

Services

Sunday

8:00 am Eucharist with hymns

9:00 am Fellowship

9:15 am Forum

10:00 am Sunday School

10:15 am Sung Eucharist

11:15 am Fellowship

Wednesday

10:00 am Eucharist (Chapel)

Daily

7:30 am Morning Prayer (Chapel)

8:00 am Friday Morning Prayer (Chapel)

(no Saturday service)

Music Rehearsals

St Thomas Singers

Thursdays, 7:30 pm

Sundays, 9:15 am

(Summer break begins June 10)

Calendar

June 2

9:00 am, Sandwich Makers (Kitchen)

June 15

6:30 pm, Vestry Meeting (Conference Room)

June 19

8:00 am, Men's Breakfast (Great Hall)

9:00 am, Eastside Episcopal Churches

Pre-convention Meeting (Great Hall)

7:00 pm, Youth Dance Party (Great Hall)

June 20

10:15 pm, Father's Day and Blessing of
Graduating Seniors (Church)

THE

COLLECT

June 2010

St Thomas Episcopal Church • P. O. Box 124 • Medina, WA 98039

425.454.9541 • www.stthomasmedina.org

From the Rector: Ordinary Time

by the Reverend Lex Breckinridge

All the festivals are over. Advent. Christmas. Epiphany. Lent. Easter. Ascension. Pentecost – these luminous, numinous seasons of the Church year. Now, following Pentecost, we stand in what the Roman Catholic calendar calls Ordinary



Time. It's the "long, green season," the season when all our vestments and altar hangings turn to green. It's the season that stretches out for the next six months of our journey back to Advent. **Ordinary Time.** It's where we live and work most of our days and it's where we often need the most help. We feel like we're just marking time, waiting for the next big event.

Yet, it's often in the waiting that we'll find ourselves better disposed to listening for the indwelling Christ, the One who is present to us in each and every moment when we are actually awake and listening. Like lots of other things, listening – listening to others,

and listening for Christ – is a skill we can develop. **The next time you're waiting for something, whether it's waiting to get onto the 520 Bridge, waiting in the physician's office, waiting for your teenager to come home at curfew, see if you can shut out the noisy voices in your head and listen for Christ. You have the time. St. Paul reminds us that the Spirit is praying through us at every moment "with sighs too deep for words" (Romans 8:26). It's in the waiting and the listening that the spirit will open for us the many rooms of our own experience. That's when our dailiness will become energized. God in Christ will sanctify our "ordinariness."**

Hagar, whom we recall in this month's *Collect*, models a particular kind of waiting for us. You may recall that she was a servant girl whom Sarah, who was barren, gave to Abraham in hopes she would bear a son for Abraham (Genesis 16:1-2). And she gave birth to the boy who was called Ishmael. By and by, Sarah bore her own son, Isaac, to Abraham. Hagar and Ishmael then became expendable, and Sarah convinced Abraham to send his first-born son and his erstwhile consort out into the wilderness. Alone and afraid, wandering in the wilderness of Beersheba, Hagar despaired that she and Ishmael would die of thirst. She placed Ishmael under a bush and went off a distance to sit and wait so she would not have to watch her child dying.

(continued on page 2)

Parish Life

In the waiting, an angel appeared to her and said, “What troubles you Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make of him a great nation.’ Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink” (Genesis 21:16-19).

It was in the waiting that the angel revealed to Hagar what was evidently already there in plain sight. Full of anxiety and despair, Hagar couldn’t see the water. She had to sit, to wait, to be still, to listen, before it became apparent.

Thanks be to God for Ordinary Time. Daily. Difficult. Now. Eternally Now.

Faithfully,



New Sports Ministry Formed

A new sports ministry is being formed under the aegis of the Fellowship Committee. Joseph Scovel has agreed to convene a fellowship team focused on attending and participating in sports events throughout the year.

