

**Vicar**

The Rev. Sharon Sheffield

**Bishop's Committee**

Allen Stout, *Bishop's Warden*  
Shelley Arnold, *People's Warden*  
Andrea Utzman, *Clerk*  
Lynne Richmond, *Minutes Secretary*  
Lance Brooks, *Treasurer*  
John Mitchell, *Bookkeeper*

Jane Gordon-Topper  
Camelia Jolly  
Jeremy Richmond  
Sue Williams

**Minister of Music & Organist**

**Editor of Canterbury Tales**  
William Henderson

**Associate Organist**

**& Webmaster**  
Marc Skuster

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# CANTERBURY

# TALES

JULY 2023



# JULY 4

## BACKPACK DRIVE BEGINS JULY 2



Our annual backpack and school supply drive for Long Beach students begins July 2 and runs through the month of July. Long Beach Family Services greatly appreciates our donations of new backpacks and school supplies to help local children who can't afford everything they need for a successful school year. Keep an eye out for local and online sales of school supplies, and then bring them on August 6 for our annual Blessing of the Backpacks.

**JULY 4**

### HOLIDAY CLOSURES

The office will be OPEN on Monday, July 3, and then closed July 4 for the holiday. There will be no Morning or Evening Prayer on July 4.



**Pulpit  
Swap**

Even though we've been sharing services for over a year, it's been suggested that it would be a good idea to have Father Michael and Mother Sharon preach and celebrate across town, so that folks in both communities learn more about both clergy and are more comfortable calling on them for pastoral emergencies. **Our first pulpit swap will be Sunday, July 16. Father Michael will preach and preside at St. Thomas, and Mother Sharon will preach and preside at St. Gregory's.** We hope you will take advantage of the opportunity to get to know our clergy better.

## EPISCOPAL NIGHT AT DODGER STADIUM

Our annual baseball event is **Friday, September 1**, when the Dodgers host the Braves starting at 7:10pm. If you are interested in attending the game, you **MUST** sign up **NO LATER THAN** July 16, as all ticket orders must be turned in by July 18. Tickets are \$30 and do not include parking. Please put your name, your email, and the number of tickets you want on the signup sheet in the narthex, or send that same information to [stlb47@verizon.net](mailto:stlb47@verizon.net). Your email address is very important; as all Dodgers tickets are now electronic, tickets will be emailed to you and you will need to show them on your phone at the stadium. If you have any questions, please see Mother Sharon. Thanks for your help in making **EPISCOPAL NIGHT AT DODGER STADIUM** a success.

## HELP WANTED!



Do you feel called to serve God and your St. Thomas siblings? We really need a few more Lay Eucharistic Ministers for our 8:00 and 10:15 services, especially during the summer months. LEMs assist clergy at the altar, help serve Communion, and occasionally read lessons. We provide all the training necessary for this sacred ministry. If you are interested, please talk with Mother Sharon or Diane Silk.

UPCOMING

# "RAISE THE ROOF"

## FUNDRAISER EVENTS

**BBQ** AT ROSEMARY & DAVE'S HOUSE

*AUGUST 19 (\$20)*

MOTHER SHARON AND THE "PIANO MAN"

**MUSIC** FUNDRAISER

*SEPTEMBER 16 from 4:00-5:30 (\$10)*

JANE & JOANNE'S **HALLOWEEN** FUN

*OCTOBER 22 (AFTER SECOND SERVICE)*

SUE WILLIAM'S **CHILI** COOK-OFF

*WHEN THE WEATHER COOLS DOWN*

*LOOK FOR SIGN-UP SHEETS IN THE NARTHEX*

# BISHOP'S WARDEN REPORT

*Allen Stout*

We are now well into “**ordinary time**” (and Summer). During this liturgical season – which will last until Advent begins in late November – we will work to put into practice those spiritual lessons that we learned (or that were reinforced) during the seasons of Advent through Easter and Pentecost. **This is the time that we try to “incarnate”** the guidance of Jesus’ teachings, and the Spirit of God.

