



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021



WE ARE CALLED TO CULTIVATE SPIRITUAL
GROWTH IN OUR COMMUNITY AND SHARE
THE LOVE OF CHRIST WITH ALL



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Table of Contents

...Embracing from our BCP "The General Thanksgiving"

Our Creation

Morgan's Town *pg. 3*

Morgan's St. Thomas Episcopal Church *pg. 3*

Our Preservation

Pastoral Care *pg. 4*

Worship *pg. 5*

Ministries *pg. 5*

Our Blessings

Local and Regional Amenities *pg. 6*

The Church *pg. 6*

Financial Security *pg. 7*

Ahead with Jesus Christ

The Congregation *pg. 8*

Our Vision *pg. 8*

Specific Qualities our New Rector Might Possess *pg. 9*

Appendices: *for Further Reading*

A. Additional St. Thomas History *pg. 10*

B. Recent Parish Clergy *pg. 13*

C. Additional Amenities *pg. 17*

D. Photos *pg. 18*



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Our Creation

*"For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything."-
Hebrews 3:4*

Morgan's Town

Thomas Morgan, Elizabeth, his wife and their four sons, John, Francis, William, and Jacob were among the earliest settlers in what today is Caernarvon Township, Berks County. It is believed that the Morgan family came from the Diocese of Bangor in Caernarvonshire, Wales. Morgan had no known connections with any church in this area, but two particular bequests in his will, written in 1740, were: one acre of land on his farm lying south of the Conestoga Creek for use as a family cemetery, and another much larger tract of land to his sons in trust with the income to be used "...towards building a church or house of worship and maintaining of a gospel ministry therein... to be built on that acre of land I have already given for a burying place." The little village was referred to as "Morgan's Town" or even "Caernarvon Town," but eventually became known as Morgantown.

For more detailed information about the history of Morgantown, visit: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morgantown,_Pennsylvania

Morgan's St. Thomas Episcopal Church

Following Thomas Morgan's death in early 1741, there is no record of the church or ministry he wished to establish until 1765. Then, sometime prior to August 1765, the Vestry of Bangor Church authorized Jacob Morgan, youngest son of Thomas, to build a chapel on the one-acre lot set aside in the will for a burial ground. The Rev. Thomas Barton, a native of Ireland serving several Anglican parishes in Lancaster County, wrote in a letter dated August 8, 1765 to the London-based Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) in Foreign Parts,

"I beg leave at present to acquaint the Society that on Sunday last (August 4, 1765) I opened a new church in the County of Berks, about five miles from the Church of Caernarvon (Bangor Church) and 26 miles from this place (Lancaster). It is a small stone edifice, decently finished, and has been built in compliance with the last will and testament of one Thomas Morgan.... Though there did not appear at first to be any immediate necessity for a church that so near of Caernarvon, yet I am now convinced it may be very useful."

The construction of the first church building was apparently financed by the members of Bangor, the status of St. Thomas at that time being a chapel-of-ease in the parish of Bangor. It seems also that a school was operated in conjunction with St. Thomas Church.

It is apparent from the records of Bangor Church that the vestries of both Bangor and St. Thomas were made up of men from both parishes, and joint meetings of both congregations were held from time to time.

For more detailed information about the history of St. Thomas, please see Appendix A.



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Our Preservation

*"We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give."-
Winston Churchill.*

Pastoral Care

The Rev. Megan Dembi, Priest-in-charge, 2015-2021

Megan Dembi, the daughter of Romanian immigrants, was born and grew up near Boise, ID. She graduated from the College of Idaho with a B.A. in Religion. Megan received her Master of Divinity degree from Virginia Theological Seminary where she met her husband Dennis Reid (also an Episcopal priest who served St. Alban's Church in Sinking Spring from 2018 until 2021), and she was ordained to the priesthood in the Diocese of Idaho. Megan served two churches in the Diocese of Washington DC before being called to serve St. Thomas. She and Dennis lived in Wyomissing. During their service in Berks County, Megan and Dennis became the parents of a daughter Lydia, born in 2017 and a son Silas born in 2020. Megan and Dennis moved to Idaho to be closer to her parents. Her final service at St. Thomas was on Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021.



Within a few weeks The Rev. Dolores Evans Smith, former supply priest during 2011-2015, accepted our invitation to return to her former position approximately 2 Sundays per month. Sundays, when pastor Dolores is not available, Rite II Morning Prayer is led by St. Thomas lay people.

The Rev. Dolores Evans Smith, Supply Priest 2011-2015, 2021-

Pastor Dolores would come to St. Thomas three Sundays each month where she presided over the 8:30 AM Rite I and the 10:30 AM Rite 11 services until June 2013 when we cut back to a single service, at 9:30 AM. On the Sundays when she was absent, the service was led by parish members Rev. Charles Kapps, PhD, and Rev. Donald Howells, Vocational Deacon.