Tentatively, we’re planning a group outing to a Mariners game at the end of August and a Sounders game in the second week of September. We will continue the golf event on fellowship weekend and hope to have a multi-generational mini golf event at Willows Run, probably in August. If there’s enough interest, we will take a nature hike and attend the bicycle races at the velodrome at Marymoor Park this summer. And in the fall and winter, we’ll get together for bowling. If you have other ideas, let us know – and help us organize them. It’s a wonderful way to enjoy the fellowship of other parishioners.

Save the following dates:

Fellowship Weekend, July 17&18 (July 17, golf; July 18, Mass on the Grass)
Mariners Game, Tuesday, August 31, 7:00 pm, LA Angels
Sounders Game, Thursday, September 9, 8:00 pm, Real Salt Lake

To assist in this ministry, contact Joseph either by e-mail at joseph.scovell@gmail.com or by phone at 425-638-2210. It should be a fun way to contribute your talents to St. Thomas.

If you have further ideas or thoughts about fellowship events at St. Thomas, please feel free to contact Peter Pitarys (425-635-1191) or Anne Rogers (425-641-1350).

Associate for Liturgical Arts Search in Process

Liturgy and music are at the heart of our lives together at St. Thomas, and this parish has a long tradition of musical excellence. Charles Rus, our Interim Associate for Liturgical Arts, has continued and strengthened this tradition. When Charles was hired in October 2008, it was with the understanding that the parish would engage in a national search to fill the position permanently and that his name would be included.

An Associate for Liturgical Arts Search Committee that I appointed has been at work since January. The Committee, chaired by Gwyn Barkman, has advertised the position and received more than 30 applications from gifted musicians all across the country. We have narrowed the list and are now selecting semi-finalists for more intensive review. Charles, whose outstanding work we have so appreciated here, is already a finalist.

At the same time, it is important to honor the process that was created following Dent Davidson’s departure for the Diocese of Chicago, that is, to conduct a national search to find the candidate best suited to St. Thomas to fill this position. We expect to make a final decision no later than July 1.

The Committee is composed of folks who can speak from and to a variety of interests ranging from the adult choir to the children’s program to the Sinfonia. Members of the committee are Alyce Rogers, Catherine Blundell, Jean Johnson, Catherine and Karl Kunkel, Laila Hilfinger, Marilyn Pedersen, Paul Johnson, and Robin Middleton. They were commissioned on Sunday, May 16, at the 10:15 am service. Please keep them and their work in your prayers.

Vestry Views

How Does God Reward the Obedient?

by Bonnie Palevich, Vestry member

After perusing nine St. Thomas library books, performing a ton of googling, plus cracking my Bible, I now humbly understand a bit about the Genesis Hagar and St. Paul's allegorical Hagar, the mother of Ishmael. Ishmael became the patriarch of the 12 tribes of Ishmaelites (the Bedouin Arab people) and his story is a part of Christian, Jewish, and Islamic beliefs, not to mention contemporary African American womanist theology, according to Carol Meyers, author of *Women in Scripture*.



Hagar, servant/slave to childless Sarah, was a concubine elevated to be Abraham's wife at Sarah's suggestion. Author Ann Spangler, in *Women of the Bible*, tells us that when Hagar became pregnant she began lording it over Sarah (perhaps not the smartest move for a foreign slave girl). The bitter rivalry led Hagar to run away from her mistress' harsh retaliatory treatment. She was confronted by God near a spring of water, told to return and obey Sarah and to name her son "Ishmael," a name that means "God Hears."

She did as the Lord commanded and returned home, but Sarah's jealousy about who would become Abraham's heir after the birth of her own son, Isaac, caused Hagar to be banished again. But God hears her and her son's cries in the wilderness as Ishmael lies dying of thirst, and a well gushes forth to save them.

So why is Hagar seen as a vulnerable heroine even in modern times? Is it because she was submissive? I think probably not; if she hadn't mocked Sarah or run away or cried out in the desert, we might never have heard of her. It's because she, as a lowly and miserable slave, was heard and helped by a God who listened to her; and she, in turn, heard God and lived in the joy of that experience.

