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St. Thomas Memorial Church

# Thomas Tract June 2026

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Rector's Message - by Fr.  
Jeff Murph



As probably most now know,  
I will retire as rector of St.  
Thomas Church in July of

this year. My last Sunday will be July 12, and I will spend the last couple weeks of the month emptying my office and sorting books and papers for the parish. (I will continue to serve as part time chaplain of UPMC St. Margaret and will continue to serve with the daycare/preschool for a time.) I intend to continue living in Oakmont.

Some, however, now may wonder what comes next for St. Thomas. First, I will continue to serve until my last Sunday. The Sundays after that will be led by Fr. Guy Brown and Fr. Dan Isadore and eventually by an interim rector chosen by the vestry. In the Episcopal Church, the process of discerning a new rector is not allowed to begin until after the retirement of the past one. A representative from the Diocese will meet with the vestry to discuss this process then.

The first step is for the congregation to enter into a process of prayer, self-study, assessment, examination and discernment of what kind of rector God might be calling for the future of St. Thomas Church. The vestry will make provision for this process to be open to every member of the parish who is willing to participate. From this process, important information about God's future mission of the church might be revealed as well as what kind of priest might be needed at this stage in the history of St. Thomas.

After this assessment process is completed then the vestry will form a search committee comprised of active members, probably around seven people. The vestry will likely try to include a cross-section of members for this committee, who will receive nominations or recommendations of priests for consideration. Anyone may nominate possible candidates for a period of time. The search committee then will measure the qualifications and gifts of these candidates with the results of the parish discernment about its future and begin to interview candidates who seem to be a good match for St. Thomas Church. They may travel to the parishes where these clergy are currently serving to hear them preach and to observe them lead worship.

Eventually, through prayer and discernment, the search committee will recommend a name to the vestry. If the priest under consideration is from outside the Diocese of Pittsburgh, then that person must obtain approval of the bishop. With that permission, the vestry, after prayer, makes a decision to ask the identified candidate to become the Eighteenth Rector of St. Thomas Church.

It is important to understand that God has already chosen the next rector of St. Thomas Church for the future he has for this wonderful parish. So now it is the work of the vestry and people to pray and to prepare for, to discern and to recognize the one whom God has called.

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[Annual Church Picnic and Bishop's Visit](#)



Preparations are already well underway in anticipation of St. Thomas' Annual Church Picnic. This year's event is expected to be extra enjoyable, as the June 7 celebration also coincides with our yearly visit from Bishop Ketlen Solak, who will confirm and receive seven people during the 10:30 morning service that day. She will also be passing out acolyte awards, to include Bishop medals to two of our upcoming high school seniors.

The picnic is hosted by the newest members of the St. Thomas Vestry, with additional help and food being offered by parishioners. If you haven't already done so, please consider signing up for food or help on the lists available in the Parish Hall.



### St. Thomas Receiving New Vestments & Linens

Early this year, the Altar Guild requested funds from the Book of Memory to purchase some new vestments and linens. Many items in our inventory need to be replaced, having been in use for a very long time. We were given permission from the Vestry to spend up to \$6500.

We are happy to report that we came in well under budget, spending just under \$5000.

We have ordered:



- a white chasuble and stole to match the white frontals and chalice veil/burse that we got last year
- a green chasuble, stole, frontals and chalice veil/burse
- 2 fair linens for the high altar and 2 fair linens for the free standing altar, all in easy care linen
- 1 credence table cover
- 2 purificators
- 2 lavabo towels
- 2 corporals

The smaller linens are all regular linen.

Delivery is expected in late June. Father Jeff was instrumental in helping us to make decisions about this purchase, so we are planning for him to do the blessing of it prior to his retirement.

by Laura Spisak, co-leader of the Altar Guild



## Family Visits Church 15 Years Later

Fifteen years after their wedding at St. Thomas, the O'Shea family came back to remember the moment, and show their children a part of their shared story.

Parishioner Toby Stilley recounted that Mr. John O'Shea came into the building recently and asked if his family could see the church. He, his wife Josie, and their three children were up from Tennessee visiting relatives. They had

been married by another pastor at St. Thomas 15 years ago, and always admired the beauty of the church.

It is always nice to meet people whose lives have been impacted in a positive way by St. Thomas and its parishioners. Just think of how many lives have been touched throughout its 150+ years, and how many lives will be blessed in the years to come.

## St. Thomas Kids Preschool Graduation

Five students of St. Thomas Kids Daycare and Preschool celebrated their graduation from the program last month (May 27). Friends and family of the children enjoyed a short program, treats and fun in the Parish Hall, which was decorated thoroughly for the event (see photos right and below).

The daycare and preschool opened in January last year, and has since become a highly rated, award winning daycare serving many families throughout Oakmont and the surrounding area.





## Upcoming Events/Services

- June 7 - Bishop Visit with Confirmations and Annual Parish Picnic (see article above)
- June 21 - Father's Day
- July 12 - Fr. Murph's Retirement Luncheon following the 10:30 service. Please RSVP via evite invitation or to the office at 412-828-9680.



## Courses/meetings being offered



released/

### St. Thomas regular events include:

- Bible Study - Tuesday mornings at 11 am.
  - Healing Service - Wednesday mornings at 10:00
  - Adult Education - Sunday mornings at 9:30
  - Men's Ministry and Women's Group meetings - as determined
- Beloved Community Initiative's upcoming events include:
- a Prayer and Share meeting on Jun 17 at 7 p.m. (link found at <https://www.episcopalpgh.org/prayer-share/>)
  - Sacred Ground Small Groups - the schedule can be found at: <https://www.episcopalpgh.org/sacred-ground-schedule->

## June Birthdays

5 - John Pierce  
 11 - Cheryl Doerfler  
 14 - Mark McClelland, Jr.  
 17 - Paul Dozzi  
 18 - Lawrence Miguez  
 19 - Kristin Brown  
 19 - Coleen Middlemas  
 22 - Theresa McClain  
 24 - Chase Eber  
 25 - Alex Mysels  
 25 - Allison Pierce  
 26 - June Ferguson  
 27 - Kayla Almada  
 27 - Jill Fusaro

## June Anniversaries

1 - George & Mary Lee McClelland  
 2 - Josue & Laurel Almada  
 5 - Henry & Jill Luck  
 14 - Curt & Catherine Coulter  
 14 - Burt & Louise Lugar  
 16 - Fred & Cheryl Doerfler  
 26 - Ted & Shahnaz Denlinger  
 26 - Brad & Andrea Krushinski

**28 - Emily DiMascio**

\*\* If you aren't already on our Birthday and/or Anniversary list, please contact Laurel Almada at the office (sttomoakmont@gmail.com or 412-828-9680) and she will be happy to add you in!



St. Thomas Memorial Church |  
[[www.st-tom.org](http://www.st-tom.org)]



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