



December 2023

The Canterbury Cross

Monthly newsletter of St. Thomas à Becket Episcopal Church
Morgantown, WV

Stewardship 2024: Onward

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Whether it's Abraham and Sarah following God's call, or Moses and the Israelites escaping slavery in Egypt and eventually entering the Promised Land, or Jesus and Paul spreading the good news through their itinerant ministry, one of the most consistent and powerful images the Bible conveys is movement: a fervent desire to move beyond where a person or a community is and go farther; exploring, discovering, growing spiritually, always avidly pursuing the horizon of God's purpose.

Likewise, as disciples, literally "followers," of Jesus, God calls us to move ever onward, pursuing a lifelong pilgrimage of prayer and love and service and sacrifice, so that we might fulfill God's mission for our parish and our world. We already do this in many wonderful ways, more than I could conveniently list in a simple letter, but a moment's reflection quickly brings to mind events both great and small that glorify God and reflect the immense potential we share as a community.

Being a good and faithful steward involves a humble admission that all we have and all we are comes from a single source, God. The paper this is written on, my ability to write, your ability to read, every breath we take: all of it comes from God. Healthy stewardship also elicits a deep sense of gratitude in our hearts for all the blessings we have received. Gratitude, in turn,

propels us onward to ever greater generosity. Paul had it right, when he quoted Jesus in The Acts of the Apostles, "the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" [20:35]

We all know this to be true at a very visceral level. At Christmas, for instance, as much as I enjoy receiving gifts, I enjoy giving them much more. There's a sense of excitement in offering up part of who you are to benefit and bring joy to another person. The same is true when we make financial offerings to God for the sake of advancing and enhancing our ministry. We all share in the benefits of various ministries, but what we offer is chiefly intended to help others enter into a more profound relationship with Jesus. As William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury during World War II, famously wrote: "The Church is the only organization in human history that exists primarily for the benefit of those who are not among its members."

I encourage you to read the stewardship guide carefully. We have shown you where the money goes to make ministry happen. We have also provided charts that show how you can increase your offering to meet the immediate needs of 2024. Please prayerfully consider your offering to God for 2024. Be faithful and generous. Experience the joy and excitement of giving toward something that really matters. Give to St. Thomas à Becket what we need to move ever onward.

Peace,

The Reverend Michael L. Delk
Rector

Thanksgiving Basket Project 2023

By Aurie Acciavatti

The Outreach Committee would like to thank everyone who contributed in any way to the 2023 Thanksgiving Basket Project. Twenty-eight families totaling 100 folks were given a very full tote of food and a gift card in an amount to match the size of the family. There were a number of larger families this year. SRSB appreciates that St. Thomas is able to fulfill the needs of these larger families.

Twenty-three parishioners came out on a Friday evening to help sort, bag up food and pack the totes. It was a fun night! And others stayed on Sunday afternoon to help the folks get their totes to the cars. Some of our newer families participated and had a great time. One lady was moved to tears when she received her gift card as she said she had no meat for the dinner and now she could purchase a turkey. Folks are excited to know that they also get to keep the totes.

Once again the parishioners of St. Thomas were very generous with donations of food, gift cards and cash. With the leftover donations we were able to give SRSB \$400.00 in gift cards to be used for families waitlisted. A note from SRSB indicates that all wait-listed families were served.

Another successful Thanksgiving Project completed thanks to a wonderful congregation!!



Annual Adopt-a-Family Outreach Project

We are once again participating in a Christmas Adopt-a-Family with Scott's Run Settlement House.

Our family this year consists of two parents and six children: four boys (ages 12, 9, 6, and 4) and two girls (a toddler, age 2, and a baby, 6 months).

This Sunday you can sign up on the table in the parish hall for gifts, and take a tag from the Christmas tree, replacing it with an ornament. Gifts can be delivered the next two Sundays, which are also Ingathering Sundays: December 10 and 17. (Please leave all gifts unwrapped.)

We will email a spreadsheet for people to sign up online, but only after people have had a chance to sign up in-person on Sunday.

Questions: Grace Ayscue
304-276-8037 / grace.ayscue@gmail.com)



Poinsettias

Help us decorate the church for Christmas with poinsettias. Sign-ups and dedication forms are on the narthex table. The suggested donation is \$10.



