

Triumph Newsletter

JANUARY 2021



Christmas Day Dinner 2020

Like so many other things this year we made plans and adjustments to provide our 20th Christmas Day Dinner to the community. We prepared everything in the church kitchen, scaled back the number of volunteers coming at one time, spread the workload out over a week, and served the meals curbside. We are grateful for everyone who helped in some way: donating food, giving money to buy needed food items, coming in to prep food, filling carry out containers and packaging them up to be taken outside and served to people as they drove up. **(Continued on page 4)**



Leadership In 2021

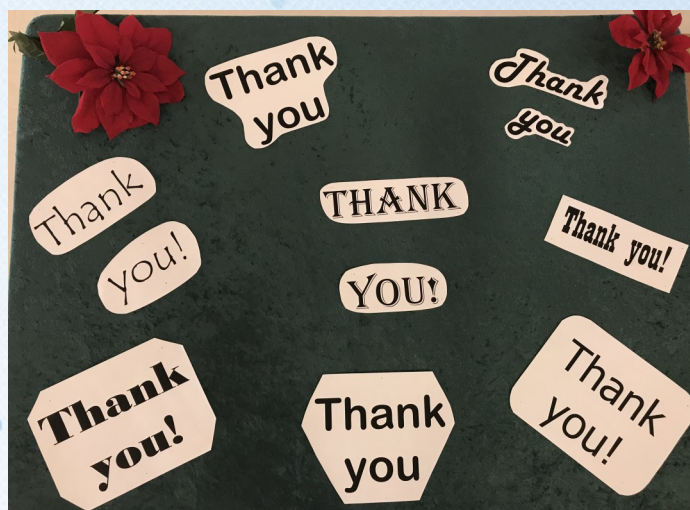
By Pastor Abi

"We are all parts of Christ's body, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So, we belong to each other and need all the others."

Romans 12:4-5 (LB)

Each one of us has a significant role to play in carrying the mission and vision of our church forward – every child, every woman, every man working together as Christ's body. It is the start of a new year together and I am mindful that God is looking to us to accomplish great things in the name of Christ for the kingdom in 2021. Sometimes, it is easy for us to think, "What can I contribute? I am just one ordinary person."

(continued on page 2)



Leadership in 2021 (continued)

Of course, this is a true statement – we are all ordinary. No person is more important than another person in the body of Christ (not even the pastor!). However, each of us is capable of becoming **extraordinary** when we surrender our life to Christ. I have no doubt that it is possible for every one of us to live an extraordinary life if we offer up our gifts, our resources, and our time. I know that when I think of my own life’s journey, I have felt most vitally alive when I’m serving God and working together with other believers. As Paul writes in Romans, *“it takes every one of us to make it complete.”*

As we reflect on all that has happened in 2020 and prepare for a new year in 2021, I would like to thank our incredible staff and all the lay leaders who have ensured continuity of ministry in what has been a year like no other. In particular, I invite you to join me in thanking the following outgoing leaders who have served faithfully on your behalf and to also welcome the new ones who are stepping up to lead in their place going forward:

2020 Outgoing Leader	Position	2021 Incoming Leader
Pat Dodson	Church Council Chair	Joe Steen
Joe Steen	Church Council, Vice Chair	Barry Barnard
Deb Crawford	Lay Leader	Gordon Haines
Leonard Fick	Finance Chair	Rich Banner
Paula Renfro & Marian Ludlow	Worship Co-Chairs	Deb Crawford

Indeed, our best resource at St. Thomas is our people who selflessly give of their time and talents so that all might experience healing and new life through Jesus Christ. Without a doubt, you too will live an extraordinary life if you invest your time in living the vision that God is giving us. May you seek to discern the ways that you can be the hands and feet of Christ in the year ahead.

In the grip of grace,

Pastor Abi

Christmas Miracle Offering and Mission Projects

Thanks to all who gave to the Christmas Miracle Offering and Mission Projects! In the November Pre-Advent Sermon Series, we explored A Different Kind of Christmas and learned to live and give like Jesus; prioritizing those who are weak, marginalized, and often forgotten. You really took this lesson to heart! Through your generosity, we raised over \$18,000 to support our annual Christmas Day Dinner and all the Mission Projects in 2021 we will support! The Narthex

Christmas Tree was surrounded by 44 Advent bags filled with food and then distributed through the Food Pantry on December 26th. Gifts were collected and distributed through A Senior Christmas, UnTrim-a-Tree, and the Angel Shop (this year through the Food Pantry). The Mission Council also partnered with the DAR to provide children’s gifts for walk-in clients. Altogether, 87 Seniors and 229 children experienced a merrier Christmas because of you!

