



St. Thomas

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DISCOVER TRUE COMMUNITY



Barbara Bowles and Andy Aspinwall enjoyed Bunco and the luck of the Irish on March 14.

Spring Vestry Retreat: Discerning the Way Forward

The Rev. Bob Goolsby, Rector



In February, the Vestry gathered for our annual Spring Retreat—a day set apart for prayer, reflection, and discernment about

where God is leading us. The retreat invited us to step back from the pace of daily ministry and listen for the movement of the Holy Spirit among us.

We began with Morning Prayer, centering ourselves in worship and scripture. Next, we revisited the heart of who we are as a parish—our core values, mission, and vision. We remain committed to welcoming all people, cultivating genuine community, offering excellence in worship, and extending compassion to those in need. These values are the foundation of our common life and the lens through which we make decisions.

A highlight of the retreat was our time with Bishop Chip Stokes, who graciously co-led the day. His wisdom, pastoral insight, and encouragement helped guide our conversations and deepen our understanding of faithful leadership. We are truly grateful for his presence and partnership. Bishop Stokes engaged the Vestry in thoughtful conversation about our identity and future. Using a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), we reflected honestly

on where we are as a parish and where God may be calling us to grow. These conversations were both energizing and grounding, reminding us that faithful leadership requires both courage and humility.

We also spent time learning about vestry leadership and congregational dynamics—an important part of strengthening our ability to lead a growing and changing community. At the heart of it all was a shared commitment: to be disciples of Jesus Christ, and to lead in a way that reflects that calling.

The culmination of the retreat was the discernment of three key priorities for St. Thomas in 2026. These priorities will help shape our ministry in the coming year and guide our decisions while we grow as a vibrant, inviting, and transformative community of faith.

We left the retreat grounded in prayer, unified in purpose, and hopeful about the future. God is at work among us, and we are excited to continue “living and proclaiming the love of Jesus Christ in a welcoming and authentic community.”

Please keep your Vestry in your prayers as we seek to lead faithfully in the year ahead.

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Dates to note

- Parish Life Mtg 4/1
- Outreach Mtg 4/2
- Maundy Thursday 4/2
- Good Friday 4/3
- Brotherhood Mtg 4/4
- Easter Sunday 4/5
- Assistance Ministry Mtg 4/6
- ECW Mtg 4/9
- St. Thomas Day 4/12
- Rummage Sale 4/17, 18

Make A Difference

You can make a difference by joining us as an usher. All three services are in need, with an emphasis on 8 and 11 a.m. Try it out next Sunday! Contact Tom Witherspoon at t_spoon1@bellsouth.net, or (954) 309-7836.

Behind The Scenes



Above: Jodi Bevel prepares M&M Containers for our Youth Fundraiser.



Above: It took a village of helpers to assemble nail necklaces for Lent.

Sr. Warden's Reflections

Charles Kreuz



On February 27th, Father Bob organized a Vestry Retreat for the newly formed 2026 Vestry team. Assisting Bishop, Chip Stokes, presided over

the retreat.

We spent roughly 6 hours with Bishop Stokes that Friday morning and afternoon. Although I had met and spoken with Bishop Stokes previously, I did not realize how articulate and inspirational he really is. More importantly, both by utilizing the focus groups he led and the workgroups he created, he motivated us to think! To think



about our purpose as Vestry members, to think about goals and objectives for the Vestry to facilitate over the coming year, and to think about our faith as members of St. Thomas. All in all, it was a very powerful and moving session that all members of the 2026 Vestry team agreed was an extraordinary and productive event.



Bishop Chip Stokes

Bishop Stokes advised us that the primary objective of the Vestry is not just to put people in the pews and money in the collection plates. It is primarily about spreading the Word of the Lord, and the ways of our Lord. Moreover, he encouraged us to read (and reread) the Baptismal Covenant, which I did. The Baptismal Covenant was not only timely, but relevant, as Jesus wanted to be baptized to mark the beginning of his ministry in a public way.

In closing, I would encourage all of you to read the Baptismal Covenant (found in the Book of Common Prayer). For me, two celebrant passages stand out in terms of my Faith and direction within the church; "Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?" and "Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?"

Blessings and Trust in the Lord.

Fiesta De Colores Saturday, May 16, 2026 5 – 9 PM

Location: St. Thomas Parish Hall.

Live music by guitarist Cesar Romero.

Beginner-friendly Salsa, Cha Cha, & Merengue instruction.

Dance music by DJ Music Master.

Themed basket raffles throughout the evening.

HUGE Fiesta Dinner Menu & Cash Bar.

Tickets \$50. Available on Sundays at the Church Office.

Proceeds benefit St. Thomas Episcopal Church

The poster features colorful Mexican folk art decorations, including a piñata, a sombrero, and a guitar.

Save These Dates For Fun Outreach Events

RED, WHITE & BLUE BUNCO

Saturday, May 30, Noon-4 p.m.