So, how do we do that? As a corpus, a church body, we do that by living in fellowship with each other, but maintaining and improving our facilities, by doing mission and outreach – and evangelism. We live, we grow, and we “**keep everything moving forward.**”

That is hard to do in the Summer. Many of our regular parishioners will be traveling. **Pledges** tend to drop (hopefully to be caught up in the Fall). Still, finances can get tight in the Summer as a result. So, step one is to try to keep up with our pledges and financial donations during the “doldrums.”

Second, we take care of the business items that must be done during this time of year. We are required to submit our annual audit of the books for 2022. To do that, we must constitute an **Audit Committee** to do that work. I would like to invite anyone with a desire to serve and to learn more about St. Thomas’ financial processes to **let me know** so I can invite you to participate. It usually takes one afternoon on a Saturday to do the work of the committee. It is helpful, but not at all necessary to have some financial knowledge to participate on this project.

Third, we all need to keep working with Shelley, Jane, Andrea, Sue and others to continue to develop ideas for Raise the Roof activities for the Fall and beyond.

These activities both help us to achieve our financial goals, but also contribute to our fellowship. A win-win!!

Fourth, for **those of us who are called to fulfill a liturgical function** (usher, choir member, server, lector, etc.), please be sure to either show up for the service that you are assigned, or at least make arrangements in advance to swap with someone (letting me and/or Mother Sharon know). It is very hard to properly conduct services when someone that we are depending on just doesn't show up.

One final note: **Important**: I want to encourage anyone who has questions about the schedule, the buildings, upcoming events, etc. to reach out to myself, Shelley, or another member of the Bishop's Committee for answers. Of course, you can also reach out to Mother Sharon, especially for pastoral concerns (we can define these in an upcoming issue, if needed). When Sharon is on her day off (Fridays), or on vacation, it is particularly important to let her have her leisure time. On those days in particular, please use the Bishop's Committee as your first resource for most non-pastoral questions. My phone number is (714) 381-5910. I can be reached by phone or text, or I can be reached by email at [astout1176@gmail.com](mailto:astout1176@gmail.com).

Let's have a great, relaxing, traveling and enjoyable Summer, while still making sure that our services run smoothly, and that all the business needs of the church are taken care of in a timely manner. **Enjoy!**

## PEOPLE'S WARDEN REPORT

*Shelley Arnold*

After much discussion during the Bishop's Committee Meeting on June 11, 2023, it was decided to begin our roof repair by fixing the obvious leaks. If fixing the leaks works, it will allow us time to raise funds for needed repairs in other areas. We also plan to replace the two toilets in the women's restroom.

## A MEDITATION: MIRACLES

The lectionary recently included two readings that included stories about miracles, which got me thinking about miracles in general, how they are portrayed in the Bible, and how we might understand them.

In **Matthew (9:18-26)**, we are told about two miracles happening almost simultaneously. A leader of the synagogue begs Jesus to bring his daughter, who had just died, back to life. As Jesus walks toward the house, a woman “who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years” touched the fringe of His cloak. Jesus turned and told her that she was healed because of her faith. He continued to the leader’s house where He led the daughter out of the house and into the street, alive.

In **Mark’s** Gospel, the story (**5:22-43**) includes a lot more detail. Here, the daughter is on the point of death, and her death is reported after Jesus begins to walk toward the house. The woman is healed of her hemorrhages, but Jesus was “immediately aware that power had gone forth from him,” which caused Him to turn and speak with the woman. In this version, the woman was healed immediately by touching Jesus’ clothes, even before he turns to address her.

The story in **Luke (8:40-56)**, is very much like Mark’s rendition, with a few details added. In particular, the woman only faces Jesus after he asks who has touched his cloak. “When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed (8:47).

So, what are we to make of these stories? And what does it tell us about miracles, as recounted in the Bible? There are three points that come to mind. First, as Mother Sharon pointed out in her sermon, touching a dead body, and touching a diseased person would cause a good Jew to become ritually unclean. Jesus is obviously not concerned about this. We can probably guess that he subsequently went through ritual purification. But it did not stop him from healing the girl and the woman, practically simultaneously. It is one story among many where Jesus gives up His ritual purity to help or minister to others.

