

Triumph Newsletter

JANUARY 2020

Drive Thru Living Nativity

It was a cold, dark night...lit with the welcoming lights of the St Thomas Drive-thru Living Nativity! After a touch-and-go day of drizzle, rain and, finally, clearing, the sets were ready to go, luminaries were lighted, actors were dressed and food was laid out. The show did go on and the community was the better for it. There were a number of "thank you"s, and not just for the candy canes being given out at the entrance! Carolers from Osbourne Park HS took their turn in the Caroler's Hut and there were *live* animals – sheep, donkey and goat.

The mood was set early as all participants met in the church sanctuary for a prayer of praise and thanksgiving and a reminder of what it was that we were really doing that night. As cars drove through, approximately 600 people viewed the story of Jesus' birth. As our gift to the community, we can all pray that we have touched some hearts to seek Jesus in the days to come. Thank you to all who participated in one fashion or another – roles are too many to list!

You may view more pictures on the church website at

<https://www.stthomasumc.org/who-we-are/photo-gallery.html>





From the Senior Pastor

When I was a teenager in the 1980s, I spent many afternoons making mixtapes for my friends. For those born in this century, a mixtape is a compilation of favorite pieces of music, typically by different artists, and then recorded onto a cassette tape (like the one pictured here on the right). Most of my mixtapes had a theme or a concept that would drive the music chosen and then shared. *Thriller* could easily find itself alongside tracks like *Papa Don't Preach* and *Sunday Bloody Sunday*. Nowadays, folks no longer make mixtapes but instead they create playlists on Spotify, itunes, and the like.

Playlists are great because they enable you to customize your content so specific songs or genres play when you want them to. There are both standard playlists and smart playlists. Standard playlists are lists of music that you create manually by placing specific songs in the playlist (like the mixtapes of yesteryear). Smart playlists are created by iTunes based on criteria you select. For example, I might select country music, or top 20 Christian artists and then iTunes will pull appropriate music into the smart list. Either way, this process is similar to what churches and those seeking to find a church go through these days when trying to live fully into their identity within the community.

Let me explain. As a church, we've said our playlist will include ministries that "reach, nourish, and serve" the community. This means we've made choices about what's important to us as a community of faith. I imagine those in our community who are seeking a church will gravitate towards St. Thomas if their "smart playlist" includes characteristics and criteria that resonate with these priorities we've identified as our unique calling as well. Folks who feel most comfortable at St. Thomas will naturally want to "reach, nourish, and serve" the community too. This is what it means to have a cohesive playlist. Our playlist as a church should have multiple, but related genres. Each track doesn't have



to seamlessly blend into the next, but what we don't want is a Death Grips track playing directly after Beyonce! Our ministry choices within our playlist must make sense.

This January in worship we'll be exploring our Playlist and where our mission is leading us to prioritize and make choices. I hope you can join in the fun! In the meantime, I invite you to begin thinking about the sound track for each of our core callings. What music might amplify what it means to reach our neighbors? Are there songs that come to mind? I'm hoping we can build a playlist together that we can also share on social media – songs that inspire us to reach, nourish and serve the community. May our feet start tapping, our souls start soaring, and our songs start praising God that all might experience healing and new life through Jesus Christ!

Key Dates for 2020 Leadership

Tuesday, January 14, 6:30 to 7:30pm

St. Thomas Leadership Orientation for leaders and committee members to cover scheduling, budget, reimbursement communication timelines, etc.

Saturday, January 18, 8:00am to 3:00pm

Bi-District Training Day at Floris UMC in Herndon. The theme is, "Diversity in Church: On Earth as it Is in Heaven" and cost (\$60) covers: keynote presentation, 40+ workshops, networking, Committee Chair training, & lunch. To register go to: novaumc.org.

