

<p style="text-align:center">NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS WEEK OF JULY 18—24, 2010</p>
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Welcome to Our Visitors and Newcomers! We extend a warm welcome to all who are visiting us today. We are glad you are here, and invite you to enjoy our hospitality at the coffee hour after the 10:00 am service. Please pick up a packet of Visitor Information to the left of the front doors, and we encourage you to sign our guest register.

No matter what your religious experiences might have been, and no matter where you are on your spiritual journey, please know that you are welcome here, and that you are invited to participate in our worship, fellowship, education, and parish life.

The Rev. William R. White

Rest in Peace, Gay Williams: Gay Williams, who attended St. Thomas before moving back to Meridian, and who recently returned to Diamondhead, went home to the Lord on July 14 while admitted to Woodland Village Nursing Center for a rehab assignment. Arrangements are incomplete as of the deadline for this notice.

Prayer Ministry: Members of the Prayer Ministry will be available in the Prayer Chapel in the back of the church during Communion, and also after the service. You are encouraged to share in this ministry if you desire prayer for yourself or others.

Wednesday Healing Service at 6:00 pm: Our services of Holy Eucharist and Healing are each Wednesday at 6:00 pm. You are invited to come to either or both services. Eucharist is celebrated first, followed by a dismissal. The healing service begins shortly thereafter.

Parish Picnic on August 15. Invite Friends: We will have our annual picnic after the 10:00 am service on August 15 at the pavilion west of the church. Just as we did last year, the Men's Breakfast Group will buy, bring, and prepare all the food. We are asked to pay \$5.00 per person in advance so the men can buy the food. Kids are free. Iced Tea and water will be provided. Don't bring anything, unless you want to bring soft drinks or other beverages. There will be a waterslide and games for the kids. Details with sign-up sheets are in Johnson Hall.

Bulletin Insert to Invite Friends: Your service bulletin has an insert this week that you can use to give us the names of people to whom the church could send invitations to our Annual Picnic (see above). We also are planning one or more "Come and See Nights" at the church in September to offer an introduction to St. Thomas, our ministries, and parish life. This also would be for friends and neighbors. Please complete the information and return it to the office, or place it in the offering plate one of the upcoming Sundays. Please note the deadlines.

Sunday Program for Older Kids: Regular Sunday School will resume in September. During the summer the Sunday School kids are treated to short and entertaining biblical movies at the 10:00 am service, and then will join the congregation during the Peace. We will meet in the PIT (Parishioners in Training) room that we share with the Flower Guild.

Adult Education for July and August: Deacon Dave will offer an adult education class today on the practice of theological reflection. Classes will continue every Sunday through Labor Day, except for our Parish Picnic on August 15. The schedule is detailed in the list of Coming Events below.

Summer Bible Study, Swim and Sip: A summer bible study program continues to supplement the regular Monday study group, which is taking a summer recess. The study meets Thursday at 3:00 pm at the White's home, and will continue weekly through Thursday September 2, after which the Monday program at the church will resume on a regular basis. For questions or information please call Susan White.

Blessing of the Backpacks, Youth Spaghetti Dinner: Please mark your calendars for Sunday, August 1. We will have a service of blessing of the backpacks at the 10:00 am service. Kids, bring your backpacks and anything in them you want blessed. We also will bless all of our schoolteachers at that time.

In addition we would like to purchase some backpacks for needy kids in Grades K-5. Cost of a backpack and school supplies is \$30.00. We also want to get \$15.00 gift certificates for kids in grades 6-12 because their school needs are more variable. School counselors will identify the kids who have needs. These items also will be blessed on August 1. Please sign up in Johnson Hall, where there are more detailed instructions.

Also on that day, August 1, the youth will put on a spaghetti lunch for everyone in the parish after the 10:00 am service. Please be sure to stay around for this great event.

Donations for the Needy: An increasing number of needy people from Hancock County have been visiting the office to seek financial assistance. Fr. Bill's Discretionary Account exists for this purpose, There is no line item in the church budget for this purpose. A box is in the narthex near the baptismal font to receive donations to help the needy of Hancock County. We do not give cash, but usually provide gift cards for Rouse's and the Chevron Gas Station, payments directly to utilities for past due bills, and emergency housing for one or two nights at the EconoLodge in Diamondhead. In a few cases we have helped in other ways (i.e. Walmart gift cards for toys at Christmas) as the circumstances warranted. The box will be a permanent fixture, and we urge you to offer tax-deductible donations at any time.

Discount Dining Cards, Fine Dining While Helping The Church: St. Thomas is offering the above dining card for 20 free meals for \$20.00. The bearer will receive one free entre when purchasing an entre at Salut  and Back Bay restaurants (10 meals each). The church keeps one half of the price of each card. Cards are available in the church office. This is a great deal, and helps the church as well.

Woodland Village Ministry Continues: Each Friday we conduct a worship service at the Woodland Village Nursing Center on Gex Road south of the church. There is a service of Evening Prayer, with Eucharist on the fourth Friday of each month. Much of this work is done by Lay Worship Leaders, Lay Readers, and Lay Eucharistic Ministers. This is a wonderful opportunity to serve the elderly in our community in their own setting. Please see Fr. Bill if you are interested in serving in this ministry.