



FORWARD IN FAITH

ROOTED
IN FAITH

NOURISHED
BY COMMUNITY

BRANCHING
OUT TO SERVE

GRACE UPON GRACE

REFLECTIONS FOR OUR STEWARDSHIP JOURNEY



“From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.
John 1:16

ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH | AUTUMN 2026



WELCOME

This is a season of blessing in the life of St. Thomas.

We are grateful for the ways God continues to guide and sustain our parish during this time of transition. We find ourselves blessed by the faithful leadership of Father Tom, by new faces in our community, by deepening friendships, by vibrant worship, and by countless acts of service, generosity, and care. As we look toward the future, we do so not from a place of scarcity or uncertainty, but from a place of gratitude for all that God has already given.

Over the coming weeks, we invite you to spend time with these reflections and scriptures, allowing them to draw you more deeply into the heart of God. Together we will consider the many gifts we have received: the gift of faith, the gift of community, the gift of purpose, the gift of time, talent, and treasure, and above all the gift of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ.

May these reflections help you discover anew the abundance of God's grace and the joy of sharing that abundance with others.

Blessings on the journey,

The St. Thomas Stewardship Team

READ

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, [\[a\]](#) and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' " ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

REFLECT

John's Gospel begins with a sweeping vision of God's abundance. Before Jesus speaks a word, before he performs a miracle, John tells us who Christ is: the Word through whom all things were made, the light that shines in the darkness, full of grace and truth.

Notice where the story begins. Not with what we offer to God, but with what God has already given to us.

The Christian life begins not in scarcity, but in fullness. Every breath, every friendship, every act of mercy, every glimpse of beauty, every opportunity to love and serve is ultimately a gift. Above all, God has given us Jesus, revealing a love deeper and more generous than we could ever earn.

At St. Thomas, we have experienced this grace in tangible ways. Through worship, fellowship, faithful leadership, and God's steady guidance we have been reminded again and again that we are held by a loving and faithful God.

Our stewardship journey begins here. Not with obligation, but with gratitude. Not with what is lacking, but with what has already been received.

ASK

- Where have I experienced God's grace this year?
- What blessings in my life do I most often take for granted?
- How has God blessed me through the life of St. Thomas?

PRAY

Generous God, from your fullness we have received grace upon grace. Open our eyes to the gifts that surround us and fill our hearts with gratitude for all you have given. Amen.

READ

²⁵ Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life^[a]?

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

REFLECT

Jesus now turns our attention to one of the greatest obstacles to living from abundance: worry.

"Do not worry about your life," Jesus says. Looking around, we might wonder how such a thing is possible. There are bills to pay, responsibilities to meet, and an uncertain future ahead. Yet Jesus points us to the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. They do not manufacture their own security. They live by receiving the gifts God provides.

Jesus is not encouraging passivity or carelessness. Rather, he invites us to release the fear that there will never be enough. Worry narrows our vision. It convinces us that scarcity is the deepest truth about the world. Faith opens our eyes to a different reality: a loving God who knows our needs and remains faithful through every season.

As we continue our stewardship journey, we are invited to consider where fear may be shaping our decisions more than trust. God's abundance is not a promise that life will be easy. It is the assurance that whatever comes, we are held in the care of One who provides.

ASK

- Where does anxiety about the future most often show up in your life?
- How might God be inviting you to trust rather than worry?
- What gifts has God already provided that remind you of God's faithfulness?

PRAY

Faithful God, when fear and worry take hold, remind us of your constant care. Help us to trust that you know our needs and provide what is necessary for each day. Free us from anxiety so that we may live with gratitude, generosity, and confidence in your love. Amen.

READ

¹¹ On the way to Jerusalem Jesus^[a] was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he entered a village, ten men with a skin disease approached him. Keeping their distance, ¹³ they called out, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” ¹⁴ When he saw them, he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were made clean. ¹⁵ Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. ¹⁶ He prostrated himself at Jesus’s feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ Then Jesus asked, “Were not ten made clean? So where are the other nine?” ¹⁸ Did none of them return to give glory to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹ Then he said to him, “Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.”

REFLECT

As Jesus travels toward Jerusalem, he heals ten people suffering from leprosy. All ten receive the gift of healing, but only one returns to give thanks.

The story reminds us that gratitude is more than good manners. Gratitude changes how we see the world. When we pause to recognize God's gifts, we begin to notice abundance where we once saw only obligation, routine, or scarcity.

It is easy to focus on what remains undone, what we wish we had, or what lies beyond our reach. Yet the thankful Samaritan turns around. He takes time to recognize the blessing he has received and to offer praise to the One who gave it.