Christmas Services

- Dec. 24: 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I (Advent 4)
- Dec. 24: 10:30 am Holy Eucharist II (Advent 4)
- Dec. 24: 5:30 pm Holy Eucharist II
- Dec. 24: 10:00 pm Holy Eucharist II
- December 25: 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II
- December 31: 10:30 am Lessons & Carols

November Vestry Meeting Highlights

By John McFerrin

Special guest Nancy Mosser presented the report of the Finance Committee. She reported that the budget for 2024 was being developed and will be submitted to the Vestry on December 21, 2023, for final approval. Nancy thanked committee chairs for submitting their 2024 goals/budgets by October 31, facilitating the development of a more accurate and timely budget.

An agent from our insurer had come for a visit. In a subsequent report he made some suggestions of things we could do differently but on the whole he gave a favorable report.

Jeff Fedan reported on the work of the Property Committee. They have had the light in the kitchen fixed, had a new thermocouple installed on the kitchen oven, had the hillside mowed, and installed anti-slip wood on the ramp to the shed. The skylight has been ordered but will not be installed until 2024.

The office renovation is moving along and probably would have been complete by next week. There was a snag when the wrong color desk was delivered and installed. Straightening that all out will delay the completion of the project although we don't know by how much.

The Bible from which we do Sunday readings has fallen and broken. In order to prevent this from happening again, Jeff has installed a more substantial lip on the lectern that holds the Bible.

An issue has arisen about transgender people not knowing which bathroom to use. We are going to change the signs so that each bathroom is available to persons of any gender. To address any privacy concerns we are going to install locks on the doors so that they may be locked from the inside.

There have been ongoing difficulties with the cleaning of the church. We have now ended our relationship with the company that had been doing the cleaning and are interviewing companies to take its place.

There was a long but inconclusive discussion of excluding people—and especially hunters—from our property. Churches have a centuries long tradition of being welcoming places. The controversy is over how we can convey the message that we do not want anyone hunting on our property while maintaining the traditional message that our church—like all churches—is a welcoming place. There is consensus that we need some sort of signs; there is no consensus on exactly what the signs should say.

Father Delk has worked on a stewardship brochure for distribution on Sunday, November 19. The ingathering will be December 10 and 17.

The ordination of Tim Allen will take place on December 13. We plan to make a gift of an oil stock to commemorate the occasion. An oil stock is a container for carrying anointing oil.

Stewardship Giving Report			
October *	Giving	Expenses	Variance
Monthly	\$15,184	\$22,721	\$(7,537)
2023 YTD	\$201,792	\$154,737	\$47,055

* Amounts reflect balances as of October 30, 2023 from the Treasurer's report presented at the November 16, 2023 vestry meeting.



The Rev. Michael Delk, Rector
The Rev. Al Prichard, Deacon
Dr. William Haller, Director of Music

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Sunday Worship Schedule

8:00 am **Holy Eucharist Rite I**
in-person only

9:00 am **Adult Formation**


Holy Eucharist Rite II
in-person and livestreamed on
YouTube

10:30 am *Nursery Care*
Children's Sunday School
Coffee Hour after service



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75 Old Cheat Road
Morgantown, WV 26508

December 2023

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
3 1 Advent 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 9:00 am Adult Formation Class: Jonah 10:30 am Holy Eucharist II (in-person and on YouTube) Children's Sunday School Coffee Hour & Milestone Birthday Celebration <i>Finance Committee Meeting</i>	4 3:00 pm Fellowship Committee Meeting	5	6	7	1 8	2 Parish Hall, Kitchen RSVD: 9
10 2 Advent INGATHERING SUNDAY 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 9:00 am Adult Formation Class: Jonah 10:30 am Holy Eucharist II (in-person and on YouTube) Children's Sunday School Coffee Hour <i>Worship Committee Meeting</i>	11 7:00 pm <i>Finance Committee Meeting</i> 7:30 pm <i>Outreach Committee Meeting on Zoom</i>	12	13 12:30 pm Backpack Feeding Program @ SRSB 7:00 pm Timothy Allen Ordination	14	15	16
17 3 Advent INGATHERING SUNDAY 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 9:00 am Adult Formation Class: Jonah 10:30 am Holy Eucharist II (in-person and on YouTube) Children's Sunday School Coffee Hour & Hanging of the Greens	18 7:00 pm <i>Calendar Meeting</i>	19	20	21	22	23
24 4 Advent / Christmas Eve 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I (4 Advent) 10:30 am Holy Eucharist II (in-person and on YouTube) (4 Advent) Coffee Hour 5:30 pm Holy Eucharist II—Christmas Eve 10:00 pm Holy Eucharist II—Christmas Eve	25 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II - Christmas Day	26	27	28	29	30
31 1 Christmas 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 10:30 am Lessons & Carols Coffee Hour 						