St. Thomas Serving the Community at Christmas

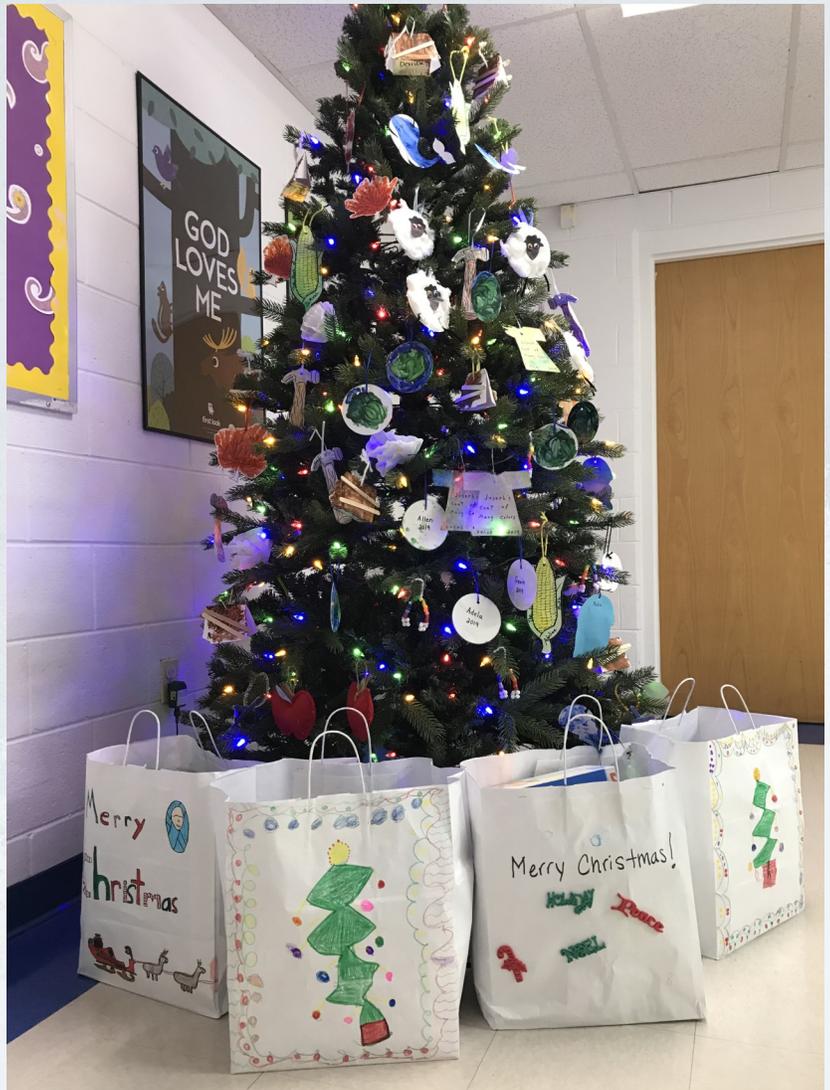
Many thanks to all who took the time to participate and give generously during the Christmas season!

In addition to the major projects (Advent Bags, Un-Trim-A-Tree & A Senior Christmas), the Missions Committee provided gifts for 40 children at Loch Lomond Elementary through the Angel Shop! Each year the office also receives last minute requests and this year, with help from the DAR Toy Drive, The Nativity of Our Lord Orthodox Church donation of hats, mittens and scarves, and excess from the Angel Shop, we were able to address all the needs and provide gifts for 6 more families with over 20 children.

Finally, our Food Pantry provides food throughout the year but this is especially important over the holidays. Because our Food Pantry is well-regarded in the community, we received three major gifts - \$350 from The Manassas Men's Club and the bounty from food drives at the VFW and Duvall Wheeler CPAs. This is all possible through your ongoing support of our missions with your time and financial resources. Thank You!



A Senior Christmas: We provided gifts for 106 residents at Manassas Health & Rehab



Advent Mission Bags: This year we collected 36 bags of food from our King's Kids and Sunbeam families. The bags will be distributed on Saturday mornings at the Food Pantry.



Un-Trim-A-Tree: Gifts for 55 children in 20 families in Prince William County.

Theme for this Year's Lenten Devotional

"A Mile in My Shoes: Cultivating Compassion"

This year, we will be exploring the idea of a *Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope* that leads to a greater practice of compassion with those who are suffering in our county and in our community. Our Lenten Devotional will be shaped by three distinct movements:

Encountering Those Who Suffer – When and where have you encountered someone who is suffering? Through your story and personal experiences, help us to identify where the pain is in our community.

Reflection on What the Scriptures Say about Those Who Suffer -- What has God said about suffering and the specific situations you have identified in our community.

The gift of Transformation as We Become More Christ-like in Our Response. How have you been transformed because you've opened yourself up to those who are hurting, in pain, or are suffering in some way?

All of these core questions will be framed by a deeper understanding of stewardship of our lives and resources. Ultimately, how is God calling us to cultivate deeper compassion for others as we learn to walk a mile in someone else's shoes?

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which is Wednesday, February 26 this year. While we recognize that we are still just moving through the 12 Days of Christmas... it is not too early to be thinking and praying about what God might be nudging you to share in this year's Lenten Devotional.

If you are interested in penning a daily devotional, please let us know in worship on your Connect Card and the editorial team will be in contact with you about pertinent details and format. Your devotional article will be due by Sunday, February 9 so there is enough time to prepare the complete Devotional for our congregation. Thank you in advance!

