

Triumph Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2022 | VOLUME 11

Local Relief Update

By Paula Harper

Let me introduce Belita Payne and tell you just one of the stories from our Local Relief Program. Belita is 47 years old and guardian of her granddaughter. She had worked for years as a careiver for an elderly lady who succumbed to cancer last year. Belita was left unemployed and unable to find a job. She soon found herself homeless. She and her granddaughter were accepted into a Social Services program, placed in a hotel and finally into a townhouse. One jobless month bled into another until she found herself owing a \$900 electric bill. When she finally got a job, she couldn't pay all the balance so she asked us for help before the disconnect notice caught up with her. Because she qualified for ARPA grant funds, we were able to pay \$400 and lead her to another local organization who pitched in the rest. (ARPA is an acronym for monies designated from congress in last year's stimulus package for those who were financially impacted by COVID. Monies are to be dispensed by local jurisdictions and we were awarded some of those funds last spring).

Belita was a feel-good story and was thoughtful enough to respond with a note of gratitude: "I truly want to say thank you. It was on my heart to send you this card. You've been there to help me in my time of need. I want to say God Bless You and Thank You again."



So far this year we have assisted about 130 neighbors: 52 with rent, 64 with utilities (we have restored water or power within 24 hours for about ten families who had been disconnected with just our pledge to pay down enough of the amount due with the utility and then mail a check). In total, we have dispersed \$7860 in ARPA monies and \$28,660 in church funds. Yet the calls still light up our phones every day. I bet you know someone like Belita. A major change in her life's routine sent her spiraling. Through the grace of God she sought help where it was available and managed to change her trajectory for the better. Yet she didn't ask you for help; she asked your church. Please help us keep on making change for others like her.

Why I Give to St Thomas Church

Reflection from Pastor Abi



Dear Friends & Members,

Do you remember an infomercial for the Hair Club for men?

James Whitman looked into the camera and said, “I’m not just the

President of the company...I’m a user.”

I’m blessed to be one of the pastors of St. Thomas Church. I really am.

But I’m not just a pastor. St. Thomas is my church too – it’s where I worship every week and where God empowers me to use my gifts for ministry.

Lacy and I participate in Sunday School. My teen volunteers with Sunbeam Children’s Center. And, every member of my family supports our church financially through tithes, offerings, and in-kind gifts for a variety of needs.

I don’t just pastor the church – I support the church by giving at least 10% of my income every month. Here are three reasons why I do this:

1. I want to be a good and faithful example to my son, Levi. Let’s face it – we’re living in pretty selfish times. We don’t have to teach kids how to be selfish. They just figure that out on their own! So I want to be a counter-cultural example to my child. Generosity is more than an attitude – it’s an action. I want him to know that I don’t just feel generous, when “the spirit” moves me, but that I actually give. Lacy models this example as his father too.

2. I believe in our mission. I believe we are uniquely called “to reach, nourish and serve the community

so all may experience healing and new life through Jesus Christ” — and that this mission is really, important. These aren’t just words on a website or on the wall when you enter the church building – they are a rally cry worthy of my attention. I want to show Jesus that I love him every way that I can because I know that he loves me too.

3. I want to make a difference. When I give to St. Thomas, I’m making a dent in eternity. You don’t have to be an insider to know that your donations make a difference. I encourage you to participate in our annual meeting (we Methodists call it a “Charge Conference” on Sunday, November 20 at 12:30 pm on the 3rd floor. We’ll share financial reports for 2022 as well as the projected budget for 2023 so you can see where the money goes.

These are just three reasons Lacy and I give to St. Thomas. I’d love to invite you to do the same. In fact, I’d love to encourage you to do what we do – set up an online profile with Elana Verosko, our Business Manger, and give automatically. It’s easy and secure.

Here’s a link to our online giving page where you can set it up or make changes:

<https://www.stthomasumc.org/giving>

You’ll also find an electronic copy of the 2023 pledge card and resources to determine your gift for the year ahead.

Grace upon grace,

Pastor Abi

P.S. If you ever have questions about the finances or want more information, just let me know.

What's Happening in Worship?

Return of Holy Communion

Beginning on Sunday, November 6, it is our intention to begin returning to some of our traditions and practices. The Worship Committee met on October 16 and agreed that we will begin to offer a bread station only as part of Holy Communion. For those who would like to receive the sacrament this way, the pastors will say, "This is the body of Christ given for you," as a portion of bread is broken off and handed to you. Juice will continue to be pre-portioned for everyone, plus some pre-portioned bread for those who feel more comfortable receiving the sacrament this way as we make this transition.