Stewardship grows from this same posture. Gratitude opens our eyes to God's generosity and helps us recognize that our lives, our relationships, our talents, and our resources are gifts entrusted to us.

ASK

- What gifts from God have you taken for granted?
- What are three blessings from this past week for which you are especially grateful?
- How might gratitude shape the way you use your time, talents, and resources?

PRAY

Gracious God, open our eyes to the countless gifts you have placed in our lives. Fill our hearts with gratitude and help us recognize your presence in both ordinary and extraordinary moments. Teach us to respond to your generosity with lives marked by thanksgiving and joy. Amen.

READ

⁶ The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not regretfully or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. ⁹ As it is written,

“He scatters abroad; he gives to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever.”

¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ^[c] ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us, ¹² for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. ¹³ Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your partnership with them and with all others, ¹⁴ while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

REFLECT

Paul reminds the church in Corinth that generosity is not about obligation or calculation. "God loves a cheerful giver." True generosity flows from a heart that trusts God and rejoices in God's goodness.

The world often teaches us to hold tightly to what we have. The Gospel teaches something different. God's blessings are not meant to stop with us; they are meant to flow through us.

When we give of our time, our gifts, our compassion, or our financial resources, we participate in God's work of blessing others. Generosity becomes less about the amount we offer and more about the posture of our hearts.

The remarkable promise in this passage is that God provides what we need so that we may continue sharing with others. Generosity is not about giving away what we cannot spare. It is about trusting that God can do more through open hands than through closed fists.

ASK

- What makes generosity joyful rather than burdensome?
- Where do you feel invited to share more freely?
- How has someone else's generosity blessed your life?

PRAY

Generous God, thank you for giving so much to us. Free us from fear and teach us the joy of sharing what we have received. May our lives reflect your love and become a blessing to others. Amen.

READ

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias.^[a] ² A large crowd kept following him because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. ³ Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. ⁵ When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. ⁷ Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." ⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, ⁹ "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" ¹⁰ Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place, so they sat down, about five thousand in all. ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." ¹³ So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets.

REFLECT

Faced with a hungry crowd, the disciples see a problem. A young boy offers five loaves and two fish. It does not seem like enough.

Yet Jesus takes what is offered, blesses it, and shares it. By the end of the meal, everyone has eaten their fill, and baskets of leftovers remain.

The miracle begins not with abundance but with willingness. Someone offers what they have. Jesus does the rest.

Many of us wonder whether our gifts are significant enough to matter. We look at our schedules, abilities, resources, or experience and think, "What difference could this make?"

The story answers that question clearly. In God's hands, ordinary offerings become extraordinary blessings. God does not ask us to provide everything that is needed. God asks us to bring what we have.

The ministry of St. Thomas is built upon countless offerings of loaves and fishes: prayers offered faithfully, meals shared, children taught, songs sung, newcomers welcomed, and gifts given in support of God's mission.

ASK

- What gifts do you have that may seem small or ordinary?
- How might God be inviting you to offer them?
- Where have you seen God multiply the efforts of a community?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, take the gifts we bring and use them for your purposes. Help us trust that what we offer in faith can become more than enough in your hands. Amen.

READ

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. ¹⁶ I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit ¹⁷ and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. ¹⁸ I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

REFLECT

As ingathering Sunday approaches and our stewardship journey comes to a close, we hear Paul offering a prayer rooted in confidence and hope. He reminds believers that God is able to accomplish "abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine."

Christian stewardship is ultimately about participating in that hopeful vision. We do not give because we are afraid. We do not serve because we are pressured. We respond because we trust that God is at work among us and that God's future is filled with possibility.

Throughout these weeks, we have reflected on abundance, trust, gratitude, generosity, and faithful offering. Together they point toward a larger truth: God's grace is always moving outward, creating new opportunities for love, growth, and transformation.

As we look toward the future of St. Thomas, we do so with confidence in God's faithfulness. The same God who has guided this community through past generations continues to call, equip, and sustain us today.

Our invitation is simple: to join in the work God is already doing, trusting that God's abundance will continue to bless this community and all those we are called to serve.

ASK

- Where do you see signs of hope in our church and community?
- How is God inviting you to participate in that future?
- What step of faith are you being called to take?

PRAY

God of abundant grace, thank you for all that you have given us. Strengthen our faith, deepen our gratitude, and fill us with hope for the future. May all that we are and all that we have be used for the glory of your kingdom. Amen.



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“The place God calls you to is the place
where your deep gladness and the world's
deep hunger meet.”— Frederick Buechner

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