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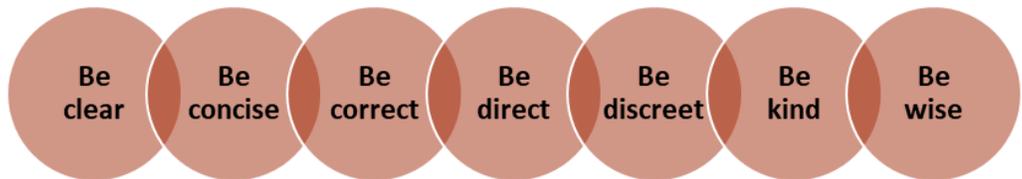
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Guidelines for Effective Parish Communication

John Clinton Bradley

Maintaining good communication in any parish is a challenge. During times of transition, like our parish is experiencing, effective communication can be even more difficult. That's because the rector, who tends to be the center of the communication network, is no longer present. So, we all need to be especially mindful of our communication. Below are seven guidelines for effective parish communication:



Be clear. Strive to communicate your message unambiguously. Remember to include all the information the other person needs (who, what, when, where, why, how).

Be concise. Keep your message brief and focused. Eliminate unnecessary words without being rude or brusque.

Be correct. Make sure the information you are sharing is complete and accurate. If you aren't sure the information is correct, try to "fact check" it by going to the source.

Be direct. Say what you mean rather than hint at your meaning. Talk directly to the person who needs the information or has the information you need. Don't ask third parties to serve as your messengers. Directness is especially important when miscommunication or conflict is occurring.

Be discreet. If someone shares a confidence with you, don't share that information with anyone else without the explicit permission of the person who is the subject of the confidence. Confidentiality is especially important when medical information is concerned. Parish employees and volunteers are required to follow the privacy guidelines established by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA). Privacy is a universal human right, and everyone should have the ability to control how their personal information is shared and with whom.

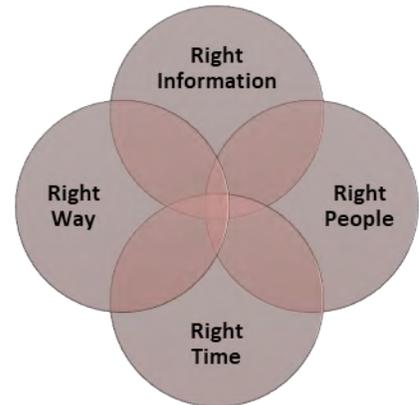
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Be kind. Every word we utter (or write) has the potential to positively or negatively affect another human being, sometimes without our knowledge or intent. Speak to every person with respect and compassion, even when you disagree with them.

Be wise. Strive to share the right information with the right people at the right time in the right way.

John is an instructional designer employed by Communispond, a company that teaches professional communication skills.



The Holy B Team

Dear Friends in Christ:

Over the past four months, I've had the opportunity not only to serve you in the capacity of covenant priest and celebrant, but to spend time before, between, and after services with you, as well as assisting your Pastoral Care Team visiting and taking Communion to those at home and in hospital. I am enjoying getting to know you and learning about the many and varied ministries of St Thomas' Church.

I want you to feel comfortable questioning me and suggesting ways I can best be of support during this time of transition. I believe that we are all in ministry together for mutual growth and support. I definitely do not have all the answers! I look forward to exploring with you the questions our faith brings to us.

In the words of Central New York Bishop DeDe Duncan-Probe:

What we're called to do as God's people is to try new things even if we're not so great at it. Because we have to remember a very important thing, the church is not ours. The church isn't our possession. The church isn't something we do. The church isn't something we created or that we have any real power over. Which is a very vulnerable thing for us. Because we like having power over things. We like deciding what's right and wrong. We like deciding what God should do. In fact, we like deciding what everybody should do.