Pastor Dolores was married on May 18, 2013, to William Smith (at right), and they live in Conestoga, Lancaster County. Dolores retired from her pastorate at St. Thomas on June 28, 2015. In retirement, she serves as a supply priest in both the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Bethlehem.



The Rev. Eleanor (Ellie) Hart, Priest-in-Charge	2002-2011
The Rev. John C. Kolb, Supply Priest	1995-2002
The Rev. Judith Cowper, Rector	1999-2002
The Rev. Robert Mikol, Interim and Various Supply Priests	1997-1998
The Rev. John Harvard, Parish Priest	1987-1997
The Rev. Kilmer Sites, Interim Priest	1986-1987
The Rev. Eugene S. Patton, Rector	1966-1986

Refer to Appendix B for additional Information



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Worship

Weekly Sunday services are held at 10:00 AM. In the absence of a priest we have committed to hold morning prayer services. Many of our parish members are enjoying their golden years and recall the time when the 1928 Prayer Book Morning Prayer was used quite regularly for Sunday worship, Holy Communion being celebrated once a month or so. The Morning Prayer service includes the reading of a sermon from an on-line source that is based on the readings for that Sunday.

At times when an ordained priest is celebrating, (about every two weeks) Rite II is most often used. There is one acolyte who lights and extinguishes the two altar candles prior to, and at the end of the worship service. Congregants enthusiastically sign-up several weeks in advance for reading the lessons and the psalm. Only the priest is vested.

Birthday and Anniversary Recognition occurs during Sunday service and recognizes parishioners who have celebrated the occasions during the previous week. Donations to the Heifer Project are made by the honorees (a cow – piggy bank is used for these donations).

Ministries

Worship services constitute our most important ministry, as it is our belief that stewardship is most fulfilling when it is Eucharistic centered. Encompassed within any worship service are various ministries, including music, which parishioners find spiritually inspiring. An outgrowth of worship is, of course, outreach. Our members value stewardship and are generous when sharing their time, talents, and treasure. As a need arises, congregants are assisted in a variety of ways, including telephone calls, notes and cards, meals or shopping, and transportation. Donations of various types are routinely provided by St. Thomas folks to many groups, including the community Food Pantry, providing Twin Valley students with necessary classroom items, and to the Reading Opportunity House for homeless people. At Christmas, an Angel Tree provides gifts for nearby nursing home residents.

A variety of groups, including AA, Weight Watchers, Tai Chi and Girl Scouts have all benefited from scheduling meetings and events at our church buildings. Within our parish, there is a strong sense of community both within and beyond our walls. Those who are no longer able to work physically within the community and at the church continue to be supportive and faithfully attend services and other events.

We have an active prayer chain that supports members of our church as well as people beyond our parish family. A social hour on Sunday and a monthly dinner at one of a variety of nearby restaurants provide an informal opportunity to gather and compare ministry ideas and experiences (*Appendix D*).



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Our Blessings *“No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.”— Charles Dickens.*

Local and Regional Amenities

Situated at the southernmost tip of Berks County and bordered by Lancaster County and Chester County, St. Thomas is conveniently located 2 miles from the Pennsylvania Turnpike interchange. The Morgantown community has become a popular area for families seeking an affordable cost of living.

There has been a lot of commercial growth in the area. There are many small businesses, antique shops, banks, fast food restaurants, pharmacies, doctors, orthodontists, dentists, and veterinarians. Many opportunities exist for recreational activity in the area.

The social service related governmental agencies serving our community are mainly those of Berks County. However, Chester County and Lancaster County services are also available. The breadth and diversity of the agencies serving the area are vast, and encompass several day care facilities, including Little Mates Child Development Center, the Whole Child Learning Center, and a Goddard School.

Regional hospitals including The Reading Hospital and St. Joseph’s Medical Center, both in nearby Reading, are about 20 to 30 minutes from Morgantown. Lancaster General Hospital, Heart of Lancaster Hospital and Lancaster Regional Hospital are in nearby Lancaster County. Additionally, Philadelphia and Chester county Hospitals are no more than an hour away.

The public school district, Twin Valley, has three elementary centers, which accommodate grades K-4; Honey Brook Elementary Center, Twin Valley Elementary Center, and Robeson Elementary Center. Twin Valley Middle School and Twin Valley High School are the other two schools in our school district. Many of the buildings have been expanded and renovated to provide state of the art facilities, particularly at the high school. There are also three Christian Schools in the area: Twin Valley Bible Academy, Conestoga Christian School, and High Point Baptist. Nearby institutions of higher learning are in the Reading area and include Penn State University - Berks Campus; Reading Area Community College; Alvernia University; Albright College and Berks Technical Institute. State Universities that are not too far away include Kutztown University in Northern Berks and Millersville University in Lancaster County, both about 50 minutes from Morgantown.