News from the Kitchen

It was fabulous to have our annual Christmas feast on Dec. 17th; a fun night of fellowship. We've enjoyed serving you this year and look forward to seeing you and serving you in 2020. Our first dinner will be on January 14th.

Just a reminder as we begin the new year that if your group needs any supplies from the kitchen there is a form in the workroom to fill out. Please use this as it helps us have your supplies on hand when you need them.

Our menus for January are as follows:

January 14th

Beef Stroganoff with Noodles
Carrots
Salad
Apple Cake

January 21st

Caesar Salad
Baked Ziti
Vegetable
Bubble Bread
Cannoli

January 28th

Turkey a la King
Rice
Peas and Carrots
Fresh Bread
Pumpkin Pie

Please accept our great big thank you for your donations to the Christmas Day Dinner. As I write this we are still in the prepping stage for the dinner. We have several people awaiting the turkeys they are going to bake, others making the cookies, brownies and desserts to share. We have several helpers with their peelers ready for peeling potatoes on Dec. 24. Read on for the results of all this hard work!

Christmas Day Dinner 2019...

... was a joyous time as we shared a delicious meal with family, friends, and made new friends. We started the day by packaging and delivering 576 meals to first responders, hospitals and shut-ins, then welcomed 387 for dinner together in the Fellowship Hall. Serving 963 people is no small task so we are grateful for the generosity of our church family in donating items for the dinner, helping with prep, baking turkeys, delivering food, serving, and cleaning up. Special thanks go to our chef, Frank, for a delicious meal and leadership. Much gratitude to Connie for overseeing a record number of to-go dinner deliveries. We look forward to doing this again on Christmas Day in 2020!



Older, Wiser, Livelier Seniors



On Friday, December 20, the OWLS traveled to DC see the National Christmas tree on the Elipse, then on to the Capitol to see the tree on the lawn. The evening was pretty chilly (33 degrees!) so on the way home we warmed up at Bonefish Grill in Centreville. Lots of fun and laughter. Stay tuned for our January gathering!



Student Ministry

THE PACK AM MEETS SUNDAYS AT 9:40 am in Room 305. Students 6th-12th grade are invited to join us as we journey together through "The Gospel Project," God's redemptive story for mankind.

UPCOMING PACK MEETINGS

January 21: Pack Meeting

January 24-25: Bi-District Bowling Lock-In @ Chantilly Bowl America. All teens 6th-12th Grade welcome to join! This event starts off at St. Thomas with games and worship with other churches in our district. Then we'll head to Bowl America for all night bowling! Register with Caleb by January 12.

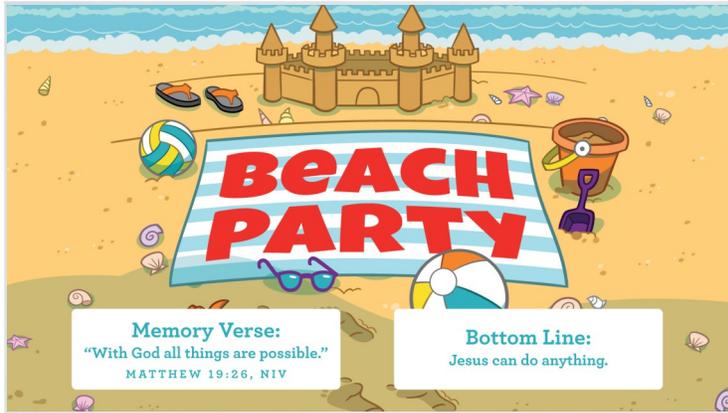
Pack Christmas Party: We had a great time in December celebrating Christmas with a meal, cookie decorating, and a sock gift exchange!



Kids' Christmas Service

There were 188 in attendance at the 9:40am service on Sunday, December 22 to see the play, *Bethlehem Bound*. Thank you to our Kids Choir, Angels, Wise Men, Shepherds, teens, and adults for all their hard work to bring this special message!





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

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT STUMC:

PRESCHOOL-Beach Party

It's time for a Beach Party—sand, sun, and a whole lot of fun! Jesus spent a great deal of time on or near the beach. In fact, He performed MANY miracles near the water. So, the beach is the perfect environment for our preschoolers to learn that Jesus can do anything.

In December, our preschoolers learned that God gave us Jesus, and now they will learn that because Jesus is God's Son, He can do anything! With God all things are possible! Throughout their lives, children will encounter things they can't do. But, in Jesus, they have a friend who can do it all. There is no better friend than Jesus, and He wants to be our friend forever.