We have four holy orders. We have deacons and the priests. But we have the "Holy B Team." And if you're wondering what the Holy B Team is, it's the laity. You're a holy order, laity. And when I say B team, I don't mean A and B like football. I mean B as in BE. You be here before the clergy came. You'll be here while they're there, but you'll be there after they're gone. And I love that I'm looking out here and most people who clapped don't have collars on. Oh yes you will.

May God's peace, which passes all understanding, be with us, invigorate, and comfort us as we, the family and community of St. Thomas' continue our journey together.

Blessings,
Kit+

What is a Priest?

The Rev. Michael W Hopkins

As St. Thomas' continues its search for a new rector, it is a good time to reflect on the nature of priesthood in our tradition. Expectations of a rector—or any priest—are often high and varied. I've been through many an exercise delineating my duties or those of others. My problem with most of these attempts at clarity is that they result in lists of things to do. We hardly ever took the time to talk about what a priest is in our tradition.

One of the best short pieces on the nature of priesthood was given in an ordination sermon I heard by the Rev. Dr. Louis Weil. Dr. Weil was my junior year of seminary liturgy professor. I took some of what he said in that sermon and had it printed in the parish newsletter before my ordination 29 years ago at St. James' Church, Capitol Hill, in Washington, DC. I offer it to you for your own reflection.

Dr. Weil spoke of his time as a piano student, and the point at which he began to work on “counterpoint,” music in which there are two distinct melody lines. The two, he said, “become something far more wonderful than either could be alone.”



The ordination liturgy (you can find it in *The Book of Common Prayer*, beginning on page 525), he said, “is a splendid counterpoint of two strong and important themes. One is the theme of individual vocation: the response of an individual who is seeking to do the will of God in his or her own life. In the liturgy, the bishop asks the one to be ordained, ‘Do you believe that you are truly called by God and his Church to this ministry?’ And the ordinand says, ‘I believe I am so called.’”

Dr. Weil went on, “But the other melody of the counterpoint is equally important: it is the theme of the relation of the individual vocation of each one of us to the common vocation of the whole body. The [liturgy] speaks of that relation in two important ways: first, in the Church’s scrutiny of candidates for Holy Orders. That scrutiny is a long process which climaxes in our response in the liturgy to the bishop’s question to us as a body: ‘Is it your will that N. be ordained a priest?’ And we say, ‘It is.’ The priest’s vocation is not his or her private possession. Its meaning is directly related to the vocation which we all share as the body of Christ.”

“The counterpoint sounds again in one of the bishop’s questions to the ordinand: ‘Will you undertake to be a faithful pastor to all whom you are called to serve, laboring with them...to build up the family of God?’ This is no image of the priest as supplier for passive consumers. It is an image, rather, of the priest as one who ministers within a ministering community: the gifts of the individual deepen and flourish in counterpoint with all the other gifts with which the Church is endowed. There is beneath the bishop’s question a wonderful vision of the Church as a community of faith in which all the gifts of the Holy Spirit cohere in a marvelous unity.”

I hope Dr. Weil’s words are helpful in your own reflection, not only of the priest’s place in the body of Christ, but your own as well.

Report on Recent Fundraisers

Barb Fowler

Traveling Vineyard: Just like a strong vineyard begins with carefully chosen and cared-for vines, the founders of Traveling Vineyard believe a community is only as strong as the people who invest in it. So, Traveling Vineyard holds community service close to its core values—making it a key objective and encouraging their Wine Guides to get involved, too. In that spirit, Rebecca Stevenson, our Wine Guide on January 11, is donating a portion of her profits from the Traveling Vineyard event at St. Thomas. Severina Weeks was our hostess, and she made some wonderful appetizers which we paired with the five different wines we tasted. Fellowship and fundraising wrapped together!

Norwex: Toni Sterner has been our Norwex consultant. She has donated over \$1300 in the three years we have related to her. For 25 years Norwex has been dedicated to the mission of radically reducing the use of chemicals products we use, wear, and consume. On January 15, Barbara Fowler hosted another Norwex party at her house, which raised \$271.32 for the roof project.

