
ALL ABOARD
ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE
GREAT GATHERING
GALA

Welcome!

Welcome to 2026 The Great Gathering, the social event of the year for St. Thomas the Apostle parish. In addition to providing time to socialize with friends, old and new, this event raises funds to support our ministries.

Thank You!

We thank all parishioners who will host Great Gathering parties throughout the year, and those who have donated to our Silent Auction. Thanks to all the people who have put in time and talent to make this night a success. And a big thanks to all of you here tonight. We appreciate everyone's generosity!

Enjoy!

EVENING SCHEDULE

6:00pm

Enjoy Appetizers, and Buffet featuring a Carving Station Dinner and Desserts

Cash ONLY Bar Available (no credit cards accepted)

Silent Auction Open

6:30pm

Welcome from our MC Tim Busse and Father Erich

Great Gathering Sign-Up Parties Open

7:30 - 11pm

Music & DJ

Enjoy the dance floor

8:30pm

Silent Auction closes

PARTY AND AUCTION RULES

Great Gathering Parties: To sign up for a party, please write your name and email address on the sheet in front of the display. Please write ONE NAME PER LINE on the Sign-Up sheets. For example, if you and your spouse sign up for a party, you will each need to write your name on a separate line.

Silent Auction: Please enter your name and take note of the starting bid for each item and the minimum incremental bid increases that are listed on each sheet. The silent auction will close at 8:30pm. PLEASE NOTE: Successful bidders on events involving experiences will be contacted by a committee member to get further information on receiving tickets.

Payment: There will be no check out at the end of the night. An invoice will be emailed to you listing the total charges. You also will receive a list of the Great Gathering parties you signed up for and any silent auction items you purchased. Payment may be made online or by check or credit card. Payment is due upon receipt of the invoice.

GREAT GATHERINGS

Hosted by fellow parishioners, small GATHERINGS are a great way to meet and mingle with other St. Thomas the Apostle families.
Listed in calendar-date order.

Ornament Exchange - Ladies' Night

Get ready to trim the Christmas tree at STA's first Ornament Exchange Ladies' Night. Come with a wrapped ornament - funny, beautiful or anything in between, we'll play a fun swap game, and you'll go home with an ornament too! Festive beverages and appetizers will also be served.

Sunday, December 6, 2026 from 6:30pm - 9:00pm
20 Guests - $30 per Lady
Hosted by: Mary Aubart, Susan de Hoog, Mary Schoellman & Kelly Zech

Sound Bath

A group sound bath is a meditative experience in which participants are “bathed” in soothing vibrations from instruments like crystal singing bowls, gongs, and chimes. Designed to promote deep relaxation, stress relief, and inner balance, this communal journey invites you to simply lie back, listen and let the sound wash over you. No meditation experience necessary. Led by Devin, a Certified Sound Healer. Please join us for a relaxing evening followed by light refreshments.

Sunday, January 10, 2027, from 6:00-8:30pm
12 Guests - $50 per guest
Hosted by: Julie Simons

An Evening with Author Don Smithmier

Join us for an evening with our fellow parishioner and author, Don Smithmier, as he discusses his first novel. THE NARROWS deals with choices, regrets, and rebuilding. Five years ago, Cal Dunn's life exploded with a tragic accident that tore his family apart. Since then, he has gotten sober and, with the encouragement of those who believe in him, decided to work towards believing in himself and starting over. With layered characters and deep humanity, this novel doesn't shy away from the difficulties around connection and forgiveness. A copy of the book is included and refreshments served.

January 12, 2027 at 7pm

30 Guests - $50 per guest

Hosted by: Kathy Cahill, Mary Jo Erickson, Maureen Monchamp & Molly Schomburg

Join the Mah-Jongg Craze!

Taught by Mah-Jongg enthusiast and former educator, Julie Schultz Brown.

Mah-Jongg is having a moment. If you want to know what all the buzz is about, let's cozy up this winter and have fun learning the American version of this Chinese game. This tile game, for four people, requires a combination of practice, skill and luck to assemble a pre-determined pattern of tiles that qualifies as a "Mah-Jongg".

The sign-up includes 3 lessons (2-3 hr. each) on three consecutive Wednesday afternoons. Each participant should be able to attend all three sessions to get the full benefit of this sign-up event. Also included is the book "Learn American Mah Jongg with Ease"

January 13, 20 & 27, 2027

4 Guests - $175 per person

Sponsored by: Valerie Burke, Kathy Cahill and Molly Schomburg

Game Night and Dinner

Love playing games? Having some of our Parishioners make dinner? Then this game night is for you! Dinner, cocktails, and games. Get to know new Parishioners, learn some new games and enjoy a memorable night.