New Year Sermon Series!

(January 10 – Feb. 14)

Habits and routines help us stay on track in many areas of our lives – whether it's our physical, mental, or emotional health. They can help us grow in our spiritual lives too. In this series, we will explore several spiritual disciplines, or faithful habits that can help us deepen our relationship with God. As we enter a New Year, now is the perfect time to commit or recommit to a spiritual discipline, as we make our resolutions and look for life to be better in 2021!



Week 1: Prayer & Meditation / Scripture: Romans 8:26-27, Psalm 30, Romans 2:26 -27, Galatians 6:11- 16

As we learn a rhythm of prayer and meditation, we become connected to God in new and exciting ways. Prayer is the breath of Christian life.

Week 2: Scripture & Study / Scripture: Psalm 1:1-3, 1 Peter 1:13-16, John 8:31-32, Romans 12:2, Phil. 4:8-9

Reading and meditating on Scripture lay the foundation for Christian life.

Week 3: Fasting / Scripture: Matthew 6:16-18, Isaiah 58:3-9a, Acts 13:1-3

Fasting is meant to change our hearts and deepen our relationship with God, yet sometimes we turn it into a diet or show.

Week 4: Silence & Solitude / Scripture: 1 Kings 19:1-15, Mark 1:35-39

When we practice being silent, we can deepen our connection with God.

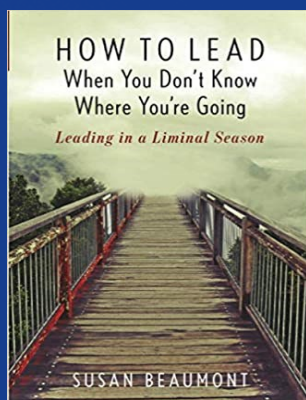
Week 5: Submission & Service / Scripture: Mark 9:33-37, Acts 9:36-43

As we grow in our faith, we learn to submit ourselves to Christ's plans, which leads us into serving the needs of others.

Week 6: Confession, Worship & Celebration / Scripture: 1 John 1:5-9, 1 Corinthians 10:14-24, 31-11:1

Confessing our sins brings us out of the darkness of the world and into the light of living as a Christ follower so that we can experience the fullness of worship -- not (just) when we show up to church on Sunday! It is about weaving worship through our everyday lives in different ways.

God's grace calls us to lives of gratitude and praise.



Bi-District Training Day REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

Bi-District Training Day will be Saturday, January 16. We will hold BDTD 2021 online via a virtual event system. **NEW** this year--select as many workshops as you want! Because it is all online, you are not limited to 3 time slots. Choose 1 workshop or choose all 41--whatever works for you. The Keynote Speaker is Susan Beaumont, author of *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading in a Liminal Season*. To register and learn more, go to <https://bdt2021.heysummit.com/>

Christmas Day Dinner - 2021 (continued from page 1)

Our heartfelt thanks go to our chef extraordinaire, Frank Priest, for his leadership, organization, and delicious food and to his faithful assistant, Janel Weed, who helps ensure the kitchen ministry runs smoothly on Christmas day and throughout the year.

Thanks also go to Connie Santee for her organizational skills and her many hours of dedication in making sure everything was completed and ready for Christmas Day.

We also appreciate the dishwashing skills of John Duffy throughout the week and the many tasks Missie Duffy tackled during the week.

Our final count for meals was 1931 which includes the 260 first responder meals we delivered.

Make plans now to join us for Christmas Day Dinner 2021! What a wonderful way to share Christ's love with the community.

Scenes from Christmas Day Dinner

...a spot for everyone with so much to do!

Baking Hundreds of Cookies



Slicing....



De-boning Lots of Turkeys!



Portioning Gravy



Prepping Dessert Carryouts



Packaging the Main Meal



Finally! Handing out the meals



News from the Kitchen

Happy New Year! We are delighted to continue our curbside service for Tuesday Night Dinners. Thank you for coming between 5:30pm-6:00pm. Please text or call Janel at 703-507-9075 if you are running late. If needed, we can place your dinner in the refrigerator for pick up on Wednesday and you can leave your payment in the office.

