



A Parish of the  
Diocese of Toronto  
Anglican Church  
of Canada



## Parish e-News

**St Thomas' Anglican Church**

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Millbrook millpond - early fall morning

**Indoor, in-person public worship has resumed at St Thomas'  
Millbrook!**

**This Sunday, October 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Proper 29, Year B**  
**Morning Prayer**  
**10.30 am**

**When attending public worship ...**

- **Please wear a face mask at all times indoors**
- **Sanitize your hands upon entering the church**
- **Maintain a physical distance of 6 feet from individuals not in your cohort**
- **Do not sit in pews or sections of pews that are marked with RED tape on the seat (sit only in areas with GREEN masking tape on the top-rear part of the pew)**
- **Follow seating instructions for physical distancing: TWO individuals per pew or ONE family/cohort per pew seated in alternate (i.e., every second) pew**
- **All readers/intercessors/musicians/ altar guild volunteers, tenant groups, etc, must have provided evidence of full vaccination against Covid-19 (see below)**

**Diocesan Mandatory Vaccination Policy now in effect in the parish**

The Diocese of Toronto has introduced a policy that requires clergy, parish employees, and all volunteers (e.g., readers/intercessors, committee/group members, cemetery trustees, those attending in-person meetings, etc) to provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 (or a valid written exemption) before they may enter any of our parish buildings. The policy also applies to our tenant groups or any member of the public entering our buildings. It does not apply to anyone who simply wishes to attend public worship and sit in the congregation. If the policy applies to you, and you have not yet shown your proof of full vaccination to the churchwarden responsible for keeping the records, please contact Sherry-Lynne McMahon or the Priest-in-Charge.

**A Note from the Priest-in-Charge -**

“Happy Thanksgiving!” I realize this is a rather belated greeting, since national Thanksgiving Day occurred last Monday. But, I suppose, better late than never! I am blaming my lapse of memory on what some people are now calling “pandemic-induced forgetfulness”!

Every year on Thanksgiving Day, I give thanks to God for how truly blessed we are in this country of Canada. But as I gave thanks for this beautiful land, for the rights and freedoms we enjoy, and for the sacrifices made by our forebears, I was also reminded of a passage from Luke’s gospel which illustrates how even the notion of “thankfulness” can be twisted to divide human beings. I’ll quote the whole passage (Luke 18.9-14):

“Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the

other was a despised tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: ‘I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners, adulterers. I’m certainly not like that tax collector! I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.’ But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.’ I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Like the Pharisee, it is possible to misconstrue “thanksgiving” and use it as a wedge to separate human beings into those who are “superior” and those who are not. The Pharisee self-righteously thanks God that he, a Pharisee, is superior to a “tax-collector” (which is really an umbrella term for any hated group). The tax-collector, on the other hand, simply acknowledges his brokenness and his need for God’s mercy and forgiveness. Jesus says that it is the “sinful” tax-collector, not the “virtuous” Pharisee, who is justified in the eyes of God. In the same way, to be “thankful” for our many blessings should not mean that we regard ourselves as somehow superior to other peoples or nations. That kind of “thankfulness” is at the core of racism, sexism, homophobia, religious intolerance, and the worst forms of nationalism. Many Canadians are finally starting to recognize and accept the hurt and the terrible damage done to indigenous peoples by the paternalism and racism of our colonial past--and the injustice which is still “built in” to our systems of government and oversight. But Jesus’ warning also applies to the “Pharisees” of our own day who self-righteously judge people of previous ages (which is not to say that evil actions in any age should ever be justified or excused). The tax-collector does not judge others. He asks only that he be forgiven. In other words, he recognizes his own spiritual poverty and need for God’s grace--which is, I believe, the beginning of true wisdom for individuals and for nations.

One final note of thanks! At this time of year, the churchwardens and I offer heart-felt thanks to our parishioners and friends for their on-going financial support. Owing to the generosity of you, our supporters, we are still ‘holding our own’ financially, even though our congregation is very small. We haven’t had regular meetings (other than Vestry via Zoom) with financial reports during the pandemic, but we are more than happy to send up-to-date financial reports at any time to anyone who is interested. Please contact Anne Austin or me if you desire this information. Those who wish to make their annual Thanksgiving offering to the church may do so via any of the methods listed at the end of this newsletter. -- RR

***Journeys Outreach*** planned fundraiser at Rolling Grape Vineyards has been postponed to the spring of 2022. A different fall-winter fundraiser and an educational event (via Zoom) are now in the planning stages. Stay tuned!

***For the on-going work of Truth & Reconciliation*** - resources from the the Anglican Church of Canada for prayer, study, and action can be found at:

<https://www.anglican.ca/orangeshirtday/>

## **Online course from Durham Northumberland Deanery Christian Education Team “Learning How to See”**

In these crazy times, do you find yourself thinking: How is it that some people hear what’s happening in the world and react to it so differently than I? In “Learning How to See” we will examine how biases can affect how we receive messages and how we act on them. From judgments made unconsciously to complacency in systemic evil, we must learn how to see if we are to learn how to transform. Authors and teachers Brian McLaren and Fr Richard Rohr join the Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis of New York's Middle Collegiate Church for this 6-episode podcast series. These three public theologians will discuss how “seeing” is social, political and contemplative. Participants will listen to the podcasts in their own time, make notes, and then come together via Zoom on Tuesday evenings from October 19 to November 23 inclusive – 7pm to 8.30 pm-- to discuss what we have heard and learned and to ask more questions. To register, please email Val Whalley at [valjwhalley@gmail.com](mailto:valjwhalley@gmail.com) by October 14.

***The parish office hours*** are normally Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9.15 am - 11.15 am. Call 705-932-2233. For any urgent matter, please call the Priest-in-Charge at home at 705-932-1231. If (and only if) his home voicemail is turned off, please call his cell number (705-313-9002) and leave a message. Your call will be returned as soon as possible.

***The Churchwardens continue to be extremely thankful for the generosity and faithfulness of parishioners and friends of our parish who are making a concerted effort to keep up their regular offerings during this on-going pandemic.***

***In addition to making a weekly offering at church on Sundays, donations (for those who are not already on PAR) can be made in the following ways:***

- ***By regular mail*** - to St Thomas’ Anglican Church, P. O. Box 187, Millbrook, Ontario, L0A 1G0. *(Please be sure to use the post office box number - not just the street address - when sending items by mail).* Cheques only please--made out to St Thomas’ Church. *Post-dated cheques, for future contribution periods, would be welcome and very much appreciated.*
- ***By e-transfer from your bank account.*** Please call Gail at the parish office at (leave message) or email her at [cavmanparish@nexicom.net](mailto:cavmanparish@nexicom.net) to arrange.
- ***By pre-arranged ‘drop off’ at the parish office (during office hours) or at the parish hall mail box.*** Note: if you wish to leave your envelope in the box at the back door of the parish hall please telephone the Priest-in-Charge to let him know so that he can collect the envelope in a timely manner. Please *never* leave cash in the mailbox!
- ***By Pre-Authorized Remittance:*** If you wish to enroll in PAR, please call the parish office during office hours. An authorization form will be mailed (or emailed) to you.
- ***By using the secure online donations link on our parish website.*** Here is the link: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/119202950RR0001-st-thomas-church/>