ELEMENTARY—The Big Quiz

God is the author of knowledge. Everything we know to be true about the world is because of God. God is the most important Person to know. And while we may never know all there is to know about God, God gives us lots of ways we can know Him. We can know Him best through Jesus, who showed us how much God loves us. We can pursue knowing more about God through Jesus, who showed why knowledge is so important. The more we know God, the better we can live His way each day. **Bottom Line:** Knowledge - Learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do. **MEMORY VERSE:** "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." Proverbs 2:6, NIV



Nursery, 0-2 years old:

Provided during all three worship services from 8:00 am—12:15 pm.

SUNDAY SCHOOL @ 9:40 am



**Preschool Kids,
Room 107**



**Elementary Kids,
Worship Center**



KIDS CHURCH @ 11:00 am 3 years old-2nd Grade

Following the Children's Message in the Sanctuary, kids are escorted to the Nursery for age appropriate worship through music, a Bible story, and play.



KIDS CARE 2 for Tweens!

Next Tween Meeting is Friday January 10, 6pm-8pm. All 3rd-5th Graders are invited to this month's gathering in the Children's Worship Center. We'll be talking about taking care of animals with guest speakers and making bird feeders. Every month we gather for food, fun, faith, and a hands on service project. Plan to join us this month and bring a friend!



Operation Bearhug Coming Soon!

This is our 20th year. Please bring new bears to the Sanctuary on Feb 2nd and 9th. Bears will be tagged with our church information and delivered to Prince William Hospital and Manassas Health and Rehab. Thank you for your continued support. Any questions, contact Cathy Campbell, 703-369-3220 or ssteechur@yahoo.com.



Sunbeam Children's Center

Preschool Registration for the 2020-2021 school year begins January 2, 2020 for children currently enrolled and their siblings. For church members and regular attendees registration begins January 8th and then it will open to the public on January 15th. You will need to submit the completed registration form along with a \$100.00 non-refundable registration fee. You can find all the registration forms needed in the Sunbeam Children's Center front office or online at our website. In February, look for information on 2020 Summer Camps for kids age 6-12. The staff of Sunbeam Children's Center looks forward to another fun summer and a rewarding 2020-2021 school year!



St. Thomas
United Methodist Church

8899 Sudley Road, Manassas,

Rev. Abi Foerster, Senior 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

January Events

- Jan 1 New Year's Day
- Jan 5 DC Homeless Mission
- Jan 8 Pre-school Registration Begins
- Jan 14 2020 Leadership Orientation
- Jan 15 February Newsletter Deadline
- Jan 18 Bi-District Training Day
- Jan 24 Youth Bowling Lock-In (This year we are hosting the pre-Bowling Gathering for the Alexandria & Arlington Districts!)
- Jan 31 Confirmation Retreat

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January Birthdays			1	2 Ron Weber	3	4 Chloe Izzo
5	6	7 Jamison Weed	8 David Ometz	9 Sherry Mootz Paul Davis	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	28 Samantha Sallada	29 Matthew Hammack	30 John Duffy	31 Kristi Swanson	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January Event Calendar			1 New Year's Day Church Office Closed	2	3 9:30am CareGiver Support Group 7:00pm Media Circle	4 11:00am DAR Meeting
			5 5:00pm DC Homeless Mission	6	7 5:30pm The PACK 7:15pm Trustees Stewardship Congregational Care	8
12	13 7:00pm Life After Miscarriage, START Meeting	14 6:30pm Leadership 2020 Orientation 7:15 pm Finance, Communications, Evangelism, Children & Youth Council	15 Newsletter Deadline	16	17	18 8:00am Bi-District Training Day, USDA Distribution 11:00am Memory Café
19	20	21 4:00pm Worship Arts 7:15pm Missions, SPRC	22	23	24 9:00pm Youth Bi-District Bowling Lock-In	25
26	27	28 7:15pm Church Council	29	30	31 5:00pm Bi-District Confirmation Retreat	
Weekly Schedule (subject to change due to holidays or other events – check with your coordinator)						
12:15pm JNS Rehearsal	7:30pm St Thom Cats	5:30pm Dinner 6:00pm Kidz Rock Choir 6:30pm Worship 7:15pm Praise Band 8:00pm AA Meeting	10:00am Quilts for Kids 6:45pm Chancel Choir	9:00am Classical Conversations 7:30pm Handbell Choir 8:00pm AA Meeting	9:30am Young Mom's Group	8:00am Ladies Emmaus Group 8:00am Men's Breakfast Group 9:00am Food Pantry