Our menus for January are:

January 5

Garden Salad

Spaghetti and Meatballs

Cauliflower/Broccoli

Garlic Bread

Dessert: Cannoli

Kid's: Same as adults

Cookie: Peanut Butter

January 12

Chilean Sea Bass

Rice Pilaf

P.E.I. Vegetables

Cheddar Biscuits

Dessert: Strawberry Cheesecake

Kid's: Fish Sticks

Cookie: Chocolate Chip

January 19

Caprese Salad

Chicken Casserole with Dumplings

Dessert: Tapioca Pudding

Kid's: Chicken Fingers

Cookie: Mint Brownies

January 26

BBQ Meatloaf

Mashed Potato

Corn Souffle

Fresh Bread

Dessert: Peanut Butter Chocolate Cream Pie

Kid's: Cheeseburger and French Fries

Cookie: Butter Toffee



Every Knee Shall Bow

In this year of Covid-19, many everyday activities have changed, some pretty dramatically. The Living Nativity was no exception. There was much discussion on whether we could do an event this year and what it might actually look like if it was presented. In an effort to combine three events that normally occur at St. Thomas during the Christmas season – Living Nativity, children’s Christmas program and breakfast with Santa - the Living Nativity had a very different look this year. There were only three key scenes from the Nativity story. All scenes were populated by children and youth of the church. There was an additional scene this year of Santa paying homage to the baby Jesus in a crib. The scene was based on a painting – Every Knee Shall Bow - that serves as a reminder of the true reason for the season. There were animals; there was an angel in the sky; there were two drones taking aerial photos! The event was shortened to 90 minutes and yet 225 cars came through with over 650 people. It was apparent from comments made by attendees that the community was looking forward to this event as much as we were looking to put it on! Overall, despite limitations necessitated by the pandemic, St. Thomas was able to nurture both inside and outside the church by presenting our gift to the community once again. Thank you to all who participated! Pictures are available on the church website in the Photo Gallery at <https://www.stthomasumc.org/who-we-are/photo-gallery.html>.

SPRC News & Updates

by Bill Bixby, Chair

We received news over the holidays that Caleb Mathews, our Children’s Ministry Director, will be stepping down to pursue new opportunities at River Oaks Elementary School in Woodbridge, Virginia. He will be joining their staff as an art teacher with Preschool through 5th grade students beginning January 4, 2021. His last full-time day at St. Thomas is Sunday, January 3. He will then continue to serve on an interim basis on Sunday mornings to help with the transition until a new Children’s Director is hired. Pastor Arum will oversee our monthly ministry with tweens during this same period and Pastor Abi will help to facilitate the Children’s Ministry Council. Thank you to Caleb for his service to our church and children/youth ministries. Please join me in wishing Caleb tremendous success in his future endeavors as he “takes his ministry with children outside the walls of the church.” Because of the pandemic, we will not be able to gather in person to celebrate Caleb’s ministry with us over the past four years. Instead, you are encouraged to reach out personally or send a card directly to him to say good-bye and thank him for his faithful service. You may send cards either to the church or to his home, 11742 Ag Industrial Drive, Bealeton, VA 22712. If you have any further questions about this transition, please feel free to direct them to me, wgbixby@gmail.com, or to the Senior Pastor, Abi Foerster. Thank you.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January Birthdays					1	2 Gary Gallahan Ron Weber
3	4 Chloe Izzo	5	6	7 Jamison Weed	8 David Ometz	9 Sherry Mootz
10	11 Wyn Weber Mitchell Sutton	12 Al Dawson Riley Miller	13	14	15 Sue Booher Holly Banner Susan Must	16
17	18	19	20 Zachary Brockwell	21 Dwayne Young	22 David Petrilla Sarah Jarrett	23 Jean Webb
24 John Guice	25 McKayla Wright	26 Ava Tacik Samuel Jarrett	27 Marian Ludlow Janie Russell	28	29 Matthew Hammack	30 John Duffy
31 Kristi Swanson						

Announcements and Events

Next Pre-Baptism Class: Interested in being baptized or having your child baptized? The next pre-baptism class will be held virtually via Zoom on Sunday, January 10 at 1:00 pm. Please RSVP on your online Connect Card or call the main office, Monday—Friday, 9 AM—5 PM.

“Taste of St. Thomas” Newcomer’s Event: New? Then plan to join us for Brunch on Sunday, Jan. 17 at 1:00 pm. Would you like to meet other newcomers, learn a little bit more about St Thomas, and enjoy a free meal on us? Please join Pastors Abi and Arum on Zoom. A specially prepared boxed brunch will be ready for you to pick up at 12:15 pm on the day of the event and then, we’ll gather back together virtually for about an hour. Sign up online using this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090a4ea8a82ba7ff2-taste> or by calling the church office. We hope you stop by!

A New History of St. Thomas UMC

Don Rickerson is compiling a history of St Thomas, going all the way back to its beginnings.

Does anyone have photos or documents from the EUB church or the Manassas United Methodist Church before the merger with St Thomas UMC?

