

# WELCOME

"Don't compare yourself to other Christians.  
Compare yourself to Christ. He is the one you follow.  
He is the one other Christians too follow."  
Israelmore Ayivor, Ghanaian author

## We Gather in God's Name

**Welcome** Rev. Dr. Jim Monnett

**Moment for Mission** MCREST Trish Pearce

**Prayer of Approach**

**Bringing in the Word and Light**

**Introit** "I Love You, Lord" St. Thomas Music Team

**\*Call to Worship**  
Come, all who have walked without light;  
Come to the light that lives in Jesus Christ.  
**God is my light and salvation; whom shall I fear?**  
**God is the stronghold of my life: I shall not be afraid.**  
Come, all who would heed the invitation of Jesus;  
Come together, to follow Him into the world.  
**God empowers us at the cross of Christ;**  
**we are eager to receive good news to share.**

**\*Opening Hymn** "Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty" #1

**First Reading** Romans 5:1-5  
The word of the Lord, **Thanks be to God.**

**Invitation to Confession**

**Confession**  
Eternal God,  
In every age you have raised up women and men  
To live and die in faith.  
We confess that we are indifferent to your will.  
You call us to proclaim your name,  
But we are silent.  
You call us to do what is just,  
But we remain idle  
You call us to live faithfully, but we are afraid.  
In your mercy, forgive us.  
Give us courage to follow in your way,

That joined with those from ages past,  
Who have served you in faith, hope, and love,  
We may inherit the kingdom you promised in Jesus Christ.

## **Assurance of Pardon**

Friends, believe the Good News  
**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

## **Worship Learning**

**\*Song** "Blessed Be Your Name" (see screen)

## **Ritual of Friendship**

### We Proclaim God's Word

**Congregational Invitation** "Where Children Belong" (see screen)

## **Children's Message**

(Children, ages 3 – 1<sup>st</sup> grade, may be excused for Children's Chapel.)

**Anthem** "Jesus Is the Living Stone" St. Thomas Music Team

**Second Reading** Exodus 17:1-7

**Sermon** "Water Fountain Rock"  
"I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock,  
and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Ex. 17:6

### We Respond to God's Word

## **Offering**

**\*Doxology**

**\*Prayer of Thanksgiving**

## **Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer**

### We Go in God's Name

**\*Closing Song** "How Great Thou Art" #625

**\*Benediction**

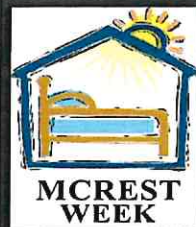
**Postlude**

**Prayer with a Stephen Minister**



## MCREST begins NEXT Sunday March 22-29

Due to the virus, and the need for available showers, we are now housing our MCREST guests at a hotel near the MCREST center.



We will still be supplying dinners and lunches, as well as toiletry gift bags, t-shirts, and socks.

Watch Facebook and email for updates on how you can help. You can still drop off items that you purchased from the papers handed out. Someone will be in the office this Monday & Tuesday 9am -12pm

Contact Trish with questions! 810-813-3121



### Safety First!

In this time of uncertainty, please watch out for your health.

Each Sunday, our sermon is videotaped and put on our website stthomaspres.com by Monday, and we are looking to start live-streaming worship soon.

**Safety matters because YOU matter!**

### Urgent — Donors Needed!!! Red Cross Blood Drive

March 30 1-7 pm



Donating blood is a safe process and healthy people are strongly urged to make an appointment to give!

Sign up Today online at Redcrossblood.org



### PALM SUNDAY

Sunday, April 5 Worship at 10am

Join us as we usher in the presence of the Lord with waving palms, and kick off Holy Week!

Stephen Ministry is checking to see if there is interest for a new GRIEFSHARE support group on Saturday mornings starting April 25 - running thru early August.

If you are interested or have questions, please see Chris Kring 586-549-0117

## PRAYERS FOR...



### Immediate Prayers for:

The Wandmacher/Lange families Richard & Dianne Dunlap

Ongoing Prayers for: Denny Davis

Homebound/ Assisted Living: Betty Brush, Dick Morgan, John Timmermans, Evelyn Smith, Dolores Dorrough, Janet Hicks

~Prayers for those serving our Nation:

Marley DeClerck, Craig Tobey

~Prayers for Park United Presbyterian, our sister church

### Prayer in the Midst of Fear over the Coronavirus

Jesus Christ,

Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process.

May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve.

Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace. Amen

## BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

16 Dustin Boudreau  
Nicole Card  
Nancy MacDonald



17 Joshua Sifton  
Henry Sifton  
Tim Trublowksi

20 Emily Lindsey  
Chris McLean  
21 Scott Nestor



16 Jim & Michelle Webber

### On-line or Text Giving

For On-line Giving,

Go to:

www.stthomaspres.com  
and click the "Give Now" box

For Text Giving, Text \$  
amount to donate to  
5862001555

Per Capita is \$30.55 per member

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Offerings from March 8

Budget Revenue: \$ 9,066

Budget 2020 \$ 7,933

Finance Update ~ February 29, 2020

Pledge Giving + Other Income= YTD Income

\$ 59,022 \$ 10,100 \$ 69,122

YTD Budget \$ 50,649

\$ 68,750 NET \$ 18,473

Prepaid Pledge Balance~ \$ 63,300

## DRY ROCKS TO WATER FOUNTAINS

Read Exodus 17:1-7

Laurajeantuman.com (edited for space)

This is one of the wilderness stories. The Israelites are between slavery and empire. It happens after they've watched their firstborn sons being thrown into a river and before they see God make a space for them in a fertile country where they will have several hundred years of safety and prosperity. This is a wandering story. This is a story of in-between times and what we do in them.