Tickets will be \$10, and include a light lunch, dessert, and loads of fun. We will also start our School Supplies and Backpacks drive for the 2026-2027 school year. Lunch will be served at Noon.

SUMMER BUNCO & LUNCH

Saturday, June 27, 2026

Tickets will be \$10 each, and we'll continue our school supply drive, using proceeds to purchase Backpacks to give to the children in our community. Lunch will be served at Noon.

INTERNATIONAL FOOD FESTIVAL

Saturday, June 6, 2026, 5-7 p.m.

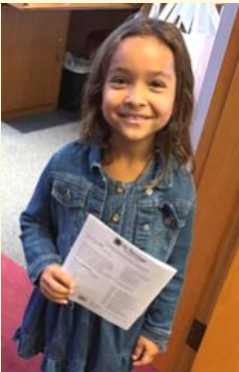
Everyone is invited to bring a treasured dish from their ancestral homeland. Tickets will be \$10, and proceeds will benefit our Sister Church, Todos Los Santos in Cuba.

CHARITY BAKE SALE

Sunday, July 19, 2026

Calling all St. Thomas Bakers! Make your special cakes, cookies, and pies for us to sell to purchase school supplies for the children in our Community!

If you have questions about any of these outreach events, please do not hesitate to contact an Outreach Ministry member.



Above: Youth Sunday - March 1, 2026

2 SERVICES ONLY!

St. Thomas Day Services & Lunch Sunday, April 12, 2026

Celebrated the Sunday after Easter, on April 12, when the Gospel features St. Thomas. Two services only at 8 and 10 a.m. followed by lunch in the Parish Hall. Tickets are available now.



**WE NEED EVERYONE'S HELP
THE WEEK OF APRIL 12-18.**

Donate household items, clothing, records, CDs, etc. There's a place for you to get involved! Sign up in the church lobby, and invite friends, neighbors, and relatives to join in. Help spread the word by sharing the [St. Thomas Rummage Sale Facebook EVENT](#). For more information, contact Fran Graham at 516-768-6281 or Cynthia Shannon at 404-539-7670.

St. Thomas Goes to St. Thomas



Join your fellow parishioners on a 7-Night Caribbean cruise to St. Thomas and Nassau, Bahamas aboard Royal Caribbean's Harmony of the Seas, departing January 9, 2027 and returning January 16. All are welcome – family, friends and acquaintances.

Call Royal Caribbean at 1-800-465-3595 to book your cruise with "St. Thomas goes to St. Thomas"
Group 9385727.

Member Milestones

April Anniversaries

- 5 - Raymond & Joy Hudson
- 7 - Kenneth & Sandra May
- 8 - Ben & Charlotte Lacy
- 12 - Paul & Althea Robinson
- 29 - John & Diane Hardos

April Birthdays

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 - Susan Anuszczyk | 12 - Jean Grant-Vazquez | 20 - Ana Gloria Eiseman |
| 2 - Leslie Elder | 12 - Kenneth May | 20 - Phyllis Kramer |
| 6 - Anne Williams | 14 - Jessie Brucculeri | 21 - Geni Witherspoon |
| 7 - Leon Kendrick | 16 - Sandra Malone | 22 - Helen Kolaitis |
| 7 - Althea Robinson | 17 - Judy Fields | 23 - Norma Daniels |
| 8 - Leila Hardison | 17 - Fran Graham | 24 - Daniel Bowman |
| 9 - Madeleine Mower | 19 - Theodora Redway-Samuels | 28 - Charles Kolaitis |
| 9 - Cassandra Parenteau | | 28 - Te'aira Wright |



The Wired Word, Adult study meets Saturday, April 11 at 10 a.m.

HOLY WEEK

PALM SUNDAY - MARCH 29

8 a.m. Rite I (Traditional Service, No Music)

9:15 a.m. Rite II (Contemporary Service with Band)

11 a.m. - Rite II (Traditional Service with Choir)

WEDNESDAY HEALING SERVICE

April 1, Noon Healing Service

MAUNDY THURSDAY - APRIL 2

6 p.m. - Maundy Thursday Service

GOOD FRIDAY - APRIL 3

Noon - Good Friday Service

6 p.m. - Stations of the Cross



Cut out or print and invite your neighbors!



Send submissions for the *St. Thomas Tidings* to karla@stechurch.org.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

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Palm Coast, Florida 32137

Phone: 386-446-2300

Email: info@stechurch.org

www.stechurch.org

Office Hours: Mon-Thurs, 9-3

Easter Sunday - April 5, 2026

8 AM - Traditional Service, No Music

9:15 AM - Contemporary Family Service With Band

Flowering Of The Cross (Children Decorate The Cross)

Easter Egg Hunt After The 9:15 AM Service

11 AM - Traditional Service With Organ, Choir, Incense

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