Passing the Offering Plate

Once Communion is re-established, we'd also like to return to having the Ushers pass the offering plates at 9:00 am during the Offertory. If you'd like to serve in this way as part of our Usher team, please don't hesitate to speak with either Deb Crawford, Chair of Worship, or Hunter Lenz, 9 AM Head Usher. Also, please don't be surprised if either Deb or Hunter taps you on the shoulder to assist on the day of worship.



*A few SCC students enjoying
the recent Pumpkin Patch !*



November Sermon Series

We often think of blessings as things we receive. While it is true that God, by grace, freely gives us all that we have, we are not just passive recipients of God's blessings! Just as God blesses us through people in our lives, so does God promise to bless others through us. When we live from a place of gratitude for God's gifts and trust in God's provision, we can be agents of God's blessing in our world. Join us from November 6 – 20 as we explore this year's stewardship series.

Week by Week

November 6: A Legacy of Blessings: "I Know Who I Am"

2 Corinthians 9:1-5

Through Jesus' gift of salvation we are called to live into our legacy of giving generously of the grace we have received. We will also celebrate All Saints Day and the saints from St. Thomas who have gone on to glory in the past year.

November 13: Blessed People Bless Others

2 Corinthians 9:6-10

All that we are and all that we have come from God. We are stewards through whom God is blessing the world. In honor of Veterans Day, we will also recognize those men and women from St. Thomas who have served in our armed forces through special music, prayer, and a reprise of the slide show from 2021.

November 20: Overflowing Blessings

2 Corinthians 9:11-15

What are the possibilities when you release the blessings you have been given and they overflow into the world?

October START Mission to New Bern, NC

On Sunday, October 2, the START team headed to New Bern, NC to continue rebuilding storm damaged homes in the area. Twenty people participated on this mission, including three former members who have moved away. For the third time, we stayed at the Baptists on Mission rebuilding center. It is an especially relaxing place with good food, comfortable beds, and warm showers. We were particularly appreciative of the warm welcome and support we received throughout the week from the staff.



We were excited to be working on a complete rebuild of a home that was destroyed beyond repair in the storm. The lady who lived in this home has been living with relatives since the storm hit in 2018. We were glad to be part of the effort to bring her home to a new house, which has been raised two feet to make it more resilient in future storms.

We began work on Monday morning at the homesite. A crew from the Quakers in NC had been there the previous week and completed the framing, sheathing, and roof underlayment quickly before Hurricane Ian. We have worked with this group before and consider them the best at what they do. When we arrived, we began where they left off by opening up all the window and door openings.

It was a busy week: assisting the roofer, working around plumbing and HVAC installers, prepping for sheathing inspection, wrapping the house in Tyvek, installing windows & doors and blocking the soffits and front porch. When we left, the house was ready

for our electricians from Manassas to come to do electrical rough in on Sunday and the next crew could start on siding.



All of the team members were very grateful for all the prayers and support we received from our congregation. We could feel your prayers and knew that we had your support. We also sincerely appreciate the financial support we received during our fund raising effort. Our church family is very special to us.

Any who might want to join us, please consider doing so. All skill levels are welcomed and we guarantee you will have a rewarding experience. We require only a willing servant's heart. We will help you find a way to contribute to the tasks in a significant and meaningful way. If you have any questions about participating in this mission, please contact Cliff Farrar at fcliff@hotmail.com or 703-881-8718.



Charge Conference

Sunday, Nov 20

Please join us at 12:30 pm for Charge Conference on the 3rd floor with special treats to mark the last day of the Christian calendar. We will celebrate a year of dynamic and vital ministry, vote on leadership and other key items, and pray for God's leading. All are invited to attend and give thanks for what God has accomplished through St Thomas in 2022. Please sign up on your Connect Card if you are planning to attend and if you would like a hard copy of this year's reports.

A Thanksgiving Feast For Our Neighbors in Need

Over the last two years, the St. Thomas Food Pantry has provided turkeys and items to make Thanksgiving dinner for over 1,000 families in our community. To be able to continue this tradition, we need food and financial donations, and volunteers — like you!

Our Thanksgiving distribution will take place on Saturday, November 19 from 9 – 11:30 am. It takes a village to raise a child, and it takes all of us to help our community. Reach out to the food pantry for ways you can help.