January 22, 2027 at 5:30pm
20 Guests - $75 per adult
Hosted by: Catherine and Kevin O'Neill, Laurie and Mike Junker,
and Sara and Matt Michel.

Brazilian Dinner with Father McMichael

Bem-vindo!
Enjoy a complete, traditional Brazilian dinner. Start with the famous Brazilian drink, Caipirinha. Then the main courses, Feijoada, a hearty beef and bean stew and Moqueca, a rich fish stew, with rice and all the trimmings. And of course, a special Brazilian dessert.

January 26, 2027 at 6:00pm
7 Guests - $95 per Guest
Hosted by Michaeleen & Rick Kruger

An Evening in Italy with Father Erich

Treat yourself to an authentic, unforgettable evening of Italian hospitality!
Skip the crowded restaurants and enjoy an evening with Father Erich at the home of Steve & Ellen Birch.
Your Experience Includes:

- Craft Cocktails & Aperitivi: Kick off the evening with refreshing Italian drinks paired with a curated antipasto board of artisanal cheeses, cured meats, and marinated bites.
- Multi-Course Italian Feast: Enjoy a scratch-made dinner featuring classic, comforting Italian flavors, perfectly paired with excellent wines.

February 6, 2027
7 Guests - $75 per Guest
Hosted By: Steve & Ellen Birch

1920's Speakeasy Murder Mystery Party

Step back into the roaring 1920s for an evening of glitz, glamour, and a little mystery! Guests must arrive dressed up as their pre-assigned character, ready for a night filled with intrigue and scandal. Enjoy delicious dinner and fun, era-inspired drinks as you mingle among the suspects and uncover the secrets lurking beneath the surface. Come ready to embrace your character, stay in role throughout the evening, and help solve a murder before the night is over… because everyone has a secret, and one of you is the culprit!

February 6, 2027
12 Guests - $100 per Guest
Hosted by: Elizabeth & Roderick Neil and Jenna & George Hanzal

Sunday Afternoon at the Movies

Join your friends from St. Thomas the Apostle for a classic movie at the Edina Cinema. We'll have an auditorium to ourselves as we gather to watch the late director Rob Reiner's 1987 fairytale fantasy, The Princess Bride, on the big screen! In this wonderfully captivating tale, Princess Buttercup has been abducted, and her only hope lies in an unlikely rescuer, the Dread Pirate Roberts. Join in this carefree afternoon of movie magic designed for family fun. Ticket includes a small drink and bag of popcorn with additional items available for purchase at the concessions stand. *Please note: The Princess Bride is rated PG and contains occasional fantasy violence such as sword fighting (including multiple wounds and a fatal strike), torture, and a death by poisoning, as well as mythical "rodents of unusual size," all of which may be upsetting or frightening to young children.

February 28, 2027 at 2:30pm
60 Guests - $20 per person
Hosted by: Ellen Veness, Luke and Cheryl Taylor, Carol Solheid, Linda DeLude, and Michelle and Phil Barry

Classic South Indian Dinner

Join us for an unforgettable evening of flavor, culture, and community!
The all-new menu will be rich with the aromatic traditions of South Indian Cuisine, featuring spices imported directly from Chennai. Kamala was born in Chennai and will be cooking with recipes handed down through her family. This event will transport your taste buds straight to the southern state of Tamil Nadu. Don't miss this and most of all, come hungry!

April 8, 2027
8 Guests - $95 per adult
Hosted by: Kamala Udayamurthy and Tom Vitt

Ladies Who Brunch with Christina

Join us for a beautiful gathering of 10 women, including our favorite liturgist/choir director, Christina. The morning will be filled with delicious food, meaningful connections, laughter, and inspiration! Enjoy quiche, fruit, the famous Isles Bun puppy dog tails, and mimosas!

April 10, 2027 at 11:00am

9 Guests - $60 per Guest
Host: Terre Schmidt & Maureen Monchamp

Holy Hops Tour

Meet in the St. Thomas the Apostle parking lot and board a good old-fashioned party bus for the ride of your life. The bus will stop at a few brewpubs where you can buy and taste some of the best local craft beer in town. Try some unique, on-site brewed beers while hanging with some incredible STA friends and meet some new ones! Snacks, beer, wine, and water provide on the bus.

