills and training for other emergencies. Now, more than ever, also preparing for a malicious attack is equally important. Until recent times, churches were perceived to be a place of peace with immunity from violence. Many churches remained open at all times to allow anyone to enter for prayer and meditation, including St. Thomas. The Church Pension Group advises “Everyone has seen in the news recently that churches and schools have been targets of shooters and other violent scenarios.” “Though attacks on churches are (thankfully) a rare occurrence, it is still a good idea for houses of worship to plan for the possibility of unexpected violence”.

Last year St. Thomas began to review all of its emergency preparedness plans and much progress has been made towards ensuring the safety of those who work, worship and visit with us. Part of this planning includes managing risk by being prepared for the possibility of violent acts.

In partnership with the Battle Creek Police Department, we are continuing this important work and Church Security Training is being offered on Saturday, September 21st, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm at St. Thomas Church. Pastor Andrew Holtz and members of Mt. Zion AME Church, Battle Creek will be joining us for this joint parish training event and members of St. Thomas are encouraged to attend.

St. Thomas is deeply committed to remaining a welcoming place, and helping all people continues to be a key part of our mission. Partnering with other houses of worship, such as Mt. Zion AME, as we do this important work will serve to strengthen our efforts as we build relationships, and share our mutual thoughts and concerns regarding parish safety.

A sign up sheet for the training will be posted in the Parish Hall; if you are interested in attending please sign up so we’ll have an estimated count. Please contact Father Brian with questions or additional information.



The Rev. Dale Bennett’s New Address

Deacon Dale Bennett has moved to New York! Dale retired from the diaconate last year; her long term plan was for her adopted family in New York to bring her nearer to them as she got older. She was having some memory problems, so when her niece found a good assisted living facility, they decided to make the move on August 15th.

Her last Sunday at St. Thomas was August 11th. Fr. Brian spoke to the congregation about the many good things Dale has done for St. Thomas and the community. After a prayer of blessing and safe travels, there was a cake during coffee hour. Many friends were able to chat with Dale and wish her well. She will be missed.

Dale has a birthday coming up September 19, 2019. For those who wish to send greetings or birthday cards:

Deacon Dale Bennett
120 Creekside Drive
Apt. 10
Painted Post, NY, 14870

– submitted by Karen Keese

Encountering Others

by Linda Buskirk, a capital campaign and strategic planning consultant for the Episcopal Church Foundation

In our Baptismal Covenant, we pledge that we will “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.” The world is crying for justice and peace, yet controversy lurks even in definitions of terms. Like a squirrel kicking up dried leaves, we scurry through the space provided for conversation, anxious to find our own safe place.

How can we make the conversation space safe enough for everyone? As we consider this, some self-reflection might be beneficial.

In her book, *An Altar in the World*, acclaimed spiritual writer Barbara Brown Taylor writes about twelve practices that engage us to experience God. The book helps us recognize some of the altars around us, which Taylor describes as ordinary-looking places where human beings meet the divine “More” they are seeking and sometimes call God. For your prayerful consideration about how to

live in respectful peace with others, check out Chapter 6, The Practice of Encountering Others.

Taylor asserts that encountering others with love and respect is to undertake “the hardest spiritual work in the world... to love the neighbor as the self.

“... to encounter another human being not as someone you can use, change, fix, help, save, enroll, convince or control, but simply as someone who can spring you from the prison of yourself, if you will allow it. All you have to do is recognize another you “out there” – your other self in the world – for whom you may care as instinctively as you care for yourself. To become that person, even for a moment, is to understand what it means to die to your self. This can be as frightening as it is liberating. It may be the only real spiritual discipline there is.”

– Barbara Brown Taylor

Taylor challenges us to encounter the people in our path, not simply co-exist.

The chapter made me think about whether I encounter the sexton with same warmth I give the rector. Am I as interested in the stories of an old woman on a park bench as I am the latest gossip? Do I go to interfaith prayer vigils or stay in my pew on Sunday morning? Do I strike up a grocery line conversation with the kid with spiked purple hair or pretend to be interested in a magazine?

Taylor calls the practice of encountering others “an assignment to get over your self.”