You can contact our Food Pantry Director, Jhenny Michalek, Jhenny.Michalek@stthomasumc.org, or at 703-626-1086. You can drop off food in the Narthex and please send your donations either to the church office or donate online:

stthomasumc.org/giving

(then click the hyperlink "donate online").

Thank you for your generosity!



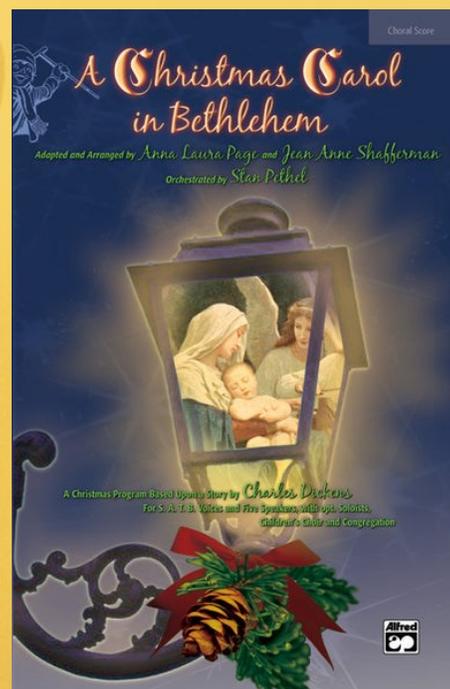
Music Ministry

Music ministries is planning a busy, worship-filled, advent season. We will start advent with a traditional "**Hanging of the Green**" service on Sunday, November 27 at 5:00 pm in the Sanctuary with all of our music ensembles. With multiple readers, we will dive deep into the meanings and purposes behind many of our wonderful holiday decorations and traditions. The service will conclude with a beautiful joint carol including our praise band, chancel choir, handbells, and youth choirs. It is sure to bring the holiday spirit and the reason for the season into our hearts as we begin our advent journey together.

On Sunday, December 11, our chancel choir will bring to worship "A Christmas Carol in Bethlehem." This wonderful cantata will complement Pastor Abi's sermon series on how Scrooge, like the innkeeper, had his heart changed by the magic and wonder of this season of coming and expectation.

If you have musical gifts to share and would like to participate in the cantata this year, please join the chancel choir on Tuesday nights in the Choir Room at 6:30 pm. All skill levels welcome!

All of us in music ministry look forward to seeing many new and familiar faces singing traditional carols over the coming weeks. Our Lord is coming, let us sing his praise!





News from the Kitchen

We are thankful for our many volunteers who give their time and talents in helping us on Tuesdays. Whether you are picking up curbside or dining in we couldn't do it without them.

Let's show our appreciation to them this month by saying thanks.

We are looking forward to our 22nd Christmas Day

Nov. 1

Beef Stew

Cheese Biscuit

Dessert: Peanut Butter Chocolate Cream Pie

Kid's Entrée: Cheese Pizza

Nov. 8

Caesar Salad

Orange Chicken

Rice Pilaf

Broccoli

Naan Bread

Dessert: Cherry Crumb Pie

Kid's Entrée: Same as Adults

Cookie of the Month:

Snickerdoodle

Nov. 15

Thanksgiving Feast

Roast Turkey

Mashed Potato/Gravy

Cornbread Stuffing

Green Beans

Rutabaga

Cranberry Sauce

Fresh Bread

Dessert: Pumpkin Pie

Kid's Entrée: Same as adult meal

Nov. 22

No Tuesday Night Dinner this week. Enjoy your Thanksgiving!

Nov. 29

Cole Slaw

Sweet Chili

Cornbread

Dessert: Fruit Jell-O

Kid's Entrée: Waffles & Sausage

Dinner next month. We would like to invite you to look at our board beginning November 15 and see if there is something you could donate to help us with that meal.

We just want to remind you that while we make every effort to serve the menu items listed each month there may be times when something is not available and we have to make a substitution.

Thanks for your understanding.

Meet Our Newest Members



Welcome to Steve Clendenin (pictured left with Pastor Abi) who joined on Sunday, September 18 and to Dr. Jan Chambers and her husband, Godfrey Ebuchulam (pictured right), who joined on Sunday, October 16. If you see Steve, Jan or Godfrey on Sunday in worship or Tuesday for dinners, please extend a warm welcome!





