



THE EPISTLE OF ST. THOMAS

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
The Rev. Jeff Douglas

Diocese of East Carolina
The Rt. Rev. Robert Skirving

November 2018

A Feast of Martyrs

This week the Church will celebrate all the martyrs and saints through the centuries who have suffered great evil or injustice for righteousness' sake. We add to that list this week: Vickie Lee Jones, 67, and Maurice Stallard, 69, were shot and killed by a white supremacist, on October 24th while shopping at a Kroger grocery store in Jeffersontown, Kentucky, a suburb of Louisville. We also add Joyce Fienberg, 75, David Rosenthal, 54, Richard Gottfried, 65, Bernice Simon, 84, Rose Mallinger, 97, Sylvan Simon, 86, Jerry Rabinowitz, 66, Daniel Stein, 71, Cecil Rosenthal, 59, Melvin Wax, 88, Irving Younger, 69 who were murdered at the Tree of Life Synagogue in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood of Pittsburgh, PA by a white man armed with an AR-15 spewing antisemitic slurs as he shot his victims in their observance of the Sabbath. All are martyrs slain by guns held by men motivated by hate.



Praying for the dead is actually borrowed from Judaism, as recorded in 2 Maccabees 12:41-45 of the Apocrypha. Early Christian teachers of the Faith, such as Tertullian, St. Cyprian, and others, testify to the regular practice of praying for the souls of the departed. During the first century, the idea that the martyrs would be resurrected at the beginning of the messianic age had taken root in Judaism. When the messiah came, it would be the beginning of righting all the world's wrongs and the first sign would be that all those servants of God who died from persecution would rise in vindication by a just and mighty God. This theology is found in the gospel of Matthew's description (Matt 27:51-53) of the moment of Jesus' death: "At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many."

And so it is appropriate for us to recognize our cousins in the faith as martyrs to the same God we both worship.

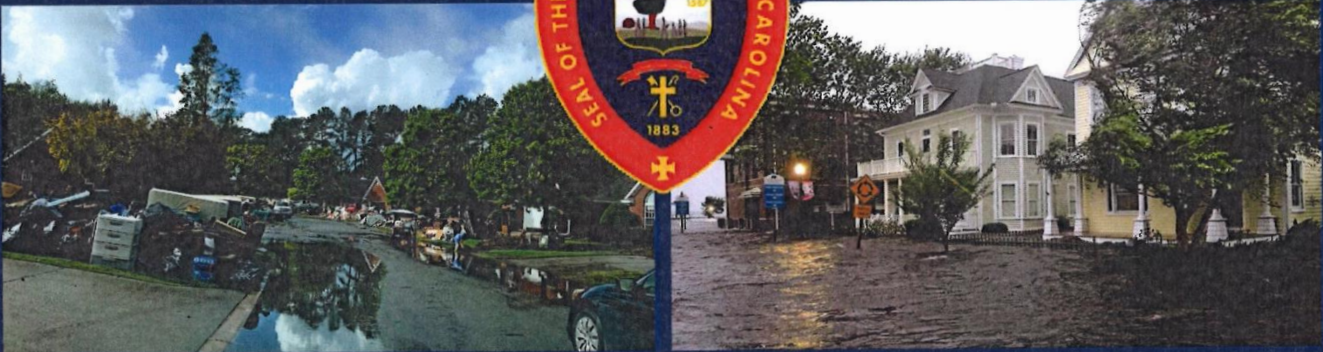
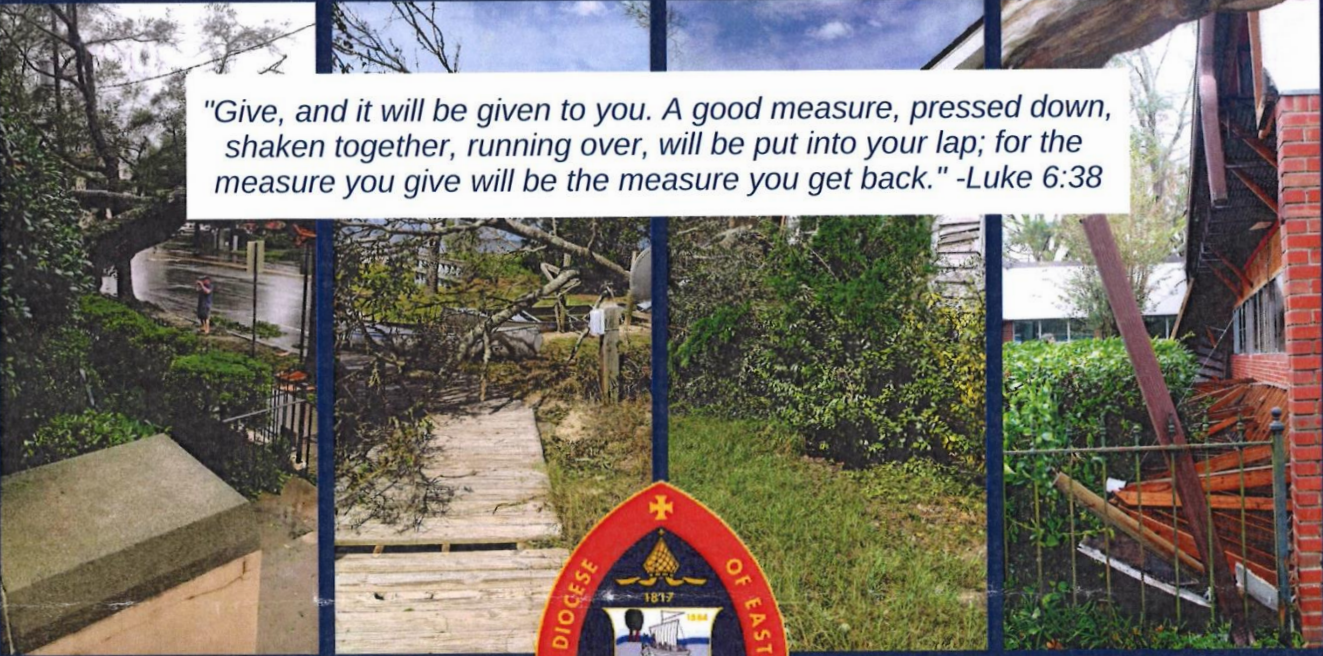
The lectionary reading for All Saints' Day, the day on which we remember and celebrate martyrs to the faith is the Beatitudes in Matthew. (Matt 5:3-10) For the poor in spirit – theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. The mourners will be comforted, as in those glorious words from Revelation: "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." (Rev. 21:4) The meek will inherit the earth. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be filled, their hunger satisfied. The merciful will receive mercy, the pure in heart will see God, the peacemakers will be called the children of God, and those who are persecuted for righteousness sake will gain the Kingdom of Heaven. "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven."