Birthdays

- 3 - Elaina Beard
- 11 - Betsy Sharley
- 17 - Dn. Al Prichard
- 19 - Brenda Shafer
- 20 - Marian Conner
- 21 - Jennifer Midkiff
- 21 - Hayes Theiling Schreurs
- 25 - Holly Moses
- 27 - Phil Kisner
- 31 - Evelyn Beard

Anniversaries

- 27 - Alan & Stephanie Beddow
- 27 - Chuck & Patty Harman

Don't see your birthday or anniversary listed? Let us know!
parish@stthomasabecket.org

Service Ministers' Schedule: December 2023

<p>December 3 1 Advent</p>	<p>8:00 am Liturgical Assistant: Tara Steed 8:00 am Reader: Susan Seitz Acolytes: Carol Beall, Jeff Fedan, Bob Acciavatti Altar Guild: Kathy, Florita, Cheryl, Liz, Carol Coffee Hour: Milestone Birthday Celebration Counters (Monday): Kathy Fedan, Grace Ayscue Eucharistic Minister: Bob Acciavatti</p>	<p>Intercessor: Dede Burnell Producer: Lisa Holland Readers: Carol Beall, John Beall Sunday School: Liz Smailes, Susan Seitz Ushers: TBD Vestry Closer: Lynda Waggoner</p>
<p>December 10 2 Advent</p> <p>INGATHERING</p>	<p>8:00 am Liturgical Assistant: John Beall 8:00 am Reader: Acolytes: Tara Steed, Bob Acciavatti, Caroline Beddow Altar Guild: Alice, Hap, Mary Lou, Bernie, Cookie Coffee Hour: Carol Beall Counters (Monday): Carol Roberts Spears, Carol Beall Eucharistic Minister: Jeff Fedan</p>	<p>Intercessor: Kathy Fedan Producer: Kevin Steurer Readers: Dan Bryan, Carol Roberts Spears Sunday School: Grace Ayscue, Liz Smailes Ushers: TBD Vestry Closer: Corey Farris</p>
<p>December 17 3 Advent</p> <p>INGATHERING</p> <p><i>Hanging of the Greens</i></p>	<p>8:00 am Liturgical Assistant: Bob Acciavatti 8:00 am Reader: Beth O'Neil Acolytes: John Beall, Bob Acciavatti, Theo Tolka Altar Guild: Natalie, Alice, John, Lynda Coffee Hour: Cheryl Prichard Counters (Monday): Kathy Fedan, Nancy Mosser Eucharistic Minister: Grace Ayscue</p>	<p>Intercessor: Corey Farris Producer: Nancy Mosser Readers: Rob Turley, Nikki Turley Sunday School: Susan Seitz, Angela Carver Ushers: TBD Vestry Closer: Corey Farris</p>
<p>December 24 4 Advent</p> <p>Christmas Eve (Schedules separate)</p>	<p>8:00 am Liturgical Assistant: Carol Beall 8:00 am Reader: Acolytes: Carol Beall, Bob Acciavatti, Shepard Tolka Altar Guild: Grace, Anne, Patty, Susan Coffee Hour: TBD Counters (Dec. 27): Linda Yost, Susan Seitz Eucharistic Minister: Carol Roberts Spears</p>	<p>Intercessor: John Beall Producer: Jeff Fedan, Kathy Fedan Readers: Lynda Waggoner, Tom Waggoner Sunday School: Grace Ayscue, TBD Ushers: TBD Vestry Closer: Jeff Fedan</p>
<p>December 31 1 Christmas</p> <p>Lessons & Carols</p>	<p>8:00 am Liturgical Assistant: Bob Acciavatti 8:00 am Reader: Beth O'Neil Acolytes: Jeff Fedan, Bob Acciavatti Altar Guild: Grace, Anne, Patty, Susan Coffee Hour: TBD Counters: TBD Eucharistic Minister: John Beall</p>	<p>Intercessor: N/A Producer: TBD Readers: TBD Sunday School: N/A Ushers: TBD Vestry Closer: TBD</p>