Magistrates Dinners: A magistrate is a civil officer or lay judge who administers the law, especially one who conducts a court that deals with minor offenses and holds preliminary hearings for more serious ones. Local magistrates have been meeting for monthly dinners at restaurants but decided this year to change that and asked us if we would be willing to cater the dinners at St. Thomas. After discussion, we said yes and will be serving them the fourth Monday of most months in 2019. Our first dinner was January 23, and we made \$286. The food was prepared and served by Barbara Fowler and Hope Anne Long. Different people have volunteered for other months, including Cinda Wheat, Linda Ferris, and Deb Scharf.

In Memoriam

We are saddened by the passing of **Dorothy S. Goodrich**, 94, on Wednesday, December 19, 2018. According to Dorothy's obituary, "She dedicated her life to her family which always came first. She taught others to love all individuals for who they are, never to judge someone by their choices and to know what it feels like to be unconditionally loved. She never took sides and never spoke negatively of anyone." Dorothy's funeral was held on Saturday, January 19, 2019, at Avoca Funeral Home.



Our condolences to Christina Brundage on the death of her father, **Henry Arms**, on Friday, January 4, 2019, at Geneva General Hospital. Mr. Arms was 81 years old. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Thursday, January 10, at St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Geneva, New York. Please keep Christina, John, and their family in your prayers.

Prayer Requests

Please pray for those who are homebound or afflicted with chronic health issues: June, Pat, Paul, Emmerson, Nellie, Allen, Greg, Harriet, Willie, Anna, and Evelyn.

Please pray for those on our prayer list: Kay, Gary, Melissa, Amalia, Gary, Andy, and Ella.



The 25 Documents You Need Before You Die

Design Your Death Dossier Soon—or You Could Be Setting Up Your Heirs for Frustration and Financial Pain



Pre-planning your funeral service is a way to help your family cope with what can be a very trying time immediately after you die. Barbara Fowler, Bereavement Minister for St. Thomas, will assist you in this process at a convenient time for you. It is so much easier to do this when you are not facing death itself. Plans, which include memorial service desires, can be changed at any time; they are maintained in the office and a copy is given to each person. Contact Barbara today at 794-0129 or email her at [REDACTED].

February 2019 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	Jan 31	1	2
3 Hope Anne Long's Birthday 7:45 AM Holy Eucharist; Chapel 9:30 AM Curious Christians 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist & Godly Play 12:00 PM Souper Bowl of Caring; Great Hall 3:00 PM Sunday Suppers	4 Janice Cole's Birthday	5 6:00 PM Bath Beach Body Fit Club; Great Hall	6 11:00 AM Red Door Kitchen 6:00 PM GrowTeam; Memorial Room 6:30 PM Bath Peace and Justice Group; Great Hall	7 Jay Austin's Birthday 12:10 PM Holy Eucharist; Chapel 6:00 PM Bell Choir Practice 7:15 PM Voice Choir Practice	8 9:00 AM Making Ends Meet; Great Hall	9 3:00 PM Champagne Whirl- a-Ways Square Dance
10 John Stranges' Birthday 7:45 AM Holy Eucharist; Chapel 9:30 AM Curious Christians 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist & Godly Play 2:00 PM Dessert Auction 3:00 PM Sunday Suppers	11 Skylar Brundage's birthday 12:00 AM Mary & Charlie Crocker Anniversary 11:00 AM Untitled	12 6:00 PM Bath Beach Body Fit Club; Great Hall	13 11:00 AM Red Door Kitchen 5:30 PM Winter Fellowship; Pizza, Pop, and Parcheesi; Great Hall	14 12:10 PM Holy Eucharist; Chapel 6:00 PM Bell Choir Practice 7:15 PM Voice Choir Practice	15	16
17 7:45 AM Holy Eucharist; Chapel 9:30 AM Curious Christians 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist & Godly Play 3:00 PM Sunday Suppers	18 Richard & Nancy Winnett's Anniversary	19 6:00 PM Bath Beach Body Fit Club; Great Hall	20 11:00 AM Red Door Kitchen 6:00 PM Vestry; Memorial Room	21 12:10 PM Holy Eucharist; Chapel 6:00 PM Bell Choir Practice 7:15 PM Voice Choir Practice	22	23 June Cheplick's Birthday 3:00 PM Champagne Whirl- a-Ways Square Dance
24 7:45 AM Holy Eucharist; Chapel 9:30 AM Curious Christians 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist & Godly Play 3:00 PM Sunday Suppers	25 Daniel Watters' Birthday	26 6:00 PM Bath Beach Body Fit Club; Great Hall	27 11:00 AM Red Door Kitchen 5:30 PM Magistrates Dinner	28 12:10 PM Holy Eucharist; Chapel 6:00 PM Bell Choir Practice 7:15 PM Voice Choir Practice	Mar 1	2
3	4	Notes Our parish calendar is now online at stthomasbath.org/parish-calendar/!				

