

Ministry of the Month: Outreach

As we can learn from longtime members, St. Thomas has a long history of community outreach. Over the years, we've run a thrift store, served meals to the homeless, donated to Rancho Damacitis, and collected food for people as well as animal friends in need. More recently, we've undertaken projects such as the Project Touch "reverse advent calendar" collection drive and the "Knit-Wits" hats-for-newborns project. We also went Christmas caroling at a local assisted living facility and had lots of fun!

But we also express Christ's love in more hidden ways, through our daily activities beyond church walls. This month's narthex display will offer an interactive opportunity to share the ways that we express our faith in the larger community—whether at work, in our neighborhoods, or through volunteerism. We'll have Post-it notes ready to add to an evolving display, and hope you'll add your own contributions. We want to learn from you and be inspired, too!

We'd also like to convene a group to explore future avenues for St. Thomas. As you'll see on this month's display, the Interfaith Council of Temecula and Murrieta Valley is a great source of information about emerging opportunities and offers rich possibilities for interdenominational collaboration. And perhaps you have ideas, too! If you'd like to join an outreach exploratory group, you can add your name to a sign-up sheet on the narthex display (or contact the St. Thomas office at 951/302-4566).

We're hoping to welcome new friends to St. Thomas on April 20, as we're issuing invitations to our luminaria-lit labyrinth walk and anticipating lots of interfaith participation. Meanwhile, as Father Tim has emphasized in recent sermons, outreach also means venturing out. Please join us in pondering the questions he's raised: How can we more effectively engage, serve, and connect with our neighbors? What are the unmet hungers and needs right here, right now? How to follow Jesus' example in searching out suffering and meeting it with love? We need your good hearts and minds, and hope you'll join us for conversation in the weeks and months to come!