

Saint Thomas of Canterbury Episcopal Church

CANTERBURY TALES

∞ OCTOBER 2020 ∞

Stewardship as Love: Choosing the Third Option

By the Rev. Julie D. Bryant, DMin., Priest-in-Charge

Jesus has reached Jerusalem, and continues his ministry in the Temple of Jerusalem. His presence is an affront to the chief priests and elders who've dedicated their ministry to ensuring that the Temple and its sacred practices will continue, in spite of the occupation of the Romans. Jesus' reputation for promoting a different view of God, and a different way of living precedes him, and threatens to upset the balance of authority that has been struck between the chief priests as Temple authorities and the occupying armies of Rome.



The Lectionary readings from the Gospel of Matthew at this time of Lectionary Year A take us through the parables Jesus offered in response to those who questioned his authority to be in the Temple preaching, each challenging today's hearers to consider what is valuable and fair. Is it right for those who come late to demanding work to receive the same reward as those who have labored long? At the time of harvest, to whom do the fruits of the land belong? When asked to take part in celebrating one another's joys, should we refuse?

Alongside, Paul's writings to the Philippians also consider what is valuable and fair. Paul writes of having great freedom in the world because of his stature, privilege, position, and wealth. Paul describes these things as worthless compared to 'the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.' Paul goes on to commend women and men who are caring for others, though the care is demanding and depletes their resources. He extols them to be joyful in the work, and steadfast, that they will find peace in service.

The promise of the Gospel and Paul's encouragement to his students at Philippi are words we need to hear as the difficulties of these days and months drag on, for already we are sorely wearied and discomfited by what has been lost to a disease in our midst for which we still have no cure. The layers of impact are emerging, but its potential long-lasting effects are as yet unknown.

(Continued p. 2)

It is hard to know what to do when so much seems changed and uncertain. We could withdraw into what is left of the way we understood the world working a short time ago. We could scoop all of our resources closer to us to protect them in hopes that we'll be able to outlast danger. Or, we could realize that we are not alone in our distress, but alongside one another as distress swirls around us all.

The third option gives us the chance to do whatever we can, in spite of the uncertainty, to put into practice the declarations we've made numerous times about sharing that which belongs to God with whoever is in need, about finding reward in sacrificing for another's survival, about moving with great care in order to care for the whole of creation rather than indulge a fleeting pleasure.

Love strengthens us to do the unimaginable. Love revives us when our bodies and minds are tired and worn down. Love carries us when we are weak. Love teaches us that our value is not in what we have in this life, but who we are for God. Love is costly and demanding. Love requires our letting go of self-protecting ways in order to both offer protection to others and to receive the protection of God.

This is a time to practice love anew. Let us do so together, holding steady for each other, and ready to celebrate life in the face of challenge and despair. For there, we will find our true selves as God's beloved people.

Yours in Christ, Julie +



Save
The
date

Bishop Susan Brown Snook will worship with us on Sunday, November 8th. More information will be provided as the date approaches in the weekly announcements and the November issue of *Canterbury Tales*.



A mission of the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego, St. Thomas is a **"pet-friendly"** church that cares deeply for our beloved pets. We work with local senior citizens to provide food for their pets and support the Animal Friends of the Valleys. We also hold a blessing for the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, and welcome well-behaved pets to attend worship with us.

CANTERBURY TALES
OCT. 2020 Vol 41 Issue 10

Return of In-Person Worship.....	3
Blessing of the Animals.....	4
Book and Fall Fair Launch.....	5
Sept Town Hall	6
Courtyard Worship/HelpWanted.....	7
Pledge/Extra Env/Stewardship.....	8
Health Update.....	9
Meet Your New Editor.....	10
Sponsors.....	11



Coming Soon: In Person Worship

Bishop Snook has responded to Riverside County's move from Purple to Red Coronavirus status, announcing that congregations can now plan for returning to Indoor Worship, following the array of protocols she and the State have set. Having previously submitted our proposal for indoor worship for the Bishop's approval, we will ask that it be reviewed in light of the latest best practices. At Saint Thomas, we have been meeting outdoors since August 30, successfully using face-coverings, distance between seated groups, live and recorded music that fits the designated pattern, and encouraging people who are at home to request Communion be brought to them. And, we've continued to meet via Zoom, which has allowed regular participation from some people who've been unable to be at church regularly for some time.