Second, this unconcern for ritual purity seems to teach the same lesson as the parable of the Good Samaritan. Taking care of people is more important, in God's eyes, than keeping oneself separate and clean, or pure. It also reminds me of Jacob Marley, in *A Christmas Carol*, telling Ebenezer Scrooge that his being called a good businessman was not a compliment. Instead, "Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity mercy, forbearance, benevolence, were all my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!"

Third, both of the people healed that day were females, and both were apparently from families of means – so both of low social stature, yet well off. The girl was the daughter of an important official. We find out in Mark and Luke that the woman had paid doctors for years to help her find a cure, until she had spent all that she had. But her disease just kept getting worse. It seems to me likely that she was originally a woman of means before her disease impoverished her. We are not told about the men in her family.

When we think of Jesus' mission; when we remember the Hebrew Bible's emphasis on taking care of the poor, the widows, the sick, etc.; and when we think of Matthew 25's teaching that helping those in need is being the same as helping Jesus Himself. We (or I, at least), tend to discount those with wealth. After all, they can take care of themselves. And we remember that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God (MT 19:24). We remember the rich ruler who is told that he must sell all he has and give it to the poor if he wants to inherit treasure in Heaven (Luke 18:18-25).

Yet, here Jesus is raising or healing members of well-to-do families. It seems that this is more about humility than wealth or poverty. Jesus sums this up by saying "for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted" (Luke 18:14).

And perhaps, that is the real miracle!

That is what is on my mind today. What do YOU think?

Allen Stout





## *Birthdays*

*Zeke Almanza 7/13*

*Michael Utzman 7/16*

*Samantha Jovanovic 7/23*

*Karen Adelseck 7/30*

*Camelia Jolly 7/31*

## **ANNIVERSARIES**

**AUGGY & ASHLEY SANCHEZ 7/3**



**The world**, especially the people of the United States, and for peace all over the world and wherever there is oppression or trouble.

**Serving in the Armed Forces** at home and around the world: members of the U.S. Army: **Adam** and Boston; the U.S. Marine Corps: Sean, Adelangel and Jesse; the U.S. Air Force: Jordan, Joshua and Carlos; the U.S. Navy: **Jonathan**; and the U.S. Coast Guard: **Jennifer** and Corey.

**The protection and guidance of Parishioners and Friends:** Bertha, Ariana, Alyssa, Ana, Joe, Deb, Erin and her family, Joey and his mothers Beth and Jan, Penny and her family, Chris and his family, Daniel, Becky, Sandra, Alex, Josef, Brandon, Rosie, Nathan, Jan, Jason and Analisa, Gayle's doctor, Patricia's children, Michele's doctor, Sarah S., Ginny, Wendy, and baby Jordan's family.

**The healing of Parishioners and friends: Karen, Liz, Carlene, Samantha, Patrick, Allyson, Bert, Allen, Joanne, Rosie, Jim, Bill,** Linda M., Diana, Susanne, Ana, Joe, Rae Ann, Kathy, Linda O., Gingi, Becky, Michael, Kathryn, Asgeir and Rosa, Beverly, Paige, Eric, Diane, Toni, Rachel, Jane, Laura, Tori, Lance, Karen, Jared, Scott, Jeff, Sean, Geri, Jim L., Sue, Lu, Richard, Cindy, Kim, Jason, Jennie, Pam, Gayle, Lori, Nancy W., Bruce, Mary, Janice, Diane, Michele, Patricia B., Carolyn, Carmen, Ruben, David F., Ginny, Terry and Karen, Melanie, Elizabeth, Patricia, Julia, David, Sister Susan Alice, Sister Ann Francis and support for all families and friends caring for loved ones, the people of Ukraine, India, Vietnam, Peru, Nigeria, Haiti, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Sudan, Myanmar and all parishioners and friends with health problems.

**Homebound and Special Needs: Karen, Samantha** and the homeless, the poor and the unemployed, affordable housing for families, the end of COVID-19, Ebola, AIDS, and Cancer in the world, and for those suffering from mental illness.

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