April 16, 2027 at 6:00

40 Guests - $40 per adult
Hosted by: Amy and Marc Colin

EAT, MINGLE & MOVE

Join us for a fun-filled Progressive Dinner as we eat our way through the Linden Hills neighborhood at the homes of Bob and Beth Elfstrand, Susan Kirkpatrick, and Joseph and Terre Schmidt! Come hungry and ready for an evening filled with great food, lots of laughter, and wonderful fellowship!

May 8, 2027 at 4:30

16 Guests - $100 per guest
Hosted by: Bob & Beth Elfstrand, Susan Kirkpatrick & Joseph & Terre Schmidt

Wine Tasting

Join us for an evening of exploring, learning, and tasting fine wines! We'll start with a glass of bubbly to welcome everyone in, then share a variety of selections along with light appetizers. It's a night of discovery, conversation, and fun for everyone involved.

May 22, 2027
20 Guests - $50 per Guest
Hosted by Jim & Meg Mannix

The Choir Member with a Hidden Talent

An evening of acoustic guitar and vocal music with Tim Davis (choir bass) presenting singer songwriters from the late 60's and 70's. Think Simon, Taylor, Lightfoot and more. This mini concert at Tim's home will be followed by pizza, drinks, and conversation.

June 5, 2027
6 Guests - $50 per Guest
Hosted by: Tim Davis

Sail Lake Pepin

Sail beautiful Lake Pepin with Tim Davis. Spend the afternoon aboard a 40" sailboat enjoying the breezes, bluffs, and small towns. Who knows – you may set a sail or take the wheel and feel the power of the wind and water! Late afternoon hors d'oeurves served.

Summer 2027 – A mutually agreed upon date and time
4 Guests - $125 per guest
Hosted by Tim Davis

Sailing on Lake Harriet

Enjoy a breezy sail on Lake Harriet. Great conversation, appetizers, wine/beer/non-alcoholic beverages and of course, dessert!

Summer 2027 – Mutually agreed upon date
4 Women - $95 per Guest
Hosted by: Susan Kirkpatrick and Terre Schmidt

Girls Just Want to Have Fun!

For all the fabulous women in our parish, let's gather on the beautiful patio of France 44 for some crisp summer wines, tasty light bites, and a celebration of friends.

July 15, 2027 from 5:30-7:30pm
50 Women - $75 per guest
Hosted by: Val Burke, Kathy Cahill, Beth Elfstrand, Kathleen Karges, Nancy Lawlor, Sara Michel, Maureen Monchamp, Sheila Murphy, Terre Schmidt, Molly Schomburg, Gigi Olive Schroder, Deb Van De Weghe & Mary Werner

The Boys are Back in Town

Grab your buddies and join us for an evening of great food, craft beer and fun fellowship. And a few lucky attendees will be taking home door prizes.

July 21, 2027 at 5:30
50 Guests - $75 per Guest
Hosted by: Russ Andrews, Mike Deeney, Ed Hennen, Rick Kruger, Mike Mazyck, Mark Sifferlin, Tom Vitt & Chuck Van de Weghe

New England Seafood Boil

Get ready for an evening of rich history, incredible food, and a spectacular backyard show. We are hosting a traditional Fish Boil, including shrimp, crab, potatoes, corn and more. Come hungry and leave happy.

July 24, 2027

6 Guests - $75 per Guest

Hosted by: Bonnie Hancock & Joe Weyandt

Tech Support from Chuck Van de Weghe

"Is your computer running slower than a Tuesday morning? Does your smartphone feel like it's plotting against you?" Fear not — help is on the way! Sign up for two full hours of friendly, patient, one-on-one tech support — at your home — with zero judgment and zero jargon. We'll tackle your tech gremlins together, at your own pace, and maybe even have a laugh or two along the way. Things that Chuck can do for you:

- Set up Email & apps
- Smartphone & tablet help
- Internet and Wi-Fi troubleshooting
- Computer tune up & cleaning
- Virus & Security check
- Printer setup & help
- Photo Organizing & Backups
- Video calling setup (Zoom, FaceTime)
- Smart TV setup & streaming help
- Passwords & account recovery