CALLING ALL FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS!

New and old, whether you come in to help, send in donations, pick up food, help by collecting grocery bags, if you volunteer every week, or only joined us once, we want to thank you for your efforts. Join us for lunch and festivities:

**Sat. Nov. 12
12 – 3 pm**

In the Fellowship Hall

Please RSVP to:
Jhenny.Michalek@stthomasumc.org
or text her, 703-626-1086, so we prepare enough food for all!



Older, Wiser, Livelier Seniors (OWLS)

On October 28, 18 OWLS traveled to Syria, VA to Graves Mountain Farm and Lodge for a wonderful fried chicken dinner. The dinner, and all the fixings, was served family style with the familiar words, “pass the ----” heard many times around the table. It gave a whole new meaning to church family. The trip, with the beautiful fall foliage, added to the enjoyment of the day. We will definitely be putting this on our “must do again” list.



Because the 4th Friday in November is the day after Thanksgiving, our November outing will be

on Friday, November 18. We will be dining at Tortino Mare Italian Restaurant at 120 Kent Village Square in Manassas Park. We have dined there once before, and everyone loved the food and the quaint Italian décor. Please RSVP to Marian Ludlow (571-351-6881) or Lynn Furlong (703-499-0243) by Wednesday, November 16. We hope to see you there.

SAVE THE DATE:

December 16: We will be going to Bull Run Park to drive through the Christmas light display. We will stop for dinner after we drive through the park. Please watch the newsletter and bulletin for more details.

January 27, 2023: Our first outing of the new year will be to an “old favorite” Bella Vita Italian Restaurant on Liberia Ave. More details to follow.

United Women in Faith

49th Annual Holiday Bazaar

Thank you for supporting our Annual Holiday Bazaar on October 14! It was a wonderful day and we expect that we will have over \$8,000 to donate to support local and international missions including CareNet, ARC of Greater Prince William, Rising Hope UMC, our own Food Pantry and several Missionaries.

Carolyn Clouse is busy making her famous Peanut Brittle; watch for an announcement on how to order for delivery dates before Thanksgiving and before Christmas. We still have White House Ornaments available for sale at \$24 each. Contact the church office.

Annual UMW Christmas Party

Save the Date: Friday, December 2nd for our annual Christmas Party. This year the party will be Friday afternoon, beginning at 1pm, upstairs in Room 300. Please bring a luncheon dish to share. As you start thinking about the Gift Exchange, this year, we are requesting that the gifts do not include food or items with a scent. Items should have a value of \$15 to \$20.

Trunk or Treat 2022

The Children's Ministry closed out October by joining with the Youth and Front Poarch Ministry to host an exciting Trunk or Treat event. We had 1,094 people and 14 dogs attend! Thank you so much to all of those who helped make the event a success.

The children had a great time and we served the community with an evening to remember.



We have wrapped up our pirate themed "Choose Your Own Adventure" Sunday School curriculum and are moving on to "Plate It" for November. This new series is all about how Kids love to be in the kitchen. They may even love helping prepare something delicious! Having a plan or a recipe usually helps, too.

Just like having a plan in the kitchen helps the meal we hope to enjoy, the stories of the Old Testament prophets are like a cookbook that helped people prepare for the Savior that God would send one day. Even though there's no exact recipe, kids will find that they can prepare themselves for a loving relationship with God when they 1) trust God, 2) talk to God, 3) listen to God, and 4) leave the results to God.



The Tweens had a fantastic gathering for October. We ran the UWF bake sale for the annual Holiday Bazaar!



The kids enjoyed taking orders, making change and conversing with their customers. Our lesson focused on stewardship and service. We also enjoyed a delicious dinner prepared by Frank Priest for the UWF. Thank you to all of the tweens who helped and thank you to the UWF for such a good opportunity to serve. Our next event is on November 11. Since it falls on Veteran's Day, we will focus on honoring veterans. All 3rd-5th graders are welcome to join.

We are looking forward to the upcoming Advent season, starting with the Hanging of the Greens service, paired with our family night on November 27th from 5:00-7:00

p.m. After the service, individuals and families can enjoy dinner, and complete Advent crafts and activities. Doug from the Flower Gallery will also lead us in making our own fresh advent wreaths or Christmas centerpieces. We hope to see you there!

