



St. Thomas's News

Welcome to a brief update of news and topics of interest to members of the St. Thomas's faith community.

The Communications Team of St. Thomas's is happy to provide this printed update to those who may not be able to access our electronic communications channels.

January 2017



Chapter 22, Page 175 – Forward in Faith

“The place God calls you to be is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”

Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC

by Frederick Buechner

*“... and the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, **PATIENCE**, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.” Galatians 5:22-23*

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“Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient.” James 5:7-8

“So, when are you leaving?” I have been asked this question more than a few times over the past year. I am pretty sure they are asked mostly out of curiosity and not with the intent of **“So, why are you STILL here?”** I am pretty sure, so I will stick with this thought.

The answer is – **well, I am not leaving yet!** While more will be revealed as the days, weeks, and months of 2017 unfold, I can say with all surety not yet. Then I began reflecting on this month’s fruit of the spirit which is **PATIENCE**. Funny how that works sometimes, don’t you think? We have grown to be a **not real patient** people or society in our days of late. It seems all those open avenues of communications and life connections that pull and push us in directions **to take action, to do something, to do anything ... but what?** So I find myself sucked into the centrifugal force of **reacting** to life and events out in a future time and place I have no control over, rather than **responding** out of prayerfulness, being alert to people and events around me, and dwelling in **PATIENCE**.

I have found the work of the diocesan Standing Committee, of which I am a member, a great reminder of how **PATIENCE** works when I work with it. After Bishop Wright disclosed his intention of retirement in 2017, we soon met with a representative of the national church who basically gave us THE BOOK of all that needed to be done in this process. The analogy of having our mouth taped over the spigot of a fire hose was the reigning feeling of all the members. Then, **together**, we mapped out a tentative timeline, and began the work of inviting others to share in the process of leadership as Search and

Transition Committee members. We gathered all together in our organizing retreat to begin this work in July. Now we support the work each group is doing, waiting with **PATIENCE** most of the time as the work unfolds before us. While we have the date of ordination and consecration set for December 9 of this year, we are still very much waiting through the days and time in God's way, not ours. Trusting God, trusting the process, and staying where we are in this in-between time. Waiting, we pray, in **PATIENCE**.

In a recent meditation entitled **The Three Boxes**, Fr. Richard Rohr reflects on the invitation, although sometimes uncomfortable, of moving through a time of transition and the gifts that **PATIENCE** brings when we are faithful to the process ...

"Julian of Norwich writes, 'First the fall, and then the recovery from the fall, and both are the mercy of God.' Whenever we're led out of normalcy into sacred, open space, it's going to feel like suffering, because it is letting go of what we're used to. This is always painful at some level. But part of us has to die if we are ever to grow larger (John 12:24). The role of the prophet is to lead us into sacred space by deconstructing the old space while the role of the priest is to teach us how to live fruitfully in sacred space. The prophet disconnects us from the false, and the priest reconnects us to the real at ever larger levels. If priests have been largely unsuccessful, it is because there are so few prophets.

Think in terms of what I call "the three boxes": *order > disorder > reorder*. The first order, where we all begin, is a necessary first

"containment." But this structure is dangerous if we stay there too long. It is too small and self-serving. Initial "order" doesn't really know the full picture, but it thinks it does. Only in the final "reorder" stage can darkness and light coexist, can paradox be okay. We are finally at home in the only world that ever existed. This is true and contemplative knowing. Here death is a part of life, failure is a part of victory, and imperfection is included in perfection. Opposites collide and unite; everything belongs.

We dare not get rid of our pain before we have learned what disorder has to teach us. Most of religion gives answers too quickly, dismisses pain too easily, and seeks to be distracted—to maintain some ideal order. So we must resist the instant fix and acknowledge ourselves as beginners to be open to true transformation. How can a Christian look at the Crucified One and not get this essential point? The Resurrected Christ is the icon of the third box or reorder

There is no direct flight from order to reorder; you must go through disorder, which is surely why Jesus dramatically and shockingly endured it on the cross." From "Daily e-Meditations" by Fr. Richard Rohr; 12/6/16

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven ..." so writes the prophet in Ecclesiastes. We know our time together will be changing, ending in some ways but not in others. Together we can move through the Three Boxes. Together, we will move to a place and time of disorder to allow space and to see what has been, what is now, and

then to reorder in the ways we will go onward. Together, might we hold before us those words in front of the journals of Dag Hammarskjöld – **“For all that has been, THANK YOU! For all that we be and becoming, YES!”**

Together, with honored and deeply held **PATIENCE**, Love will lead us home. With gratefulness always, your servant in Christ
Fr. Paul+

Martin Luther King Sunday, Jan. 15: A Very Special Guest Preacher

Blessings in Grace to all this day! On the third Sunday of January, we remember nationally and spiritually the life and witness of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. On this day, I have invited Dr. Teri Quinn Gray as our preacher. Teri was born in Jackson, MS and raised in an extended hyper-functional family steered by a matriarchal regime of activists. Even though a cradle Episcopalian, Teri’s spiritual formation dipped from Southern Baptist and Nation of Islam to Buddhism and Hoodoo sometimes all congregating over a Quinn family supper on a Sunday evening. Yes, a lot of praying required just to get through the first course of the meal.