Upcoming Liturgical Dates

March 6	Ash Wednesday
April 14	Palm Sunday
April 18	Maundy Thursday
April 19	Good Friday
April 21	Easter
May 30	Ascension Day
June 9	Pentecost

Turning Point

This month, we are collecting toilet paper for Turning Point. Our goal is 200 rolls.



St. Thomas Annual Dessert Auction

"Just" Desserts

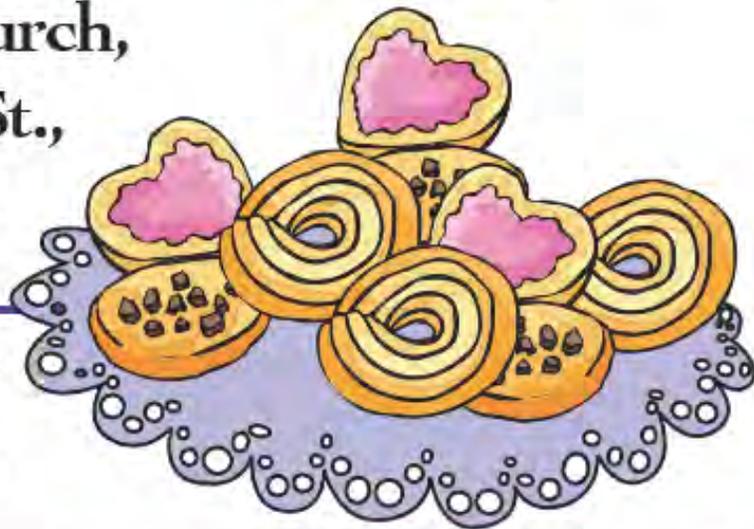


Tasting: 2 p.m.
Auction: 3 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 10

Join us for an afternoon of sampling all our fabulous bakers have to offer ... and take home the dish on which the dessert was presented - just in time for Valentine's Day!

**St. Thomas Church,
122 Liberty St.,
Bath, NY.**

A 5.00 ticket entitles you to sample ALL the desserts created for the auction.



Tickets can be purchased from parishioners OR from 9:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Mon. thru Thurs., St. Thomas office, 122 Liberty St., Bath

Vestry Notes

John Clinton Bradley

The vestry held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 16 at 6:00 pm. Here are the highlights:

- We approved the minutes from the December meeting.
- Nancy Latour presented the treasurer's report. She noted that we ended 2018 with a surplus of \$19,087.49. No concerns were brought up. We accepted the report as presented.
- Nancy also presented the 2019 budget. We approved the budget as presented.
- I presented a report from the Grow Team. No one objected to the Grow Team hosting a winter fellowship event on Wednesday, February 13.
- We will move the 11:00 am Sunday service to the chapel on February 3 for the rest of the winter, saving us a significant amount of money on heating costs.
- Carin Tobin reported that Kit Tobin, Mary Paddock, herself, and I met with Canon Johnnie Ross on January 7. Canon Johnnie said he anticipates recommending two candidates to us shortly. Both candidates recently graduated from seminary and are on track for ordination to the transitional diaconate in the first quarter of this year.
- Gil Ferris recommended we thank Ron Wyatt for his many years of work on the history articles in the parish newsletter.
- We thanked Carin and Gil for their service on the vestry.
- Our next meeting will occur on Wednesday, February 20, at 6:00 pm.

Parishioners are welcome to inspect the official vestry meeting minutes in the parish office during parish business hours, which are 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, Monday through Thursday.

How to Contact Your New Wardens

If you have any question or concerns about parish business, please don't be shy about contacting your wardens.



Mary Paddock
Senior Warden



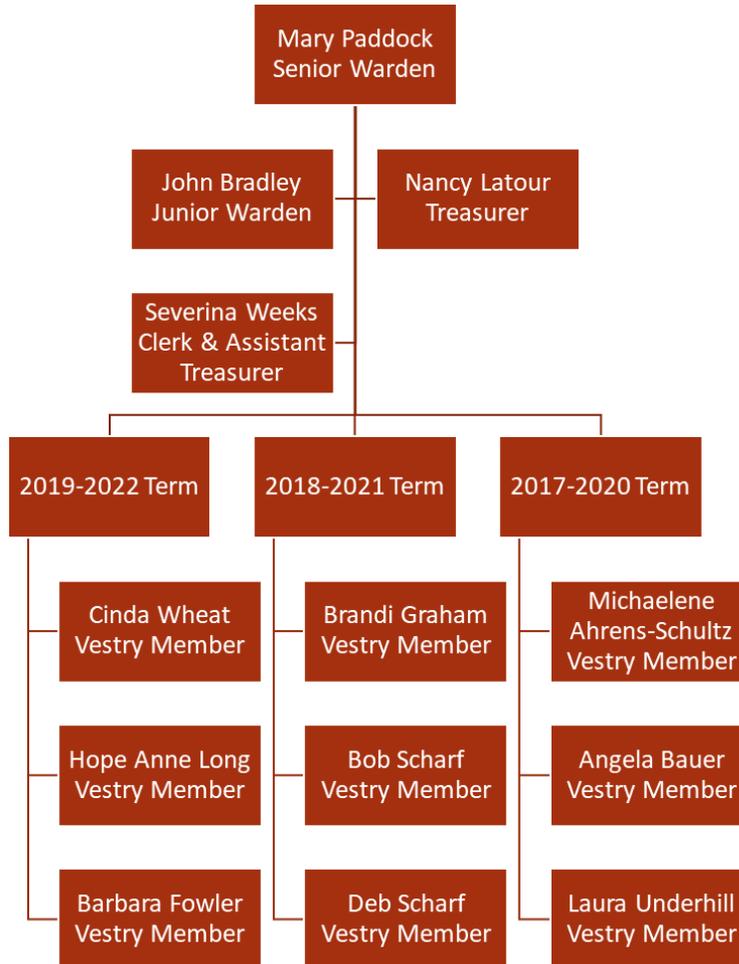
John Bradley
Junior Warden



Parish Officers for 2019

During the annual meeting on January 26, the parish elected (or re-elected) several new officers. Here's a snapshot of the lay leadership team for 2019.

Vestry



Diocesan Convention Delegates





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Crossroads

February 2019 Issue

122 Liberty Street
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607-776-4503

www.stthomasbath.org



Pizza, Pop, and Parcheesi!

The Grow Team invites you to an evening of fun and fellowship. We'll bring the pizza and pop. You bring your favorite board games.

Wednesday, February 13, 2019
5:30 PM

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church
122 Liberty St, Bath NY 14843
www.stthomasbath.org