St. Thomas is a landmark in this community. We are easily accessible at a central location.

The Church

St. Thomas is located 100 yards north of Main Street (Route 23) along Route 10. The property presently includes three buildings, the Church, the Fellowship Hall and the Parish House. The Church is a one-story structure that was built in 1922 after a fire destroyed the original church. A choir area seats 13.



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

An enclosed breezeway leads from the church to our newest building, the Fellowship Hall, which was built in 1993. Our Nursery with a child's restroom is in a separate room from the main Social Hall. Within this building, immediately adjacent to the Social Hall space is a commercial type kitchen. The Social Hall is where our receptions, congregational meetings and dinners take place. As mentioned in other sections, this area also provides meeting space for several local organizations.

The third building is free standing, the old Parish House. It is one of the oldest structures in Morgantown, built by the parish in 1827 for use as a public school. It is a two-story building. The second story is divided into two areas, the Church Office and the Rector's office. The first floor, following some renovations in 2016, is used as a meeting room when the larger Social Hall is occupied.



Church

Fellowship Hall

Parish House

← Parking →

Paved parking is on the southern side of the Fellowship Hall and Parish House and holds about 30 vehicles. Our cemetery, owned and maintained by St. Thomas, is on the northern, western and eastern sides of the church. It is filled, with the exception of a new Memorial Garden that serves as a cinerarium. Morgantown has its own cemetery, which is located across from St. Thomas on Route 10.

Morgantown Athletic Association owns the land east of the church, which includes a picnic pavilion and athletic facilities used for baseball. Caernarvon Township built an adjoining playground. A church bell was added a few years ago and in 2019, all three buildings received a fresh coating of stucco.

Financial Security

Our Diocese of Bethlehem offers an opportunity for parishes to participate in an investment program, the Diocesan Investment Trust, or DIT. Using the 7% total return policy as suggested by the diocese, St. Thomas currently receives a portion of the annual income from interest on their invested funds. A draw on the investment principal has not happened in many years.

Throughout the pandemic, while by order from the Bishop, St. Thomas held no in person worship services, there remained no accounts payable; the Treasurer was able to pay all bills on time. Well in advance of the June 30, 2020 deadline for applications, St Thomas applied for and received a loan from the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP). That enabled us to continue to pay our pastor and secretary/sexton, while maintaining a positive cash position. The loan has since been forgiven and there is no debt. As with many churches, a large portion of the annual income is provided by a few parishioners. The financial position remains strong.



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Ahead with Jesus Christ

“True faith is focused in and on the Lord Jesus Christ and always leads to action.” - David A. Bednar

The Congregation

St Thomas Parishioners are a friendly community of individuals and enjoy meeting and worshiping with new people. Many members frequently travel, and while away, attend Episcopal or Anglican churches in other countries. Their visits have been meaningful to them, and they have shared their experiences, which is always of interest to our congregation. Learning about and meeting people of other cultures and with diverse lifestyles, accepting and celebrating the differences, while also finding and celebrating the similarities bring a sense of global harmony to our church community.

We enjoy children and encourage their participation in our church services and activities. Prior to the pandemic, once a month we conducted a “Kids First” service in which the children participated in the service, presented lessons, and led songs for the congregation.

Our Vision

St. Thomas is looking for a parish priest to provide spiritual worship and leadership through regular Sunday services and through observances of principal seasons and Holy Days as well as providing pastoral care to an aging population. Our goal is to exist in harmony by understanding and respecting each other's points of view. Most appreciated are those sermons and teachings that are devoid of political references and innuendos. The pulpit should not be a soapbox. It is our hope that our new pastor can be a uniting and binding factor, bringing new ideas for spiritual growth and increased membership. With Bangor Episcopal Church only 4 miles away in the Diocese of Central PA, it is important that St. Thomas differentiate itself, knowing that which may attract a certain element of local residents to choose one parish over the other.

With guidance from our Bishop, our conviction is *we are embarking upon a spiritual and not a hiring process*. The qualities we seek are our own expressions of prayerful thought and experiences over years of parish and community involvement. It is our fervent desire that through new energy, we enjoy solid growth and renewed stewardship to Thomas Morgan's Town and Church.