If so, please contact Don Rickerson,
RickersonDon@gmail.com

Call for Volunteers for the Student Ministry!

We would like to build a team of Youth Sunday School teachers. Currently, we are offering a PACK:AM (Sunday School) only via Zoom, so you can lead the meeting from anywhere. You have the option to lead meetings either regularly or whenever you are available. We invite you to this important ministry to support the faith journey of our next generation! If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Arum at arum.kim@StThomasUMC.org. Thank you!

United Methodist Women

Thank you for supporting our bazaars over the last three months! All proceeds will be given to missions over the next few months.

Our Virtual Christmas Party was a big hit! Even though we weren’t together in-person, we had a lot of fun with our gift and cookie exchange. It was also fun to see how many of us shared the same favorite Christmas Carols and movies.

Snow Valentines

Join us for our next Virtual meeting on Jan 31 at 2 pm. We will be sharing snow stories while making Valentines for the staff at Manassas Health and Rehab (where the Senior Christmas gifts went). RSVP to Chair.STUMW@gmail.com by Jan 15 to receive the Zoom link and a surprise! Valentine kits will be provided.





Memory Verse:

"Everyone who heard him was amazed."
LUKE 2:47, NIV

Bottom Line:

Jesus is amazing.

This month is going to be Out of This World! We are going to use this fun and exciting theme to help teach preschoolers about the most amazing thing ever, which turns out isn't a thing at all. No! He's a person! You know who I'm talking about – Jesus! We are teaching preschoolers that Jesus is amazing! And, we're doing it by sharing stories about some of Jesus' amazing miracles. Jesus displayed an amazing understanding of God when He was at the temple as just a young boy. The people who heard Him were amazed! Jesus calmed a storm with just a word. Amazing! Jesus filled fishermen's nets with fish. Amazing! Jesus healed a blind man with mud and spit. Amazing! This world, well this universe, is filled with amazing things, but nothing will ever be more amazing than the One who created it all. Jesus is amazing, and we want our preschoolers to know it!



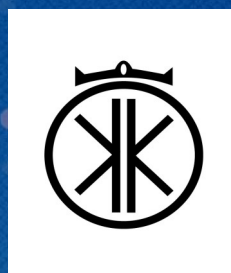
The psalmist wrote, The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, (NIV). God is the author of creation, and God has entrusted us to care for and cultivate it. We do that by taking responsibility. From the work we need to accomplish to people we meet to the words we use; life is filled with moments where we can decide to reflect God's character, take responsibility, and use what we have wisely. When we follow through and do what needs to be done, we can point others to Jesus, the One who took the ultimate responsibility for us and made it possible for us to be with God forever. **Bottom Line:** Responsibility—showing you can be trusted with what is expected of you. **MEMORY VERSE:** "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much." Luke 16:10a, NIV

King's Kids

Our ministry with children seeks to share the faith with the next generation of children from birth through 5th grade.

The primary ministry occurs on Sunday mornings. Check it out...

SUNDAY SCHOOL @ 10:15 am



FOR PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY KIDS ON ZOOM:

All kids are invited to join us on Zoom for lessons and activities around each week's Bible Story. We'd love to have you join us. Be sure to sign up for our

weekly King's Kids E-News to stay up to date and receive Zoom codes each week by contacting our Children's Ministry Director, Caleb Mathews.

KIDS CARE 2: 345



Our next gathering is on Friday, January 8 at 6:30-8 PM via Zoom. Bring your favorite snack and drink to your desk and join us for a Virtual Game Night! Stay tuned in a special

email for all the details. All tweens 3rd-5th Grade are invited to participate and friends are always welcome! Until a new Children's Director joins St. Thomas, Pastor Arum will lead the Kids Care 2 Ministry



Student Ministry

By Pastor Arum

The global pandemic has changed everything, and The PACK was no exception. Since September 2020, The PACK has gathered in a hybrid fashion: in-person and online via Zoom. But, for the month of January, we decided to have our gatherings only via Zoom to adhere to an order by the Governor that limits in-person gathering to 10 people. We hope that the PACK continues to be a place where the students can hear a message of hope and encouragement and relax and share a laugh or two with each other. Please keep our students in your prayers so they may stay connected to each other and most of all, to Christ in this difficult time.

The PACK AM on Sunday at 10:10 AM via Zoom

As we kick off the year of 2021, we start a new curriculum, *The Jesus Studies!* This curriculum is designed to help our students navigate through issues they are confronted with on a daily basis in a Christ-centered way. We hope that our students will be equipped to see the relevant issues of their lives through the words of Jesus.