They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?"

So my first reaction to these ridiculous, eternally complaining Israelites is... are you for real? After all the miracles you've experienced? You saw God collapse an empire for your salvation. You watched an ocean open and walked through it. The last time you were hungry God ripped open the sky and gave you magical bread to eat.

And then after all this, the Israelites get thirsty. And just like clockwork, they form a "back to Egypt" committee and start asking where the water is, and where God is. And I want to wrinkle up my self-righteous nose and say, "for real? What is up with you, Israel?"

But my 2nd reaction is that the Israelites' needs seem super legitimate. They're in the desert, and they are thirsty. And there is NO water. How long were they supposed to wait for God to provide water? Were they supposed to form a prayer circle, or encourage each other to "keep trusting God", until they keel over and die? At what point do we shout up at the sky — Listen to me! I. Am. Thirsty.

So the story goes. The Israelites complain to Moses to do something, and Moses throws the Israelites under the bus, and tells God that these people won't stop whining... and God gives them water. There is no reprimand. There is no punishment. There is no shaming.

It turns out that my narrative of the Israelites testing and grumbling doesn't come from the voice of God at all. We're seeing this story through the eyes of Moses, a tired and overworked leader. When God steps into this story to supply the needs of God's people, God has no rebuke and no punishment. God just provides.

And oh my goodness, in the middle of the desert, all dryness and dustiness and sand in your throat, God pulls water out of a rock. God drags thirst-quenching water to give to God's people. Because this story isn't really just about whether God is giving us water on days when we can barely breathe because our lungs are so dry. In the end, they (and we) want to know: "is the Lord with us or not?" [v 7]. These texts are full of sorrow, and fear, and lost purpose. They have stepped out of enslavement, but the next step wasn't a brand new creation, but total confusion. They're lost. And they're afraid that they're alone. Like the Israelites — we want to know if the Lord is here, in the desert, or if we've just been forgotten. We are asking for water, because we're thirsty, but we're really wondering if the Lord is with us or not.

And I don't know why, in this passage, and the manna story, and in Exodus itself, why God waits to intervene until the people cry out. I don't know why God waits. But I do know that God does not wait forever. We follow the covenant God, Emmanuel, "God with us" — who is with us when we groan and with us when we whine and with us when we doubt. Emmanuel is with us in between when we are freed and when we begin to flourish. I don't know why the wilderness can sometimes be so large and so empty. But I do know that Egypt is in the rear-view mirror, and the Promised Land is real and solid even if it's still ahead of us. And I do know that here and now, no matter why we're afraid and how much we try to strain and turn back — here, now, God will continue to make dry rocks into water fountains until we get to where we're going.

ST. THOMAS COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
55355 Mound Road, Shelby Township, MI 48316  
stthomaspres.com Office Hours Mon & Thurs 9-3, Fri 9-1 586-781-3025

## WELCOME TO WORSHIP

MARCH 15, 2020

INTERIM PASTOR  
REV. DR. JIM MONNETT



### Welcome Visitors!

We are so happy you have joined us for worship this morning! Stop by our Welcome Center located at the front entrance. Please join us for coffee and cookies after the service.



Hearing Assistance  
Receivers Available  
See an Usher for help.

WiFi: STCPCguest  
Password: stthomas



### Children and Worship

Children of all ages are welcome in worship!

Also, there is child care available all morning for infants & toddlers in our nursery, which is staffed by two people each week. Ask an usher for directions.

Children's Chapel, an age-appropriate worship for children ages 3 through 3rd grade, begins right after the Children's Sermon. The children will be led by their teacher to the class from worship.

Worship Bags are located outside the Sanctuary. Children of all ages may take a bag, add books, coloring books, crayons, and any other items from the table into worship. Please return the items and bag to the table after the service. Thank you!!

## This Week at St. Thomas

TODAY, MARCH 15

WORSHIP at 10 am  
11:15 am Good Friday Practice  
CANCELLED —LIFT

MONDAY, MARCH 16

11:00 am AA Meeting  
1:30 pm FAR~ Music & Art Therapy  
7:00 pm Bible Tasting & Wine Study

TUESDAY, MARCH 17

Happy St. Patrick's Day!!  
10:30 am Real Women, Real Faith  
11:00 am AA Meeting  
2:30 pm FAR—Music & Art Therapy  
6:00 pm Music Team Rehearsal  
6:00 pm AA Anniversary Party  
8:00 pm Al-Anon Meeting

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

11:00 am AA Meeting  
1:30 pm FAR — Music & Art Therapy  
7:00 pm WILD—Youth Crew  
7:00 pm Deacons—DATE CHANGE

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

CANCELLED—Senior Lunch  
7:30 pm AA Meeting

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

11:00 am Funeral for Cameron Lange

NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 22

MCREST WEEK BEGINS  
WORSHIP at 10 am  
11:15 pm MCREST Set-up  
7:00 pm Deacons serve dinner

## LOOKING AHEAD...

"...love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action." ~1 John 3:18

MARCH 22-29

Sign up to Help!  
MCREST  
Week

MARCH 29

Jazz Trio  
At 10 am  
worship

Safety First

Pancake  
Breakfast  
Cancelled

Holy Week Services

April 9 Maundy Thursday — 7 pm  
April 10 Good Friday — 7 pm; led by youth  
EASTER SUNDAY  
April 12 TWO Services ~ 9 & 11am