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Specific Qualities our New Rector Might Possess

...we seek growth, and renewed stewardship to Thomas Morgan's church and town

General

- Mediator / communicator
- Youth involvement and learning
- Hospital visits, routine nurturing of Parish family
- Occasional home visits with parishioners

Worship

- Thoughtful, Gospel based sermons
- Vestment cognizance
- Lay Involvement and guidance
- Acolyte program
- Altar and Liturgical enhancements
- Adherence to 1979 Book of Common Prayer

Leadership

- Decision maker (following credible suggestions)
- Explain difficult issues
- Discourage political discourse on church property
- Clarification with St. Thomas identity

Community

- Presence and visibility
- Parish involvement opportunities

Administrative

- Financial savvy
- Office and personnel oversight
- Municipal involvement, as Rector deems necessary or helpful
- Computer & App (Realm or Constant Contact or Mail Chimp) abilities



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Appendices

Appendix A *With acknowledgement of parish member Evans Goodling's meticulous recording of St. Thomas' history.*

The Birth of the Parish in 1765

Following Thomas Morgan's death in early 1741, there is no record of the church or ministry he wished to establish until 1765. Then, sometime prior to August 1765, the Vestry of Bangor Church authorized Jacob Morgan, youngest son of Thomas, to build a chapel on the one-acre lot set aside in the will for a burial ground.

The Rev. Thomas Barton, a native of Ireland serving several Anglican parishes in Lancaster County, wrote in a letter dated August 8, 1765 to the London-based Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) in Foreign Parts,

"I beg leave at present to acquaint the Society that on Sunday last (August 4, 1765) I opened a new church in the County of Berks, about five miles from the Church of Caernarvon (Bangor Church) and 26 miles from this place (Lancaster). It is a small stone edifice, decently finished, and has been built in compliance with the last will and testament of one Thomas Morgan...."

The construction of the first church building was apparently financed by the members of Bangor, the status of St. Thomas at that time being a chapel-of-ease in the parish of Bangor. It seems also that a school was operated in conjunction with St. Thomas Church.

It is apparent from the records of Bangor Church that the vestries of both Bangor and St. Thomas were made up of men from both parishes, and joint meetings of both congregations were held from time to time.

The Revolution

Following the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Barton left the area in 1778, intending to return to Ireland. With the departure of Barton, the services of the Church of England were suspended in the little stone chapel on Thomas Morgan's farm, as they were in all Anglican churches throughout the Province, although the school may have continued. The search for a new minister for Bangor Church and St. Thomas Chapel must have been quite a challenge. Due to the extreme scarcity of Episcopal clergy following the withdrawal of SPG missionaries during the Revolution, a German Calvinist, the Rev. T.F. Illing, was called to serve the people of Bangor and St. Thomas in 1780.

Church Building Moved to Morgantown (1786-1790)

When Jacob Morgan laid out the village of Morgan's Town in 1770, he had set aside three lots for church purposes: Lot 31 for the parsonage, Lot 32 for the church, and Lot 33 for the church garden. The location of the church and school on the original one-acre tract on Thomas Morgan's farm was about a half mile south, not very convenient to those who took up residence in the village. Therefore in 1786, the state legislature by charter granted the congregation permission to sidestep the provisions of Thomas Morgan's will to clear the way for moving the church and school to Lot 32 in the village. The charter set the number of vestry members at 13, including the two wardens, Col. Jacob Morgan and his nephew David Morgan. By 1790, the old building had been disassembled and moved to the present site. Although the



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

parish eventually lost Lot 33 due to some trickery of one of its own members, the present buildings and parking lot are located on Lots 31 and 32.

Near-death and Resurrection (1793-1805)

Following the departure of the Rev. Illing in 1792, Bangor and St. Thomas Churches, except for brief periods, were without a rector for more than a decade. The building was deteriorating, and with the founding of St. Mary's Church at Warwick, about nine miles to the east, there were three Episcopal churches besides St. Thomas within a radius of about ten miles. Consequently, there seemed little need at the time to keep St. Thomas open. But then, a young lawyer named Levi Bull, having experienced a remarkable conversion, responded to a call to the ordained ministry. Through his evangelism there began a spiritual awakening in Morgantown that led to steady growth in the parish for the next 40 years.

The Levi Bull Years (1805-1848)

The Rev. Levi Bull, D.D., was born in 1780 at Warwick Furnace, Chester County, the son of Lt. Col. Thomas Bull and his wife Ann Hunter. (Col. Bull was a member of the vestry of St. Thomas Church after 1786.) After having five daughters, Levi's mother prayed for a son, and when he was born, in gratitude to God she dedicated her son to the priesthood and named him Levi. He became a lawyer in Lancaster, but following a serious illness when he was 20 years old, he felt the Lord calling him to redirect his life. Accordingly, he undertook religious studies, was ordained deacon in 1805 and to the priesthood in 1806. With Levi Bull as rector, the parish in Morgantown began to grow, and by 1824, the Vestry and Wardens of St. Thomas Church had decided to rebuild and expand the church and school facilities. The old two-story church and school building were torn down and a new one-story church was built in its place, with a new two-story schoolhouse built three years later, in 1827. The new church building was consecrated on August 21, 1825 by Bishop William White of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. St. Thomas Church first appears in the Diocese of Pennsylvania Journals in 1825, where Levi Bull's parochial report for St. Thomas is recorded, this being the first evidence that it was recognized as a parish separate from Bangor.