10 Individual, 2-hour sessions available

10 Guests- $200 per Guest

Hosted by: Chuck Van de Weghe

SILENT AUCTION

101 - Zahner Dinner for 8

Donated by the Hospitality Committee and Joe & Dotty Zahner

The Hospitality Committee of St. Thomas the Apostle would like to come to your house for dinner. Actually, we would like to BRING our renowned Gathering Space dinner to your space. All you have to do is gather seven of your favorite people on a date of your choosing. We will bring the food, prepare it lovingly and lavishly, serve all six courses to you, with wine. Then, as you sip a cordial, we will clean up, pack up and slip away while you bask in the afterglow of a great meal with great friends. Please choose a date between January 2 and May 31. The Delicious Menu:

Billi Bi

Crème of Mussel and Saffron

Shrimp Cocktail Las Cruces

Shrimp in zesty chili sauce

Steamed Artichoke

with Lemon Butter

Classic Beef Wellington

With Wild Mushroom Demi-glace

Gâteau Chocolate-Thym

Chocolate Thyme Cake

Served with Farigoule

102 - Luxury Cabin Vacation on Silver Lake

Donated by Matt & Jennifer Samuel

Beauty and tranquility abound on this two-acre secluded lake-front property on Silver Lake! Open and inviting, this rustic five bedroom/four-bathroom year-round home features a main floor master, three-season porch, and heated three-stall garage. You'll love the expansive deck overlooking the lake. One week in June, Fall or Winter.

103 - One Dinner a Month for a Year

Donated by these amazing cooks: Mary Cleary, Heather Dorsey, Susan Eich, Kathleen Eikens, Beth Elfstrand, Bonnie Hancock, Francie Kennedy, Susan Kirkpatrick, Michaeleen Kruger, Bridget Murphy, Becky Rooney and Kamala Udayamurthy,
Imagine taking the evening off from cooking and having a home-cooked meal prepared and delivered to you by a church lady! Twelve St Thomas church ladies are lined up to prepare wholesome home recipes just for you—dinners to include a main, side, and dessert. Timing to be coordinated by the cook of the month and the bidder.

104 - Great Harvest Gift Card - $50

Donated by John Goodge

Treat yourself to a gourmet sandwich, and artisan hand crusted bread or a muffin, scone, cookie or bars at our favorite neighborhood bakery.

105 – Fruit of the Vine… Shop!

Donated by: Jim & Kate Vogl

Kate & Jim teamed up with The Vine Shop in Hopkins to bring you 3 reds and 3 whites from their Fall release. The reds from the Italian Piedmont, Argentina, and the Willamette Valley in Oregon. The whites from the Italian Piedmont, France & Oregon. Included are the Vine Shop tasting notes for all 6 wines, a 6-bottle Vine Shop canvas carrying tote and 2 Vine Room Branded Riedel Wine Glasses. Enjoy!

106 – Minnesota Frost Tickets (4 tickets)

Donated by: Tim & Maureen Monchamp

Come and cheer on the 2-time Walter Cup Champions! Highest bidder will choose which home team they wish to attend and invite 3 of their hockey loving friends.

107 - St. Paul Saints Tickets (2 sets of 2 tickets)

Donated by: Greg Sebald

A pair of St. Paul Saints Capitol Box Seats right behind home plate: Section 109, Row 1. Capitol Box Seats include in-seat food and beverage service. Good for a game during the 2027 season to be mutually agreed upon.

108 - Hamilton at the Orpheum Theatre (2 tickets)

Donated by Tom Vitt & Kamala Udayamurthy

See this award-winning Broadway show at the Orpheum Theatre. Hamilton is the winner of 11 Tony Awards including the 2016 Best Musical. It's a must see! (Pick your date - Showing April 20-May 22)

109 – Timberwolves v Nuggets Tickets (2 tickets)

Donated by Jim & Kathleen Karges

Come and cheer on the Wolves as they take on the reigning Western Conference Champions featuring Victor Wembanya. It's time to Howl!! Sunday, January 3rd at 6pm - Section 138, Row A, Seats 1 & 2

110 - Minikahda Golf for 3

Donated by Doug DeGrood

Minikahda is the oldest country club west of the Mississippi and a premier club in the region. As a guest of parishioner Doug DeGrood, you'll enjoy a round of golf for 3 followed by refreshments on the 19th hole.

111 – Yoga Fit – Unlimited Classes for a Month

Donated by Ashok Dhariwal & Shawna Schueller

Enjoy a month of unlimited Yoga classes ranging from YogaFlow, YogaBarre, YogaBurn & YogaRestore. You won't find a better practice that will strengthen your body physically and mentally. The quality, approachability, and community can't be beat. Experience it for yourself!