I want to include a passage Andrea Sato Borgmann wrote to me after I told her that I, too, was wandering in the wilderness trying to understand the story of Hagar. She brought the meaning of the story home to me by writing:

One aspect relevant to your work on the Vestry is the experience of shifting sands that Hagar experiences. She is asked to do something by Sarah, she does it, she is reprimanded, she follows God's word in returning, she is cast out again, and she is comforted by God. In all this tumult she seems constant to one thing – God's abiding love for her and his care. The life of our community is one of shifting sands as well – departing rector, interim, new rector, economic downturn, to build or not build, when to build? What do we learn from Hagar? We must place our trust in God and his care for us and continually seek to discern his guidance in our collective life. It seems that to do otherwise we would be too buffeted by the challenges of life.

Amen, and thanks for expressing that so eloquently, Andrea. It makes the Hagar story relevant to our journey as Christians at St. Thomas as well.

Two New Companions for St. Thomas

by Mary Pneuman, Companions Committee

The Companions Committee has recently established new partnerships with the Arab Episcopal School for the Integration of the Blind (AES) in Irbid, Jordan, and the Evangelical Home for Children (EHC) in Ramallah, thereby ending our previous companion relationship with St. Andrew's Church, Ramallah. Both institutions are ministries of the Diocese of Jerusalem, which is a Companion with the Diocese of Olympia.

Four women from St. Thomas visited both AES and EHC in October 2009. The new relationships resulted from their recommendation, which was based on the assessment of present needs and the capability of establishing good channels of communication. The Companions Committee believes that the school and the home meet both criteria, and the Vestry supports this ministry.

The AES was established in 2003 by Fr. Samir Esaid and his wife Sabah, a special educator, to provide educational opportunities for the visually impaired children of northern Jordan. Until now, unless able to travel or stay in Amman (1 ½ hours away), blind and partially sighted children were denied a normal education, lived outside the public eye, and did not interact with their sighted peers. Now, 150 students are enrolled at AES, 32 of whom are visually impaired. All classes are fully integrated, with two or three teachers in each classroom, depending on differing needs. Currently, four blind teachers are employed to teach Braille to the blind students as well as to their mothers, so the children can be assisted at home. This year, AES is hoping to open a 7th grade class to accommodate the current sixth-graders, as well as a pre-kindergarten class. The school must raise about one-third of its operating costs from partnerships. Many of the students live in nearby refugee camps and attend on reduced fees.



A classroom at the Episcopal School for the Integration of the Blind in Irbid, Jordan



Students and teachers at the Evangelical Home for Children in Ramallah

The EHC is part of a K-12 educational complex in Ramallah, West Bank. Both EHC and this school were founded in 1954 by women from the United Kingdom and the United States who were called to provide for the spiritual, physical and educational needs of children. In 2003-2004, some of the space became a pre-school that now serves about 50 children and a day care center that allows the mothers to work outside the home. The mission of the EHC, which can accommodate 10-12 children round-the-clock until they graduate from high school, is to provide a safe and loving environment where they can attend school. Most of the children in residence come from poverty-stricken or dysfunctional families. The EHC also provides overnight accommodations for teachers and students who are unable to reach home or school because of emergencies or closures at the checkpoints. EHC's mission is for the resident children to "have life and have it more abundantly," says Sister Najah Rantisi, director. The EHC receives only a fraction of its budget from the Diocese of Jerusalem and depends on donations from supporting organizations and a modest income from the day care.

The Companions Committee gives thanks for the witness of these two institutions and asks that you remember AES and EHC in your prayers. We will be looking at various ways to help support our new companions, including opportunities for personal connections, visitations, and volunteers, and we will keep you informed. We believe that the education of the children of Palestine, be they Christians or Muslims, is a critical ingredient for future peace in a divided land.