During his pastorate, which lasted until 1848, Levi Bull served several churches simultaneously, tirelessly riding on horseback between them, preaching and baptizing people by the hundreds without regard to their ethnic origins. The result was that the four Episcopal churches in his charge, namely Bangor in Churchtown, St. Thomas in Morgantown, St. Mary's in Warwick, and St Mark's near Honey Brook grew steadily in numbers of baptized members and in Christian influence in the tri-county region.

The Struggle to Survive (1848-1921)

The momentum of Levi Bull's ministry carried the church until the Civil War period. The congregation had fallen to 25 communicants by 1862, and the church building was badly in need of repairs. In that year, the church was repaired and extensively modified with a second-story nave and chancel added, the ground floor being remodeled to incorporate a social room, kitchen and utility room. During the year-long project to upgrade the church building, the congregation met bi-weekly in the Methodist church which was graciously offered for that purpose.



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

In 1871, St. Thomas Church found itself in the newly formed Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, with its seat in Christ Church, Reading. The congregation continued to dwindle and few rectors stayed more than two or three years before moving on. Between 1848 and 1896 the parish had ten different rectors, with occasional vacancies of a year or more. By 1895 the membership had fallen so much that it was impossible to find 13 men to serve on the vestry, and the first women vestry members, four in number, were elected. Women have served with distinction on every vestry since then. In 1897 the Rev. George Zellers was called as rector and he served until 1905 and again from 1919 to 1921. His great-granddaughter, the Rev. Eleanor Hart currently serves in the Diocese of Bethlehem.

In 1908, the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania was further subdivided, with St. Thomas assigned to the newly formed Diocese of Bethlehem. Between 1908 and 1918 the parish was served by six different rectors, including the Rev. Francis M. Wetherill, a great-grandson of Col. Jacob Morgan, in 1911-1913.

Disaster Strikes the Church Building

On Tuesday night, May 28, 1918, the church building was struck by lightning and caught fire. The effects of the lightning strike were not immediately evident, but apparently the dry wooden shingles in the old roof smoldered for some time before bursting into flame. However, because a new metal roof had been installed over top of the old shingles, it was impossible to get at the fire to put it out quickly. Eventually it burned throughout the building, leaving only the walls standing. Services were held the following Sunday afternoon in the schoolhouse and regularly, although not weekly, maintained there for the next five years.

Very soon after the fire, Professor William B. Plank, longtime member of the parish, was urged by Mrs. Sarah Kames, great-granddaughter of Colonel Morgan, to plan the rebuilding of the church.

The Rebuilding of St. Thomas Church

As the 1920s dawned in Morgantown, the condition of the property was very much on the minds of the vestry and the congregation. At a meeting held on October 29, 1921, after discussing plans for the church building, the vestry agreed to consult an architect and a practical builder with regard to the plans and costs. Professor Plank was delegated to meet further with the architect and to report back to the Vestry with cost estimates. It was eventually decided to incorporate into the new church the existing east, south, and west walls with their window openings and the doorway in the south wall.

In 1922 only nine services were held, but plans were well underway to begin rebuilding; the contract for the new church was signed on November 7, 1922.

The archdeacon reported to the Diocesan convention on May 1, 1923 that the new building for St. Thomas Church was nearly complete. The new church building was consecrated on July 16, 1925 by the Rt. Rev. Ethelbert Talbot.

Between 1921 and 1966, there were seven rectors at St. Thomas, none residing in the parish. Except for the Rev. Thomas Smythe who served for 21 years (while simultaneously serving St. Michael's in Birdsboro and St. Gabriel's at Douglassville), the average tenure of a priest at St. Thomas was less than four years. During this period, all of the rectors were also serving other nearby parishes.



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Appendix B *With acknowledgement of parish member Evans Goodling's meticulous recording of St. Thomas' history.*

Deacon



The Rev. Donald Howells, Vocational Deacon

The Rev. Donald Howells was an active lay person at St. Thomas for many years serving as acolyte, vestry member, church school teacher and licensed lay reader. With the support and guidance of the Rev. Eugene Patton he completed a three-year study program and was ordained as Deacon on December 19, 1970 in Trinity Church, Bethlehem by the Rt. Rev. Frederick Warnecke. In addition to serving in several Berks and Schuylkill County parishes, Don also served on special projects for Bishop Lloyd Gressle. As with Vocational Deacon tradition, he maintained private employment; his last was as Administrator of Episcopal House of Reading. Don continues as a member of St. Thomas.

