



FORWARD IN FAITH CAMPAIGN NEWSLETTER

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IN FAITH | NOURISHED
BY COMMUNITY | BRANCHING
OUT TO SERVE

St. Thomas Episcopal Church | Issue 3 | November 2024
stthomasmedina.org/forward-in-faith

Making Our Commitment: Key Dates to Remember

As our **Forward in Faith** campaign draws near to its conclusion, we're at that point when each of us will soon be invited to offer financial commitments to both our annual operating budget and our Rector Housing Fund – a three-year pledge above and beyond our annual stewardship pledge. As each of us considers our commitments, this is an opportunity to reflect on what the continued strength and vitality of St. Thomas Church means to us, and to give from what has first been given to you. Our culminating campaign activities include:

Friday, November 22: Advance Commitments Gathering

Any member who wishes to make an early, inspirational financial commitment to our campaign is welcome to attend a hosted commitment gathering. Please contact Mary Williams or Peter Justus to participate.

Thursday, December 5: All-Church Banquet

Ebsworth Life Center, 6:30 p.m.

A night of fun, food, and celebration with the entire St. Thomas family. You will also be able to meet our new Bishop! Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend. Reserve your space today! Please RSVP to Office@stthomasmedina.org.

Sunday, December 8: Commitment Sunday

After prayerful consideration, each of us will decide on the amount of our financial commitment. Pledges to our **Forward in Faith** campaign may be contributed as a one-time gift or in weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual payments. Bring your pledge card with you to church on December 8th as together we will make our commitments during our Worship services.

December - January: Commitment Follow-Up

The campaign team will reach out to those we haven't heard from. We are striving for 100% participation. The campaign team is available to answer questions and provide additional information to help you make decisions regarding your pledges.

Sunday, January 26: Celebration Worship

We will share the results of the commitments received to date and give thanks for God's abundance in the life our church.



A Message from Mother Liz

Dear St. Thomas family:

St. Thomas Church is a mustard seed faith church. Since our founding, generation after generation has offered their gifts to St. Thomas Church, making us who we are today.

God is not finished with St. Thomas Church! As we continue to treasure the seed of faith that God has planted in and among us, we can continue to be the mustard tree for the Eastside. We can continue to be a place where all people can experience God's love and peace, a place where all people can be rooted in faith in God, be nourished by Christ, and branch out to the community with God's love for the world.



We need your help to continue living into God's vision for St. Thomas Church. We need your presence, your voice, and your gifts—your mustard seeds of faith. The **Forward in Faith** Campaign invites everyone to share their mustard seed faith by participating in what God is doing through St. Thomas.

Enclosed is a pledge card for the **Forward in Faith** campaign. The card invites you to make a pledge to our annual operating budget and the Rector Housing Fund (over 3 years), in addition to your annual giving of your time and talent.

On Sunday, December 8th at the 8 am and 10 am services, we will bring our pledge cards and offer them as gifts, our mustard seeds of faith. If you cannot attend or are not yet ready to commit on December 8, a member of our campaign team is happy to talk with you, answer any questions you may have, and to receive your pledge card.

Before you decide what to financially commit to our campaign, please:

- 1) Pray. Ask God for guidance in how much to commit to giving through reflection and prayer.
- 2) Consider what a mustard seed gift is for you. A mustard seed gift is a bold-faith gift. To give this gift, you may have to reorder your financial priorities. You might consider gifting an asset such as stock or property.
- 3) Seek to grow in faith through your giving. Seeing your gift as a mustard seed of faith will increase your faith and awareness of God as the Giver from whom all good things come!

To reach our goals, each of us is being asked to give a mustard seed gift. The future of our church and our mission depends on each of our responses. Together, with our mustard seed faith, we are becoming something far beyond what we could have asked or imagined!

The Rev. Liz Costello
Rector

Successful “Forward in Faith” Gatherings

Over the last few weeks, **Forward in Faith** Small Group Gatherings have been held in members' homes, at the church, and online. These sessions were an opportunity to learn more about the needs of our church and the

invitation to respond through our stewardship campaign. Over 75 members of St. Thomas have attended. Below are a few questions that came up and insights from those participating:

Q: If a house is purchased for the rectory, where would it be?

A: Areas that have been discussed include the footprint of the Bellevue School District or the Kirkland area. These areas both offer a reasonable commute with more competitive home prices.

Q: What about our other clergy? They are currently living in the Seattle area as well.

A: The initial focus of this campaign is for housing support for the Rector, however the long term goal is to be able to support other clergy as needed and as funds allow.

Q: If it's going to take us 3 years to raise the money for our Rector Housing Fund, do we have to wait 3 years before we can help our current Rector?

A: The reality is that the 3 year fulfillment period gives us the best chance to raise the greatest amount of money, but that doesn't mean we have to wait 3 years to act. We do expect some donors to accelerate their contributions, and once we receive our first donations, we will be able to realistically assess how the fund might be put to work toward improving the current situation.



What Members Are Saying...

- “I now feel like I understand the Flexible Rector Housing model.”
- “I got to meet and enjoy fellowship with parishioners from the 10 o'clock Service that I had not met before.”
- “It was very helpful - thank you!”

One More Small Group!

By special request a small group gathering has been added!

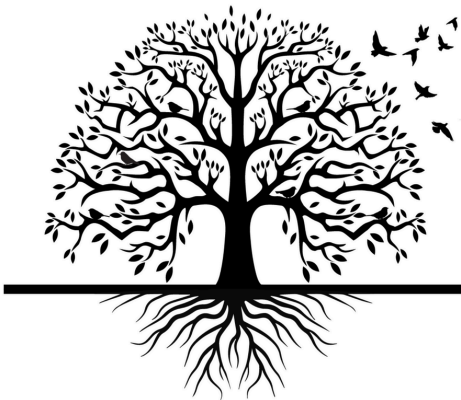
St. Thomas Church - Library

**Sunday, 11/17
from 11:30am-1pm**

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
8398 NE 12th St.
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A Prayer for the Forward in Faith Campaign



Almighty God, we thank you for the provision and abundance in our lives. We recognize that everything that we have is a gift from You. Guide each of us as we discern how to share our gifts with your church, through the ***Forward in Faith*** Campaign. Empower us to become the next generation that glorifies you, allowing your power to work through us, so that together, we might accomplish something far more than we could have asked or imagined at St. Thomas Church.

Amen.