Committee Members are: Anne Rogers (chair), Kathryn Ballinger, Mike Hayes, Kiki Lewis, Margie Mayhall, Mary Pneuman, Dwight Russell, and Kathy Williams.

Project Outreach

Celebration of Giving

by Ann Casey, Project Outreach Steering Committee Member

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth... Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven... Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” —Matthew 6:19

June is a time filled with celebrations of births, anniversaries, weddings, graduations and new beginnings. At St. Thomas, June is one of many times during the year when we celebrate the love of God through charitable giving and fellowship. St. Thomas parishioners share God’s love with their generous donations throughout the year, making it possible for Project Outreach to support a variety of different charities at home and abroad.

A special occasion offering is the perfect way to celebrate a milestone or an achievement. Such an offering will make a difference in the lives of people worldwide. At Christmas and Easter, parishioners celebrate with offerings to Project Outreach; special occasion offerings continue this celebration of giving throughout the year. When you make an offering to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, graduation, wedding or any other special occasion, you will be given a special thank you note on behalf of the recipient.

Over the last year, contributions to Project Outreach have allowed us to support a variety of organizations. Grant recipients include Episcopal Relief and Development, which has been helping victims of the earthquake in Haiti; Hopelink, which fed, last November, 550 people in need of food for a Thanksgiving dinner; and The Sophia Way, which provides support services and shelter to homeless women on the Eastside.

As members of the parish, we are all members of St. Thomas’ Project Outreach, and all are welcome to recommend charities to the Project Outreach Steering Committee – organizations with which we are involved – as possible future grant recipients. To find out more please visit <http://www.stthomasmedina.org/Outreach/Outreach.htm>

In addition to financial contributions, parishioners are encouraged to take part in the many volunteer and fellowship opportunities available through the church. To find out more about ways you can get involved in the church while helping those in need, visit: http://www.stthomasmedina.org/Outreach/Outreach_ministries.htm

In July, St. Thomas will be hosting 30 homeless men in their transition to permanent housing. If you would like to donate your time or skills you can find more information at http://www.stthomasmedina.org/Outreach/Congregations_for_homeless.htm



Financial Report

APRIL 2010

	Budget	Actual
Income	\$76,212	\$79,557
Expense	\$74,711	\$84,318

YEAR TO DATE

Income	\$365,323	\$357,646
Expense	\$357,833	\$347,934

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

Vestry

Bob Webb, *Senior Warden*
Fred Barkman, *Treasurer*
Jim Blundell, *Chancellor*
Jean Johnson, *Clerk*
Christopher Breunig, *Music/Arts/Worship*
Margaret Chorlton, *Junior Warden/Personnel*
Joanne Del Bene, *Transition*
Brian Evison, *Finance/Leadership*
Rose Magee, *Building Committee*
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Bonnie Palevich, *St. Thomas School Rep*
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Nancy Pitarys, *Pastoral Care/Formation*
Delphine Stevens, *Project Outreach*

Staff

The Rev. Lex Breckinridge, *Rector*
The Rev. Kathryn Ballinger, *Deacon*
Associate for Spiritual Direction & Parish Visitor
The Rev. Stephen W Best, *Associate for*
Couples & Family Life
Charles Rus, *Interim Associate for Liturgical Arts*
Josh Hosler, *Associate for Christian Formation*
Laura Gregg, *Executive Assistant to the Rector*
Gerry Gallaher, *Business Manager*
Mark Hugo, *Sexton*

The Collect

Shirley E. Deffenbaugh, *Editor*
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Deadline: For the July issue, June 14.
Please submit copy to Shirley Deffenbaugh,
sedeffenbaugh@comcast.net or leave in the
drawer marked "Collect" at the church. All
articles will be edited. Questions? Please call
Shirley at 425-455-4817.