We have a lot going on with the building these days, as repairs following mold remediation continue. Drywall is going in this week, then there's a bit of painting, flooring installation, and finally, moving office furniture out of the Sanctuary! Giving ourselves time to do all of that, it looks like we can have our first service back in the Sanctuary for All Saints Day, November 1. The Re-gathering committee will be meeting to determine the time of the service. We will review the technology needed to be able to broadcast a quality service via Zoom. If we feel we are ready to do this, we can have one service at 9 AM for in-person and Zoom. If not, we will continue to have our 9 AM Zoom service and then the in-person worship at 10:15.

The following weekend is Diocesan Convention, so we may have delegates from this region with us that Friday and Saturday. Then, Sunday, November 8, Bishop Snook will be visiting Saint Thomas. If we get the construction and arranging finished ahead of schedule, we'll see if we can move up the date, but for now, it looks like we'll be back in the Sanctuary by November 1.

Blessing of the Animals & Book Fair Launch

Sunday, October 4th (Feast of St. Francis) 11am - 1pm

Let's bless animals of all sorts, sizes, and species!

(Please be sure animals are leashed or caged securely.)



We know some animals have people that can't be in crowds, so we're offering a Drive-Through Blessing option, too. Whether the animal is fully inside the vehicle or has nose out and ears flapping in the wind, we'll bless them with a fine mist and pretty good prayers.

This year, we'll have a friendly competition among the dogs. We're setting up an agility course and have prizes for the fastest finishers.

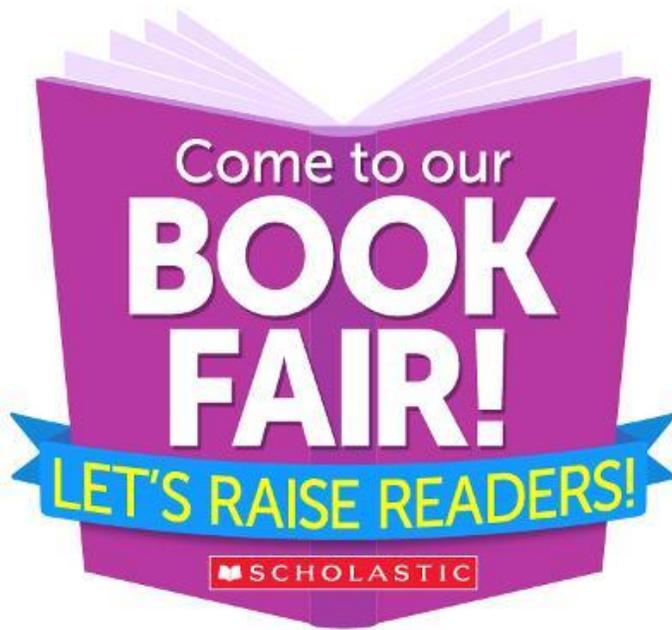


And, just in case you thought the animals were the only ones getting in on the fun, we have a version of a dunk tank. Yes, you have the



chance to soak Preschool teachers, your fellow church members, or even Mother Julie! The Soaking will be a Fundraiser for 2TheRescue Animal Sanctuary, with tickets \$1 each or 6 for \$5. 2 The Rescue Animal Sanctuary rescues, rehabilitates, and re-homes animals that might otherwise be euthanized due to lack of space in local shelters. And, we have it on good authority that it's a fun place to camp overnight!