SAVE THE DATE

Nov 11 - Tweens - 6:30-8:00

Nov 27 - Hanging of the Greens/Family Advent Night - 5-7

Dec 24 - Children's Christmas Pageant - 5pm

Dec 25 - NO Sunday School, Children's Church, or Children's Choir Practice



THE PACK

ST. THOMAS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Student Ministry

By Pastor Arum

Our Student Ministry is going well! Our Youth Band welcomed a new member, Jack Bailey. It's good to have new friends on our Fun Day on the second Sunday of the month. During our Small Groups Day, we talked about how to better love and serve one another and so we can be BFF to each other.



Twelve of our students helped with the Trunk or Treat event as the mission project of the month. Check out the photos on the Trunk or Treat page and try to figure out who is who with the costume!

Here is upcoming schedule. PACK is joining in the Youth Ministry Cohort Fall Retreat on the first weekend of November. Youth Groups in UM Churches in the Northern Virginia District (St Thomas, Annandale, Fairfax, Christ-Crossman and others) will get together for worship, fellowship and fun! Therefore, there will be no PACK AM (Sunday School) and PACK Night on Nov 6th.

The second Sunday of the month is always a good day when the students bring their friends. Both the student and their new friend will receive a gift certificate for an ice cream at Nathan's. This month, Laser Tag is coming to our church parking lot! How exciting!

There are so many upcoming special events as we close to the end of the year. Please mark these on your calendar so you won't miss these opportunities of mission, service and fun fellowship!

- November 4 (Fri) – 6 (Sun): Youth Ministry Cohort Fall Retreat in SkyCroft Conference Center
- November 6 (1st Sun): NO PACK AM & Night as we participate in the Fall Retreat
- November 13 (2nd Sun): Fun Day with Laser Tag at church! Invite your friends!
- November 20 (3rd Sun): Small Group Day - Friendsgiving
- November 27 (4th Sun): Mission Day
We are helping with the Family Advent Night at 5 – 7 PM as the mission project of the month.
- December 4 (1st Sun): PACK Worship Day
- December 10 (Sat): Living Nativity 5 – 8 PM
- December 11 (2nd Sun): PACK Christmas Party.
(If it rains on 10th, so we have the Living Nativity on the 11th we then have our Christmas Party on the 10th. We basically switch the date.)
- December 18 (3rd Sun): Breakfast with Santa at 10 – 11 AM & 12 – 1 PM

Finally, if you have any questions about the Student Ministry and would like to know how to support the Student Ministry, please feel free to contact Pastor Arum at arum.kim@stthomasumc.org or 571-438-3953 (cell).

Mission Extravaganza

Mission Extravaganza has wrapped up and we want to express our appreciation for all that participated. You have blessed many in our community and beyond. UVA Cancer Center, Manassas Health and Rehab, Little Dresses for Africa, our Angel Shop, victims of natural disasters, our Community Clothing Closet and the homeless of our community will be delighted with your contributions. We collected 74 Chemo Kits, 60 Blessing Bags, 31 No Sew Blankets, 36 No Sew Scarves, 4 Flood Buckets, 77 Packages of Socks for Socktober, 64 Pillow Case Dresses and 60 Thinking of You Cards

Thanks to everyone!!!



St. Thomas UMC

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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

November Church Events

- Nov 4 Memorial Service for Jocile Johnson
- Nov 8 Dorcas Circle 1:00pm
- Nov 13 Taste of St. Thomas, 12:15 pm
- Nov 20 Charge Conference, 12:30 pm
- Nov. 22 Church Council, 7 pm (Tuesday Night)
- Nov 24 Thanksgiving Day, Office Closed
- Nov 25 Office Closed
- Nov 27 Hanging of the Green Service and Family Advent Night, 5 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Jane Amstutz Hank Heuser	3	4 Jerry Haase	5 Amanda Hoxworth
6 Debbie Barnard Kennedy Alexander	7	8 Kimberly McGregor	9 Joe Workman Ed Cramer	10	11 Daniel Ometz	12
13 Alicia Hamilton Bryant Alexander	14 Janel Weed	15 Comfort Adjei	16	17	18 Dick Crompton Jill Guice Marcus Groenig	19
20	21	22 Theresa Thompson Jeff Thornton	23	24 Lee Becker Nailey Norman	25	26 Brenda Farrar
27 Karen King	28 Tammy Fick Jeff Barlow Cindy Enke	29 Steve Verosko	30 Nick Kinnear	November Birthdays		