This childhood experience led to a very personal practice of the platinum rule – treat others as they want to be treated – and family directive to “be of consequence” in the world. Teri left Mississippi in the late-80s for graduate school in Maryland, married Bernard Carl Gray in 1990 followed by birth of their only son, Zhalen, in 1995, before fully transplanting to Delaware in the early 2000s. As of January 2015, Teri transferred from DuPont Crop Protection (after 17y) to DuPont Performance Materials as Technology Senior Manager leading cross-functional teams that span the USA, Canada, Mexico and Brazil. She

currently serves on the Board of Trustees at University of Delaware, recently the Board of Directors for the U.S. Education Delivery Institute, and founding chair of the American Chemical Society (ACS) Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Board. She holds a B.S. in Chemistry from Jackson State University; a PhD in Analytical Chemistry from the University of Maryland, and worked as National Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow at the National Institute of Standards & Technology prior to joining DuPont in 1997. Teri is President of the Delaware State Board of Education, appointed by Governor Jack Markell in 2009, and co-chair of the Delaware STEM Council since September of 2012. At St. Thomas’s, Teri has actively lived her faith, serving on Vestry, as People’s Warden, co-leader of our Confirmation Program, and a member of the Standing Committee and Disciplinary Board for the diocese.

Please join us for a very present and powerful witness on this Sunday, January 15, 2017 at the 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. services.

Grateful always, your servant in Christ,
Fr. Paul Gennett, Jr.+

Epiphany Night Potluck & Burning of the Greens

W.O.O.W. – The Feast of the Epiphany

The Feast of the Epiphany is celebrated on January 6, the twelfth night of the Christmas Season. At St. Thomas’s, we celebrate this principal feast day in a W.O.O.W. kind of way, which means Wildly Out Of Wonder! On this day, we remember We Three Kings from Orient are and their arrival at the stable of Bethlehem, led by the guiding star of the East, to worship the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in the baby Jesus. So, in following the wisdom of those three kings

and countless others in faith, it is good for us to do the same!

Our gathering was on Friday evening, January 6 in the Great Hall for a potluck supper. We began with Evening Prayer followed by supper. We gathered around the Christmas greens that have adorned the church in the parking lot and burnt them in a REALLY BIG FIRE to welcome the light of the Season of Epiphany.



Diocesan Prayer for 11th Bishop Search & Calling

In your Name, Lord Jesus, the community that is the Diocese of Delaware has been raised up and has flourished. We pray that in our day we as a Diocese may continue to be a sign of your presence in this State, a people devoted to You, and willing agents of your peace. In this time of transition as we seek a new bishop, help us to discern your will for us, to receive with joy and grace those who offer themselves to the election process, and to celebrate the episcopal ministry we have been given and that which is yet to come. Give us open and gracious hearts, patience with one another, and joy in anticipation. Lord Jesus Christ be with us in these days, as you are with us always, for You, with the Creator and the Holy Spirit, are one, Our God, now and forever. Amen.

175TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. THOMAS'S

St. Thomas's Parish was first organized on August 1, 1842—175 years ago in 2017.

This year-long birthday party recognizes our enduring ministry in Newark and our warmth as a parish of faithful people.

Watch The Carpenter's Helper and website for further details as the celebration develops.

Please contact Nicole Cebula, Laura Greene, or Tom Fairchild to learn more about our plans and how you can help.

Ways to Stay in Touch

In addition to the Google group mail list, keep in touch via St. Thomas's website at stthomasparish.org or via St. Thomas's Facebook page. To join our Facebook community, you can go to our web site at stthomasparish.org and click the Facebook ("F") link at the top right, log on to Facebook and like us. You can also go directly to Facebook, search for St. Thomas's Episcopal Parish just be sure to click that you like us! The weekly Carpenter's Helper and sermons are published via all three avenues. Please share our mail list, website and Facebook page with others who wish to keep in touch with St. Thomas's Parish.

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Office Hours:
Monday - Thursday
Church office hours 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.