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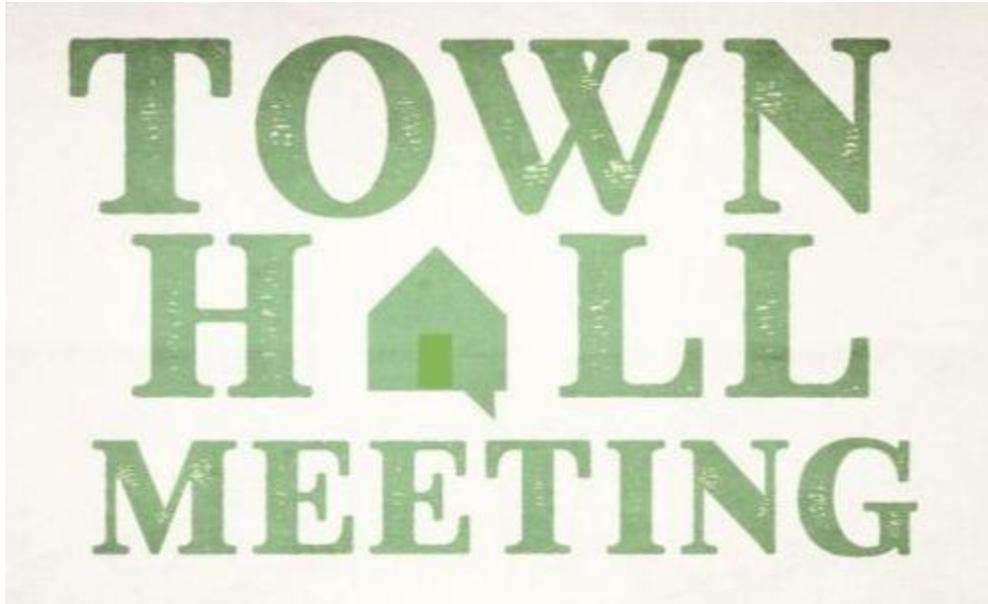


AND... October 4 is the first day of our Book Fair! We'll have an array of books for kids of all ages, and the chance to shop for yourself or someone you love. For each book sold our STEP preschool will earn points. these points will transfer into a dollar amount for the preschool to use to purchase books for their classroom libraries, manipulatives and activities, and more! We are also collecting cash donations for Rancho Damacitas so we can deliver some books to the children. The book fair will run Sunday October 4th through Sunday

October 11th. You will be able to shop the book fair Monday-Friday 7:30am-9am and 4pm-5:30. On Sunday October 11th we will have the book fair open starting at 9am and this will be the last day to come shop.



Participants need to wear face masks, and we'll all be practicing Safe Distancing.



Senior Warden Tom Reid Reports on the September 24 Meeting

Thanks everyone who attended September's Town Hall Meeting. We continue to get great turnouts for this meeting. We appreciate everyone's love and support of St Thomas which shows with the attendance. The theme of this Town Hall was Re-connecting. When we had our last service in the Sanctuary on March 15th, many of us thought we would be taking a short break. Activities like in-person worship and other social and outreach events would be put on a short hold. We took this break thinking we would wait for this pandemic to slow down and then we would re-start most of our activities and engagement. It is now over six months later and the COVID pandemic is still with us and will be with us for a while longer. We did begin in-person worship in the St. Francis courtyard on August 30th and while this has been invigorating for many of us, the job of re-connecting is still an opportunity.

St Thomas can re-connect in many ways. The Bishop's Committee has been working to put together ideas and a plan on how we can do this. The most obvious is Fellowship. We schedule events (both online and safely in-person), where we can see each other and share our affection for being part of St Thomas. But there are other ways as well, through Outreach, Stewardship, Work Parties and during Worship. These are all opportunities for us to re-connect and serve the Temecula Community. Look out for more opportunities over the next several months.

For October, In Person Worship in the Courtyard Continues

After several weeks of meeting for In-Person Worship at 8, we've determined that we do not need reservations for those planning to attend. The Saint Francis Courtyard is quite large, and there are plenty of chairs easily available, so we are foregoing the need for you to let us know you are planning to come in person.



We do, however, want to plan for those receiving Communion at home. Please request Communion by return email with: Your Name, the Number of Persons Receiving, and Your Telephone Number. Also, please let us know if you need Gluten-free Hosts.

Please Do Not Hesitate to ask for Communion to be brought to you. We are eager to share the blessing of the Sacrament!

9 a.m. Worship via Zoom also continues. Please call me for Meeting ID and Password. My number is: 310-625-9377.

I pray this finds you well, and your dearest ones safe.

