

THE SAINT THOMAS Voice

Fall 2011

St. Thomas
Episcopal Church
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS



www.StThomasBCS.org

Dive in!

Don't tell my dermatologist, but I've spent a lot of time this summer at various swimming pools not always slathered in sun screen! I know I'll be sorry one day, but in the mean time I have enjoyed not having skin that is so white it glows in the dark! With or without sunscreen, a day in the waters of a swimming pool, or lake, or the ocean is about the most refreshing thing to do especially in these hot humid days.

Summertime and water are almost synonymous. We worry about the lack of rain, our sky high water bills. We head to beaches and swimming pools to try and cool off. Water is, at the very least, refreshing and water is critical to our survival. And water is fundamental to our life of faith as well.

In our baptism services the importance of water is obvious. We pour water on the candidate as a symbol of cleansing and as a symbol of both life and death. You can't live without water, and too much water can kill. In baptism, we pass symbolically from the death of our old way of life into new life with Christ. Our old life is washed away and our new life is freely bestowed upon us by our loving God.

But even at services in which we are not celebrating a baptism, water plays an important role. At the altar, when a priest or deacon prepares the table for Communion, she or he pours a bit of water into the chalice of wine. The water reminds us of our own baptism, the promises made and the identity forever given to us in that sacrament. The sacrament of baptism is so central to our understanding of our life with God that this reference is made every time we gather. The water

poured into the chalice also connects us to the passage in the Gospel of John in which it is recorded that water flowed from Jesus' side at the time of his death on the cross. God's willingness to go to such extraordinary lengths to love us is also something of which we must be reminded often.

The waters of St. Thomas are ready for you!

So with water being such an integral part of our lives both inside and outside of church, our theme for this year's fall kick off is "Dive Into St. Thomas!" Sunday August 28th we will celebrate all the ministries of this remarkable parish. From the Altar Guild to the Youth Group, the Early Learning Center to the Church Pantry, everything that St. Thomas offers to our parish and to the wider community we offer because we are children of God washed in the waters of baptism. Ministry Fair Sunday will be your opportunity to learn about, sign up for, and participate in any or all of the ministries, events, and activities of St. Thomas.

So fix a glass of ice cold water, read this newsletter carefully, and dive into St. Thomas! May we always be grateful for the water we enjoy, and for the Living Water we worship.

Love,

Rhoda

The Rev. Rhoda S. Montgomery, D. Min.

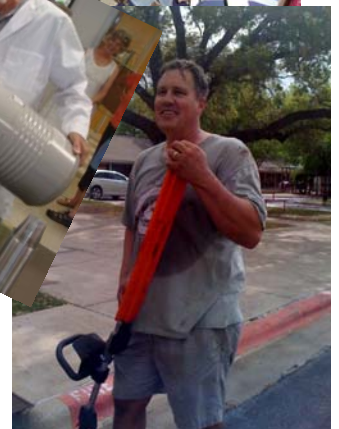
Sunday, August 28th, 9-Noon

Come visit, splash in the water, share food, and join (or re-join) any and all the ministries you are interested in.



Splash into Fall

There are numerous ways to participate at St. Thomas and the Fall is a great time to join any group you are interested in. You can always join at a later month too, however, on Sunday, August 28th from 9am until Noon, you can meet others that have participated in the year(s) before, get explanations of how each group works, enjoy some great breakfast foods, a humongous water slide and kiddie pool (wear or bring your suit!), prizes, and some wonderful fellowship. All the ministries will have tables out, some under the easement of Ministry Center; others inside the parish hall, with sign-up sheets.

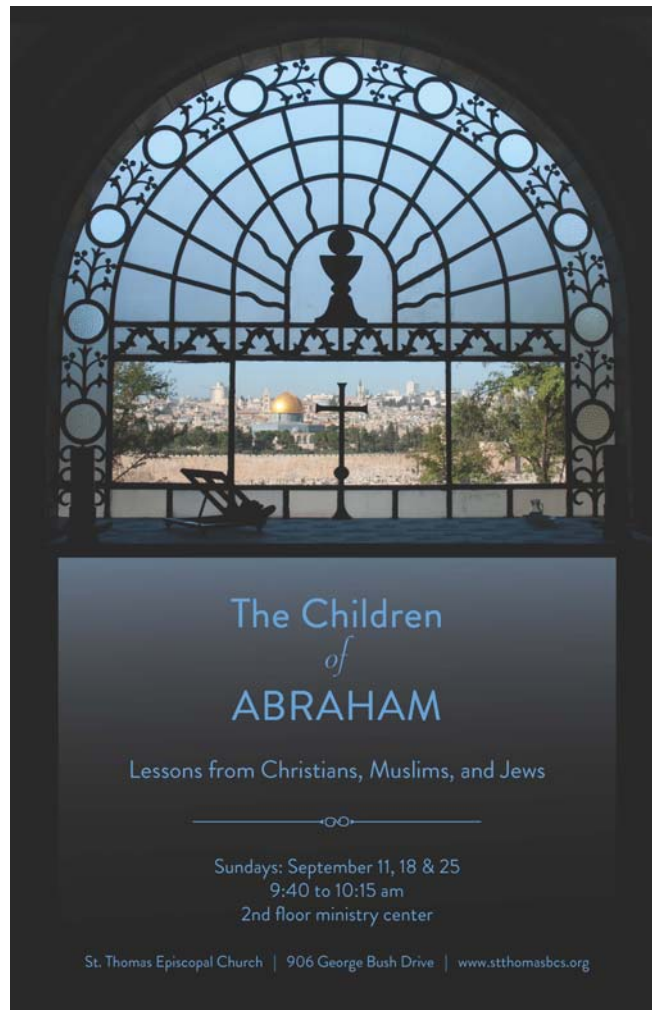


Fall in upon us and we anticipate (and pray) for the changes each season brings. Likewise, St. Thomas eagerly looks forward to the fall as families are welcomed back from travels, students are back in school, and we *really* crank up the activities at St. T.