A Letter to the Congregation

June 2010

Dear Friends:



Since 2005, I have been involved in an intentional discernment process with an eye toward the priesthood. I've recently reached a new plateau in the process and want to keep you posted. This winter, Christy, Sarah and I visited three different seminaries. I attended BACOM, the weekend event at which eleven other aspirants and I were evaluated by the Commission on Ministry. And I received the official letter from Bishop Greg Rickel admitting me as a postulant for Holy Orders, a huge step toward priesthood.

Now we know that we will be in Seattle for one more year and then move to seminary in the fall of 2011 – either at Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, California, or Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia – for a three-year course of study. After a long period of uncertainty, it feels great to have clarity and direction.

I have already taken several seminary classes at Seattle University: a series of classes in pastoral care, plus a quarter of Biblical Greek. After the summer quarter I will not continue at Seattle U., but I will seek to transfer these credits to the Episcopal seminary we choose.

I am in spiritual direction with the Rev. Wray MacKay, who is very good. Lately we've been identifying early threads in my life that have led me to a call to the priesthood. Both Wray and Lex have helped me solidify my daily prayer practice and rule of life. Over the next year, they will both help me engage in new experiences to intentionally prepare for seminary.

When the Rev. George Anne Boyle hired me in 2004, she included in my job description: "Build a program that will continue after you're gone." Although I have kept these words in mind all along, they will be my guiding principle in 2010-2011. I will convene and empower transition teams for Adult Formation, Youth Formation, and Children's Formation. Together, we will imagine and implement ways to shepherd all the people involved in these programs and prepare the way for parishioners yet to come.

Christy and I have been so grateful for your support. Some of you have donated lots of time to help me formally in my discernment process. Some of you have donated money for seminary or have indicated that you will in the future. Thanks to all of you, I have been able to take these early seminary classes, and we have visited seminaries and narrowed the field. I hope we can count on your ongoing help engaging more "seminarian boosters." Thank you so much.

In Christ,

Josh Hosler

The Quiet Corner

Waiters Working for Tips

by Katherine Ballinger, Deacon, Associate for Spiritual Direction & Parish Visitor

In April, Philip had College Board meetings in New York City. I went along to do my own thing, which is art and history, while he was in meetings all day. On this trip, I visited the Tenement Museum on the lower eastside. It was a fascinating look back in time at the living conditions of immigrants when they arrived in this country. I also visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Guggenheim again. But this is not a NYC travelogue.

On Sunday, we decided to go to church and chose the one closest to our hotel, The Church of Paul the Apostle on West 59th. Owned and served by the Paulist Fathers, the church is the birthplace of the oldest men's Catholic religious order in the United States (founded in 1858). The early Paulists began as missionaries to the huge influx of immigrants flooding into the city around that time. Today the Paulists serve churches throughout Canada and the United States.

The exterior of the church was covered with scaffolding, either for cleaning or restoration, but the inside was full of light and color. The barrel ceiling, painted sky blue, displayed constellations of stars in the night sky at the church's founding. The congregation was diverse and welcoming, the atmosphere warm and inclusive. The music was outstanding. "If you can't get good music in NYC, where can you?" asked Philip. We were just blocks away from Lincoln Center and Julliard.

The presider and homilist was an older priest, tall, somewhat stout, and balding. He gave a good homily with some profound thoughts spoken simply, but with no tone of condescension. At the end of communion, a second collection was taken to aid retired, elderly priests. Father explained that he had been a priest for more than 40 years and some of the older priests for much longer. Half apologizing for the second collection, he explained that some of these elderly had lost their hair and teeth, and some their minds, too. But they had been faithful for many years. Humbly, he said, "Some priests may think they are special, but really, we are just servants. He took out an apron and slipped it over his head. "We are just waiters at this table, and we work just for tips."

There were chuckles and smiles as people dug deep into their pockets. I had goose bumps and felt deeply touched. This old priest, with his New York accent and hands outstretched, was begging with elegant humility; he was totally sincere and transparent.

I've thought a lot about humility since then and have told this story to many of my friends. It still brings me close to tears. Humility is a rare and beautiful thing. It is full of grace, revealing the true nature of Jesus Christ.



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