The slowing Covid19 infection rate in California is encouraging, but having lost 200,000 persons across the nation a heavy and sobering realization for us to take care of ourselves and others as best we can. *Yours in Christ, Julie +*

Help Needed

Got A Heart for Recycling? We are seeking someone to transport our current backlog of collected recyclables to the recycling center (located next to the Ralph's on 79S and Butterfield Stage, and to take over monthly recycling transport. If interested, please contact Mother Julie 310-625-9377

Community Mission of Hope: Community Mission of Hope needs drivers on Mondays and Thursdays to transport donations from the Sprouts Markets in Temecula and Murrieta to CMoH. Volunteers need to either have an SUV or truck OR be between the age of 25-69 to drive the CMoH van. If you can volunteer, or know of someone who might be available for this most necessary work, please contact Allison Willits at CMoH – 951-444-1404



Thank You for keeping your pledge current.

Payments can be made through the mail, or through Bill Pay at your bank, or electronically via the GIVE / PLEDGE ONLINE button on the Saint Thomas website www.episcopalchurchtemecula.org.



“Special Plate” Giving

Contributing with those “extra envelopes” in the pledge packet make a big difference in offsetting unexpected expenditures at the church. Use them to contribute whatever you can. October has four of them including a special one for the Blessing of the Animals. Your giving account will be credited.

Our Stewardship Campaign commences this month. Watch for updates in the weekly announcements from our Stewardship Chair, BC member Ann Little.



Health Update

Dr. Ed Rather Advises: "Get your Flu shot soon. We don't need a TWINDEMIC!"

There are eight things which the AMA stresses we need to know about flu shots:

- 1) The flu shot may make you feel badly for 48 hours but it does not cause the flu.
- 2) Flu vaccine decreases flu risk by 60%.
- 3) If we ALL are vaccinated, this does help the "herd immunity" concept.
- 4) This year especially, get the flu vaccine... the sooner the better. Special circumstances exist!
- 5) Everyone, children to seniors, should be immunized. Talk with your doctor now!
- 6) Afraid of shots?... there are Nasal Sprays approved if you are between two and fifty years old.
- 7) DO IT FOR OTHERS AROUND YOU AS WELL AS FOR YOURSELF!
- 8) You can get the flu vaccine at doctors' offices, drug stores, and grocery pharmacies.



And I am adding # 9: If you have had the vaccine and get the flu, the chances of a lighter case and avoiding hospitalization are statistically markedly better.

Covid 19 vaccine update: There is a new concept vaccine being engineered by Johnson and Johnson with Phase III testing to begin soon. It has a bioengineered Covid virus combined with an adenovirus (common cold) which attacks the Covid spike which attacks us. J and J is attempting to have a group study of 60,000 involving all ages. It is only one injection.

Stay well and while always caring about others, wear your mask.

As always, your friendly, but retired, Dermatologist,

Ed

Meet *Canterbury Tales*' New Editor



Hello St. Thomas Congregation Members,
My name is Arija (Aria) Applegate, and I am the new editor of *Canterbury Tales*. I want to thank our editor, Bill Liesman, for his work these past few years. Saint Thomas will miss Bill and Andrea and their contributions to our church but wish them well in their new endeavors back East!

Years ago, my husband Chris and I were members of Saint Thomas. Chris was an acolyte and our sons (Benjamin, Collin and Dylan) went to S.T.E.P. and Sunday school. I worked as the Administrative Assistant to Father Robert Nagy and participated as a Lector and Choir member.

Currently, I work as a substitute teacher and freelance editor and proofreader. I hold a Bachelor's degree in Art History and a Master's degree in Education. I am working toward a Professional Certificate in Copyediting from UCSD Extension.

I have continued to read the newsletter to keep up with changes in the ministries and congregation at St. Thomas. It is my pleasure to be the new editor. If you have information about a church event or have an article or photographs you would like to submit, please contact me via email: akmapplegate@yahoo.com.

I look forward to seeing you!

Kind regards,

Aria Applegate

Outgoing Editor's Note: I have appreciated the cooperation, input, and love from so many of you these past three and a half years. The ministry of *Canterbury Tales* is now in capable hands. Please support Aria's ministry as you did mine.
Bill



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