Clergy



The Rev. Eleanor (Ellie) Hart, Priest-in-Charge ...2002-2011

The Rev. Eleanor (Ellie) Hart, graduated from Keene State College, Keene, NH, and received an MA degree in Counseling Psychology from Kutztown University. She received her theological education at the University of the South, Sewanee, TN. Pastor Ellie was ordained a deacon in 1989 and as a Missionary Priest in 1994. She accepted the call at St. Thomas in 2002. In addition to her parish responsibilities, she provided pastoral and psychological care at Berks County Prison and with the Berks County AIDS Network. Ellie is the great-granddaughter of the Rev. George Zellers who served St. Thomas from 1897 to 1905. When Pastor Ellie was occasionally absent from the pulpit, the Rev. Charles A. Kapps, PhD (retired) and the Rev. Donald Howells, Permanent deacon, both members, conducted services.



The Rev. John C. Kolb, Supply Priest ...1995-2002

The Rev. John Kolb was born in Boston MA in 1930 and served in the U.S. Navy as Lieutenant Commander and Chaplain during the Vietnam War. He was priest-in-charge at The Church of the Epiphany at Royersford, PA and a long-time rector of The Church of the Holy Apostles in Wynnewood, PA. During his frequent Sunday appearances at St. Thomas Church, he was noted for his regular introduction of controversial topics into his sermons, often with references to news items and editorials in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Then he would ask the congregation how many had read the article to which he was referring, and of course no one had. One Sunday, in response to this question, everyone raised into the air a copy of the newspaper that was handed out by a parishioner. He was momentarily speechless as everyone laughed, but he soon went on with his generally well-received sermon.



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021



The Rev. Judith Cowper, Rector

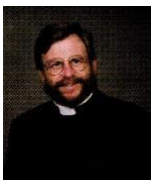
1999-2002

In early May of 1999, a call was extended to the Rev. Judith Cowper of the Diocese of Connecticut to become full-time rector of St. Thomas Church. She and her husband Clive Cowper moved to Caernarvon Township, Lancaster County, and Mother Judy preached her first sermon at St. Thomas on June 20, 1999. However, growth in the parish during the next few years was hampered due to turmoil resulting from events in the national church, and we lost some members as a result, including some who thought that the national church had taken on too many controversial positions on social issues. Most members however decided to remain and avoid taking sides in what appeared to be an unresolved political controversy. Shortly after Easter 2002, Mother Judy and Clive responded to a spiritual summons to return to their New England roots, bidding farewell to St. Thomas on April 7, 2002. The Rev. John Kolb was again called as interim rector for the next six months.



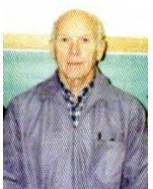
The Rev. Robert Mikol, Interim and Various Supply Priests ...1997-1998

In the summer of 1997, the Rev. Robert Mikol was assigned by the Diocese to serve as the interim priest, commencing on Sunday September 7 for approximately a year. He had been employed by the Lyons VA Medical Center in NJ as their Chaplain. He served in the Navy Reserves and had been very active in Vietnam Veterans causes. He and his wife Eileen were living in Bethlehem Township, Lehigh County, where he died on May 22, 2013. Commencing with the summer of 1998, services at St. Thomas were provided by supply priests, the Rev. Eleanor Hart, the Rev. John C. Kolb, the Rev. Caroline Bruschi, and by parish member Rev. Donald Howells, Deacon.



The Rev. John Harvard, Parish Priest ...1987-1997

The parish grew considerably during the Harvard years. Fr. John and his wife Susan and their children Tessa and William lived in Morgantown, maintaining a high level of visibility within the community. Much more about the Harvard family and their six years of service as missionaries for the Anglican Church in Peru can be found in the 1990 history of the parish. During his 10-year sojourn at St. Thomas, Fr. John continued his education and eventually was awarded the degree of Doctor of Ministry. With that, he received an offer from the Hill School, Pottstown, to fill a faculty position teaching religion and serving as a chaplain at this prominent old residential school. Fr. John died in Pottstown on March 27, 2005.



The Rev. Kilmer Sites, Interim Priest ...1986-1987

On Sunday, July 6, The Rev. Kilmer Sites became interim rector of both St. Thomas and St. Gabriel's, serving the parish for the next 13 months. The Rev. Kilmer Sites was born July 24, 1920, in Dayton, Virginia. He attended the University of West Virginia, receiving a BS degree in Electrical Engineering in 1942. In early 1943, he went on active duty with the U. S. Navy and served as a radar materiel officer, subsequently taking part in the invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944.