Jesus And Identity
Jesus And Your Faith
Jesus And Culture
Jesus And Loving Others
Jesus And Tough Times

Jesus And Your Image
Jesus And Stress
Jesus And Forgiveness
Jesus And Influence
Jesus And Relationships

Jesus And Your Future
Jesus And Mean People
Jesus And Stuff

The PACK on Tuesday at 4 PM Virtual only via Zoom in the month of January

We will hang out, play fun games, participate in mission projects, and/or discuss how to apply a message of the Sunday worship service in our daily lives. Please stay tuned for a weekly newsletter from Pastor Arum to discover each week's special activity!

Confirmation Orientation on Sunday, January 24 at 1 PM via Zoom

Confirmation is open to any students between the 6th grade and older who was baptized as a child and is now willing to "confirm" their faith in Christ and make a commitment to become a lifelong Christian. During the confirmation class, the students can learn Christian beliefs as well as what it means to be a Christian. Classes will run from February to May with a Confirmation ceremony during a Sunday worship service in the late May. You can hear what the confirmation is all about at this orientation. Both the student and their parent/guardian are required to attend the orientation. Please contact Pastor Arum to RSVP for this orientation (arum.kim@stthomasumc.org)

Snapshots from our virtual Christmas Party on December 22



The students were asked to purchase food items with their money as a gift for Jesus. This is a Christmas Tree built with collected items! Those were donated to the Food Pantry.



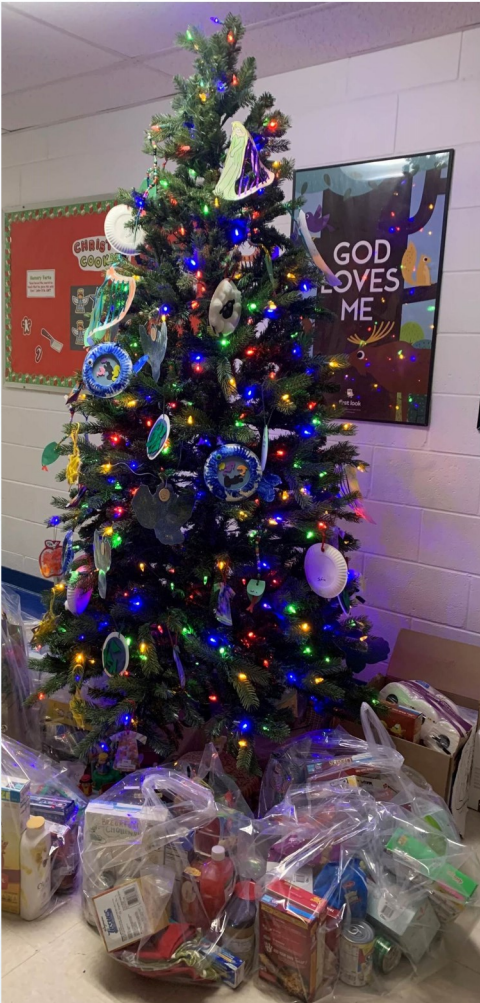
Twelve students and two adult youth leaders and Pastor Arum got together for the Christmas Party. We began the party with a Bob Ross Style Painting challenge. Each created a unique art piece!



After playing a virtual Escape Room game, we opened our gift!
The students dropped off a gift at church and Pastor Arum delivered it to their place before the party.
We wished Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to each other!

Sunbeam Children's Center

Each year the children of Sunbeam decorate our "Jesse Tree" with crafts from the old testament. From toddlers to Kindergarteners, each year the tree is more beautiful than the last. Two of our Kindergarteners built a large tower during some free time that they had in the morning before their day began. Great job Hannah and Nora!! Some of our SCC students participated in the Dec. 27th Worship service singing holiday songs. Even during COVID-19 these special moments are blessings from above that stay dear to our hearts and help us to continue the faith that there are brighter days ahead. A special thank you to all the SCC staff for the dedication and love they give to the children each day so they have some normalcy during this very trying school year. Each one of you are a blessing to all.



St. Thomas
United Methodist Church

8899 Sudley Road, Manassas,
Rev. Abi Foerster, Senior Pastor
Rev. Arum Kim, Associate Pastor

stthomasumc.org

703-368-5161

Newsletter Deadline:

15th of the month

Please email all articles to both:

samantha.bouquet@stthomasumc.org

receptionist@stthomasumc.org

Upcoming Events

- Jan 10 New Sermon Series
Pre-Baptism Class (via Zoom)
- Jan 16 Bi-District Training Day (Virtual Event)
- Jan 17 Taste of St. Thomas Newcomers Event
- Jan 24 Confirmation Orientation
- Jan 26 Church Council Meeting