As followers of the God whose law is the law of love, we are called to spend our lives working to make this world a little more like heaven and a little less like the hell it so often seems to be. Let us unite with all people of good will, regardless of how they practice their faith, just as those who landed on Plymouth Rock joined with Native Americans in a cooperative feast to celebrate the bounty that the Great Spirit provides us all. Let us unite to treat each other with kindness and justice; compassion and grace. Together our light can push away the darkness, heal our broken hearts and unite a divided land.

Peace

Jeff+

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back." -Luke 6:38



In the aftermath of Hurricane Florence, **24 parishes** in our diocese have filed insurance claims due to damage to their properties.

Relief work that has been done in East Carolina through the financial support of Episcopal Relief and Development:

- Childcare and activity camps
- Distribution of food and essential goods
- Support of first responders
- Other ongoing and developing work

How to Help: If you would like to make a donation to support the work of hurricane relief and recovery in East Carolina, you can do so by scanning the above QR code with your phone and making a donation online or by mailing a check to the Diocese (PO Box 1336 Kinston, NC 28503) marked for "Hurricane Relief."



St. Thomas Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting October 16, 2018
Minutes

Present: The Rev. Jeff Douglas (Rector), Ernie Carter (Treasurer), Dr. Charles Sawyer, Buddy Jones (Sr. Warden), David Simons (Jr. Warden), Martie Tayloe, Brenda Hewitt (Clerk), David Shields, Becky Johnson, and Carolyn Peele.

The meeting was opened in prayer.

Minutes: A motion was made by Dr. Charles Sawyer and seconded by David Simons to approve the minutes. It passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's report was given. Buddy Jones made a motion to accept the report and Carolyn Peele seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. There were no expense items cited being out of the ordinary.

Stewardship: By November 2, 2018, a letter will inform parish members of a dinner after the November 4 service to support continuing stewardship. The Rector and Treasurer will compose the letter.

Outreach: The parish was praised for their response to the need for flood buckets. Sue Liverman has sent them to New Bern where they were very appreciated.

Lobster Feast approaching. To date, 500 tickets have been sold.

Blessing of the Animals was attended by over 20 people and by one cat and a pack of dogs. It was one of our best turnouts for this event.

Worship: The Bishop will be at St. Thomas for a visitation and confirmation on Sunday, November 18. The parish will have a reception following the service. The Bishop will be at St. Mark's, Roxobel, on October 27 for a confirmation.

Pastoral Care: Parishioners who are facing illness have been contacted and visited at home and in the hospital by the Rector and parishioners. Julie Bazemore, our parish secretary, has an uncertain diagnosis and the Vestry pledged to work with her as she faces treatment.