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Following the war's end, he entered Union Theological Seminary in New York City to study for the Presbyterian ministry. He later taught at Colgate University and served as minister of Haydenville (MA) Presbyterian Church. Within a year or so he began his entry into the Episcopal Church, spending a year at Harvard University, followed by 2-years as chaplain at the University of Rhode Island. About 1957, he accepted a call to St. Andrew's Church, Vestal, NY, where he served as rector for 30 years before retiring. Fr. Sites and his wife Elizabeth (Riley), both very fondly remembered by the entire parish, were the parents of four children. During his tenure, the parish lost no members, but instead continued to grow in numbers. Fr Sites died in May, 2005 in Holyoke, MA.



The Rev. Eugene S. Patton, Rector ...1966-1986

Gene, as he is usually known, was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, in December 1919. He grew up there, attending the University of Tennessee, graduating in 1941 with a BS degree in Business Administration. Much later, he earned a Master of Education in Media from Temple University (1971) and a Master of Science in Library Science at Drexel University (1976), both in Philadelphia. Fr. Patton entered the Army in December 1942 and served as a light machine gunner in the 94th Infantry Division. His three years of service included three months as a prisoner of war in Germany.

While employed as a retail lumber clerk, Gene married Nancy Allen Stillman in July 1946. They became the parents of four daughters; tragically, the youngest was killed in a car-truck accident in August, 1974. Following several secular employment positions, Patton entered Virginia Theological Seminary in 1958. After graduation and ordination, he served St. John's, Ashland, and Faith Church, Mahanoy City, until 1966, when he came to Morgantown to serve St. Thomas and Bangor Church, Churchtown, in the Diocese of Central PA, about 4 miles from Morgantown. In 1971, Patton resigned from Bangor to serve St. Thomas on a non-stipendiary basis. For ten years he was Director of Media Services at Chestnut Hill Academy, Philadelphia, and served the parish in the evenings and on weekends. In the fall of 1982, Patton returned to full time parish ministry at St. Thomas, and served until retirement in 1986. Since then, he has served as interim rector for St. Michael's, Birdsboro, and St. Elizabeth's, Allentown, and supplied for several months for Christ Church, Reading. Fr. Patton died in 1997 and is buried in Caernarvon Township Cemetery, across the road from St. Thomas.





Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Clergy from the beginning into 1987

Chronology of Rectors for St. Thomas Church

Period	Name	Other parishes served at the same time
1765–1778	The Rev. Thomas Barton	Bangor, St. James', St. John's
1780–1792	The Rev. Traugott Frederick Illing	Bangor, St. John's, Plow (Robeson Lutheran)
1793–1799	The Rev. Levi Heath	Bangor, St. John's, St. Paul's (Chester)
1799–1805	The Rev. Joseph Clarkson	Bangor, St. James'
1805–1848	The Rev. Lewi Bull	Bangor, St. Mary's, St. Mark's, St. Gabriel's
1848–1851	The Rev. James A. Woodward	St. Mark's
1851–1854	The Rev. Thomas Brinton Flower	St. Mark's
1854–1856	The Rev. Edward L. Lycett	Bangor
1856–1859	The Rev. Henry M. Stuart	Bangor, St. John's
1860–1864	The Rev. Francis E. Arnold	Bangor
1865–1867	The Rev. William R. Gries	Bangor
1869–1872	The Rev. Henry R. Smith	Bangor
1873–1876	The Rev. John Ireland	Bangor
1876–1892	The Rev. Samuel McElwee	Bangor
1893–1896	The Rev. Elijah Roke	Bangor
1897–1905	The Rev. George A. Zellers	Bangor
1908	The Rev. John C. Skottowe	Bangor
1908–1911	The Rev. George Van Fossen	
1911–1913	The Rev. Francis M. Wetherill	
1913–1917	The Rev. Harry Howe Bogert	St. Michael's
1917	The Rev. Alfred Quintin Plank	
1917–1918	The Rev. William DuHamel	St. Mary's, St. Gabriel's
1919–1921	The Rev. George A. Zellers	
1921–1924	The Rev. George D. Harris	St. Mary's, Bangor
1924–1926	The Rev. William Agate	Bangor, St. Mary's
1926–1935	The Rev. Frederick B. Hornby	Bangor
1935–1938	The Rev. Daniel Cargill Osborn, Jr.	St. Michael's, St. Gabriel's
1939–1942	The Rev. Irving Angell McGrew	St. Michael's, St. Gabriel's
1942–1963	The Rev. Thomas Bennett Smythe	St. Michael's, St. Gabriel's
1964–1965	The Rev. William E. O'Connell	St. Luke's (Reading)
1966–1986	The Rev. Eugene S. Patton	Bangor
1986–1987	The Rev. Kilmer Sites	St. Gabriel's
1987–present	The Rev. John Harvard	



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Appendix C ...*Additional Amenities*

Morgantown Crossings is a large shopping center, anchored by Walmart. The Morgantown Business Park and Thousand Oaks Corporate Center have many small manufacturing and assembly plants. A few of the larger plants are Morgan Trailers, Timet, and Viwinco.