Sundays, beginning September 4th, we will offer Sunday School classes for **EVERYONE** age 3 years and up. We will also utilize different locations on our campus.

Adults will begin the Fall with the opportunity to learn about *The Children of Abraham: Lessons from Christians, Muslims, and Jews.*, taught by Rev. Rhoda and guest speakers. Plan on meeting upstairs in the double classroom. In fact, most adult Sunday School topics will be taught in the double classroom or in the library as we often will have two different topics available. A few other topics to look forward to include: St. Thomas Green and Love & Logic (a parenting class).

Adult age who prefers to have the opportunity for fellowship? You might be interested in the



- 9:15** [Choir for kids 1st grade and up.](#) All kids in this age group are welcome regardless of their singing ability!
- 9:45** Sunday school for all ages
 - [3s & 4s downstairs ministry center, Community Room](#)
 - [5s —4th grade in the Oxley building](#)
 - [5th/6th grades EpiscoPALS.](#) location will vary
 - [7/8th grades 2nd floor ministry center, room D](#)
 - [9-12 grades 2nd floor ministry center, Youth Room](#)
 - [Adults 2nd floor ministry center, Double classroom, room C](#)
 - [Conversation Café in the parish hall normally](#)

Conversation Café!

Conversation Café will be held in the parish hall (although occasionally Adult Sunday School *may* need the space and will meet there.) Enjoy visiting with others every Sunday morning!

Children ages 3 through 12th GRADE will have weekly Sunday School. So if you are in 7th, 8th, or even 11th or 12th grade....check the schedule below for where your Sunday morning class will be held. Those in 5th & 6th grades will become EpiscoPALS. These EpiscoPALS will assist the younger children's Sunday School class, help Rhoda prepare for the 10:30 service, and/or help the Breakfast Crew!

September at a Glance

- Youth & families (5th-12th grade) Pool Party at Henthorne's Sept. 5th, 6 pm. Everyone brings something according to name.....more to follow!
- **New photographic directory.** Begin signing up Aug. 28th during Ministry Fair and Sundays thereafter (on bulletin boards beginning 9/4) to have your family's picture taken during week of Oct. 11-15) —each setting comes with a \$25 coupon towards pictures.
- 3rd Friday Men's Happy Hour, September 16th @ Ozona's, 5-7 pm.
- Music at St. Thomas presents **Texas Early Music Project: Convivencia: The Three Worlds of Renaissance Spain.** Join us on 9/11 from 4:30-6 pm for a cultural arts exhibit in the parish hall, the music program from 6-7 pm, then a reception.
- Sr. High Retreat @ Forest Glen, Sept. 9-11th.



- **GET YOUR TICKETS!! For The Houston Chamber Choir FUNDRAISER performance at St. Thomas Sept. 18th at 6 pm with a wine and dessert reception to follow. The fundraiser tickets are \$50 and benefit St. T's music program.**

- EYC (not Sunday School) for Jr. High on Sundays @ 4:15 and Sr. High on Wednesdays @ 7 pm and EpiscoPALS meeting the 1st & 34rd Sundays @ 12:15 pm for fellowship...yes, there still is Sunday School for you too!
- **Safeguarding God's Children class—Sept. 17th 9-11 am or Thursday, Sept. 22nd from 6-9 pm.**
- Jr. High Lock-in @ St. T. Friday, Sept. 30th, 8 pm....bring a friend!
- **EYC 5th quarter gathering @ St. T. October 7th after the CROSS-TOWN Showdown...10 pm.**
- Football Parking – spots still available...the youth will be checking everyone in on Sunday, Sept. 4th.
Go Aggies!



Tell me a story....

Pueblo Native American culture gives us an image of The Storyteller, like the one depicted here in a ceramic figure I purchased on our honeymoon in New Mexico. The Storyteller is always pictured with its mouth open, ready to tell the story, and its body covered in children, presumably listening to every word, learning the stories to repeat to their children. I have always loved these dolls and what they symbolize.

As people we are shaped by stories. The stories of our family histories, childhoods, and countries of origin are all crucial in understanding who we are. As Christians we are particularly shaped by the Biblical narrative and the stories of God's great love of us, culminating of course in the story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

As Christians in this place who are part of a particular community of faith, we are shaped by the stories of St. Thomas. I want to learn and celebrate those stories! For that reason, with great joy the Vestry and the Stewardship Commission of St. Thomas are launching a year of "Storyteller Groups."

It is our hope that over the next twelve to fifteen months every person at St. Thomas will attend a small group gathering and share stories about this wonderful church. Whether you have been a part of this parish for six months or sixty years you have a story to tell. As we look toward the year 2013 and our seventy-fifth anniversary, I want us to have a deep and clear appreciation for our history and be able to look toward the future with joy and eagerness.

In the coming months you will receive an invitation to someone's home where you and a handful of other St. Thomas parishioners will gather to listen, share, laugh, and of course, eat! And unlike some church gatherings, you will not be asked to fill out a pledge card. You will be asked to think deeply about the mission and ministry of St. Thomas: where we have been and where we might be headed so that future generations can tell the story of God's love and the story of St. Thomas.

Blessings,

Rhoda S. Montgomery



**St. Thomas Episcopal Church
906 George Bush Drive
College Station, TX 77840**

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

The Rev. Dr. Rhoda Montgomery, Rector

Www.StThomasBCS.org

churchoffice@StThomasBCS.org

979.696.1726

8 am Rite I Eucharist and 10:30 Rite II Eucharist

Nursery available 7:45 am—Noon