Building and Grounds: Tile in the bathrooms is down and has been waxed. Spot lights in the sanctuary will be ordered at a later time. The outside lighting has a short that has yet to be located. Work will continue.

The meeting was adjourned with our Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Hewitt, Clerk



*ECW
Luncheon*

An Annual Tradition

**Thursday, November 15
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

**Sponsored By:
St. Thomas' Episcopal Church Women**

Tickets: \$7.00 each

*** Eat-in or Take out ***

**Hot Chicken Salad complete with their famous
Three Bean Salad, Cranberry Salad,
and a Ham Biscuit.**

(Beverage and dessert included)

*A wide array of homemade baked goodies and other specialties
will be on hand for purchase as well.*

**424 West Church Street, Ahoskie, North Carolina
For more information, call (252) 332-3263**

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Shields Overton
- 5 Kathryn Brooks
- 6 Virginia Suiter Pierce
- 7 Glenna Sullins
- 9 Benjie Brown
- 12 Becky Hoggard
- 16 Anderson Braswell
- 16 Charles Brooks
- 20 Lindsay Griffin-Vaughan
- 24 Margaret Newbern
- 27 Clyde Hughes
- 27 Overton Suiter



*“O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor; we pray, on your servants, **Shields, Kathryn, Virginia, Glenna, Benjie, Becky, Anderson, Charles, Lindsay, Margaret, Clyde, Overton**, as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**”*

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Benjie and Amy Brown

*“O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is represented the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church: Send therefore your blessing upon, **Benjie and Amy**, that they may so love, honor, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**”*



*“Honestly Madam, do you expect this court to believe that *all* of your husbands mysteriously disappeared at this same time in November?”*

St. Thomas Episcopal Church – Schedules for November 2018

Acolytes

- 4 Hugh Davis and Alexis Urquhart-Harrell
- 11 Gretchen Simons and Mac Griffin
- 18 OPEN
- 25 Charles Sawyer

Altar Flowers

- 4 Mr. and Mrs. Bubba Peele
- 11 OPEN
- 18 Mr. Carl Taylor
- 25 OPEN

Altar Guild

Patsy Jones and Carolyn Peele

Food Pantry (Note-Wednesdays)

- 7 Dicky Hoggard
- 14 Jim Shotwell
- 21 Peggy Vann
- 28 Bubba Peele

Lay Readers

- | | | | |
|----|----------|--------------------------|---------------|
| 4 | 10:30 AM | Holy Eucharist | Martie Tayloe |
| 7 | 6:00 PM | Evening Prayer | Martie Tayloe |
| 11 | 8:00 AM | Morning Prayer | OPEN |
| | 10:30 AM | Holy Eucharist | John Davis |
| 14 | 6:00 PM | Evening Prayer | John Davis |
| 18 | 10:30 AM | Holy Eucharist | Sarah Davis |
| 21 | 6:00 PM | NO EVENING PRAYER | |
| 25 | 10:30 AM | Holy Eucharist | Hugh Davis |
| 28 | 6:00 PM | Evening Prayer | Hugh Davis |

Ushers

Jim Shotwell and Buddy Jones

Yard Work

- 4 Ernie Carter and Benjie Brown
- 11 Tom Newbern and Charles Pierce
- 18 Tom Newbern and Charles Pierce
- 25 Charles Sawyer and Beth Douglas

NOVEMBER 2018						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

Hospitality Committee

*All Saints' Luncheon,
Bishop Skirving's Reception,
& ECW Luncheon*

Patsy and Colin Jones

Tom and Margaret Newbern
Buddy Jones and Cecelia Jones

November 2018

Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																											
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11 Veteran's Day Morning Prayer 8am Holy Eucharist 10:30am Adult SS 9:15am	12 Becky Hoggard Ahsokie Rotary Club Meeting 12pm Book Guild 5pm Office Closed Boy Scouts 7pm	13 NA Meeting 8pm	14 Evening Prayer 6pm	15 Annual ECW Luncheon 11am-1:30pm Choir Practice 6pm	16 Anderson Braswell Charles Brooks	17 St. Mark's, Roxobel 5pm <div style="background-color: #800000; height: 15px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>																																																																																											
18 Bishop Skirving's Visitation & Reception Holy Eucharist 8am & 10:30am Adult SS 9:15am <div style="background-color: #800000; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;">Stock Thanksgiving Baskets</div>	19 Dame Julian Prayer Group 5pm Boy Scouts 7pm	20 Lindsay Griffin Vaughan Vestry Meeting 6pm NA Meeting 8pm	21 Mary Breeden Prayer, Fasting & Advocacy	22 Thanksgiving Day Soup Kitchen 5pm <div style="background-color: #ff8c00; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;">Office Closed</div>	23	24 Margaret Newbern																																																																																											
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Ahoskie, NC 27910