Twin Valley Recreation Association owns the local swimming pool. Our neighboring Elverson community is home to the Twin Valley Fitness Center and Snap Fitness. West Nantmeal, a neighboring township, offers St. Mary's, with an indoor pool, facilities for retreats, and a park with tennis courts. Nearby parks include Livingood Park, French Creek State Park, Nolde Forest, and Blue Marsh Recreation Area. Berks county is also home to Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site. Morgantown is located less than 20 minutes south of Reading, PA, home to the GoggleWorks Center for the Arts, Santander Arena, and minor league sports, as well as Santander Performing Arts Center – home to the Reading Symphony Orchestra.

Regionally, Philadelphia is just a one hour drive, giving us all the amenities of the big city such as museums, theatre, orchestra, major league sports, and teaching hospitals. Located in neighboring Lancaster county are the American Music Theatre and Sight and Sound Theater, the largest faith-based live theatre in the country. We are 1 hour and 30 minutes from the Pocono mountain resorts, about 2 hours and 30 minutes from the Atlantic Ocean or New York City, and about 50 miles from Harrisburg.

Governmental Agencies serving our community include national agencies such as the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, DARE, and the American Cancer, Lung and Heart Associations. Berks County provides AARP, Office for the Aging, Talkline, Police Athletic League, Childline, and Headstart. There are also numerous support groups that meet in the area, including Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-anon, Weight Watchers, and TOPS. Morgantown also supports the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts of America as well as Awanas, a Christian based boys and girls club.

In 2010, our Morgantown Fire Company joined forces with our neighbor the Elverson Fire Company to build the Twin Valley Fire Company Ladder 69. The new facility is considered "state of the art" and has been used as a model for design by other communities. The Twin Valley Fire Company also houses a full-time EMS that's available to surrounding counties. Support for legal problems is provided by county legal aid societies.

Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

Appendix D ...*Photographs*

Dinner Out:



The Church:





Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

The Fellowship Hall:



The Parish House:



Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

The Grounds:





Parish Profile, Fall, 2021

The Neighbors:



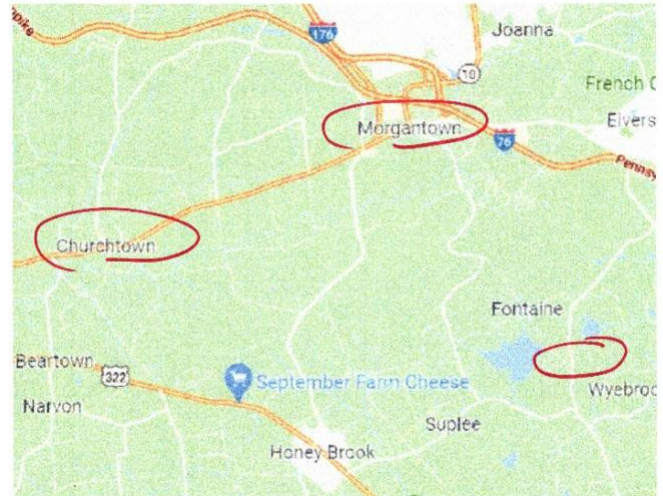
Morgantown, Main Street looking west. St. Thomas is a right turn just ahead and then about 100 yards to the church.
Diocese of Bethlehem



Churchtown, Main Street looking west. Bangor Episcopal Church will celebrate its 300th Anniversary in 2022.
Diocese of Central PA



Honey Brook, Chestnut Tree Road looking west, St. Mark's Episcopal Church.
Diocese of PA.



3 Parishes, 3 Diocese, 3 Rectors, 5 Miles A Possible Alliance?

One of the possibilities for the new rector at St. Thomas in having greater visibility in the community is to demonstrate the Episcopal Church strength and ability to support local needs through a unified approach to the three county area.

St. Thomas is located directly in the center, *ground zero*, of the three county Episcopal Churches. In the southernmost part of Berks County and the Diocese of Bethlehem, it is potentially a gem of the south. The members are committed and the history is solid, an excellent basis for confidently leading a unified relationship, offering a tri-diocesan approach to an "Episcopal doctrine."

Bangor, in Lancaster County, is the easternmost parish in the Diocese of Central PA, headquartered in Harrisburg, the State Capital. The Bangor cemetery is the burial site for 22 Revolutionary War veterans. It was the parish of Jacob Morgan, youngest son of Thomas. Jacob is buried, along with his wife, in the St. Thomas Cemetery.

St. Mark's in rural Honey Brook, Chester County, is located in the North Westernmost part of the Diocese of PA, headquartered in Philadelphia. St. Mark's Cemetery was established on a parcel of land donated by Vincent Trego in 1822 for burial of Vincent and his wife. The church was built 14 years later.