Perhaps therefore it can create an environment for conversations about living into our Baptismal Covenant.

Baptisms

Tucker Kuharik, grandson of Jill Ebeling, and Cassidy Godbey, new Treble chorister, were baptized on Aug. 18.

– Photos by Sharon Engle



Regular Worship Resumes
 On Sunday, September 8th,
 we will resume
 two Sunday services
 at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.



Rusty checking out the meat for our Memorial Day cookout. It passed the inspection. Submitted by Bob & Patti Harberts



Joe and Emilie Cummins spend a summer day in South Haven.



Stella Puzzuoli, 15, vacations with her family (Karmel Addis, A.J. Puzzuoli and Dan Egan) along Lake Michigan just south of Ludington, MI.



Kamden and Khylen Malone and Karter Stanton, Emilie and Joe's grandsons, spend a day at Cedar Point, Sandusky, Ohio.



A.J. Puzzuoli searches for treasure with a metal detector during his family's vacation at a Lake Michigan beach near Pentwater, MI.

St. Thomas @ BC Pride Festival



From left to right: James Hidley, Mark Engle, John Moore, Yvette Petti, Fr. Brian Coleman and Sharon Engle (seated) walked in the Battle Creek Pride Parade on behalf of St. Thomas Church on July 19th, one of the hottest days of the summer (>93°). The parade route began at McCamly and Van Buren and went past St. Thomas. BC Pride also sponsored a Stonewall Memorial Event, a Pride festival, and a candlelight vigil for transgender lives lost.

Thirst

Another morning and I wake with thirst
for the goodness I do not have. I walk
out to the pond and all the way God has
given us such beautiful lessons. Oh Lord,
I was never a quick scholar but sulked
and hunched over my books past the hour
and the bell; grant me, in your mercy,
a little more time. Love for the earth
and love for you are having such a long
conversation in my heart. Who knows what
will finally happen or where I will be sent,
yet already I have given a great many things
away, expecting to be told to pack nothing,
except the prayers which, with this thirst,
I am slowly learning.

— Mary Oliver, Thirst

– submitted by Bob Harberts

St. Thomas Venture Crew

Crew 4316 recently enjoyed a week in the Upper Peninsula. They hiked the Chapel Loop of Pictured Rocks, visited Kitch-iti-kipi spring, witnessed Tahquamenon Falls, fed bears at Oswald's Bear Ranch, and spent a day Mackinac Island.



ST. THOMAS
Episcopal
CHURCH



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Rector

Dr. Stephen White

Director of Music

Denise Genise

Bookkeeper

Karmel Addis

Communications

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Battle Creek, MI
Permit No. 734

Return Service Requested

Parish Schedule

Sundays

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

*Childcare available for infants and toddlers
from 9:30 a.m., upstairs in the nursery.*

Coffee reception following both services.

5:00 p.m. Choral Evensong (First Sunday)

Parish Evensong (Third Sunday)

Weekdays in the Chapel

Monday – Saturday

8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer

5:00 p.m. Evening Prayer

Wednesdays

6:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Fridays

11:00 a.m. Bible Study in the Lounge

12:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Office Hours

Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

September



Mon/2nd **Labor Day** (church offices closed)

Wed/4th **iBelieve Class**, Baptism and Eucharist:
Nurturing Disciples, 6:30 in the lounge
Resume Choir rehearsals

Sat/7th **Kayaking/Church Picnic**, 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Historic Bridge Park, Battle Creek

Wed/11th **Preaching Circle**, 6:30 p.m. in the lounge

Fri/13th **Feast of the Holy Cross** (tr.). 12 noon in the chapel

Sat/14th **Saturday Breakfast Program**, (St. Thomas volunteers)

Mon/16th **Ladies' Night Out**

Thu/19th **St. Margaret's Circle**, 1 p.m.
Vestry, 6 p.m.

Fri/20th **Feast of St. Matthew** (tr.). 12 noon in the chapel

Sat/21st **Church Safety and Security Training**, 9 a.m.-12 noon

Tue/24th **St. Mary's Circle**, 12 pm

Sun/29th **Fifth Sunday**
Behind the Scenes: Lectors and Intercesors