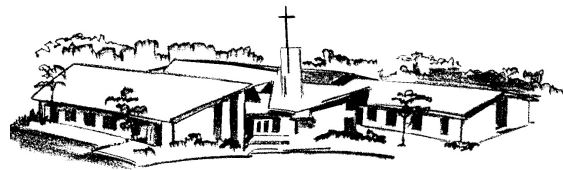


The Witness

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Troy, MI 48098

April / May 2019

A Message from our Senior Warden



Hello Family

As Seasons of the church go, Lent is my personal favorite! Lent is a time when all Christians regardless of denomination, enter into the same 40 day period of reflection, preparation, and renewal. Kind of shows us, no matter our doctrine, we are all ONE in Christ!! On a side note, the Friday Fish Fry is an added bonus not to mention Fat Tuesday marking the start and let's not forget Easter!

I find the season of Lent particularly relevant to me this year as we as a family reflect and prepare for the calling of a new Spiritual Leader culminating in a long awaited renewal! Wow – what a mouthful and idea to wrap our brains around.

Jesus felt it necessary to retreat to the desert during this period to discern his relevance to and acceptance of our Father's plan for him. Through faith, Jesus endured thirst, starvation, temptation, and ultimately acceptance. Upon emerging from the desert Jesus through faith began to execute his

ministry and God's plan. What a gift our Father gave our brother and our Lord! To know one's purpose with NO doubt ... NO hesitation ... just a TRUE path to follow!!

As we progress through Lent individually and as a Parish Family, I charge you to discern your relevance to our Father's plan for St. Stephen's. I realize some thirst for an appointed spiritual leader and some feel starved of patience which leads to temptation – temptation to seek a different path or even different parish. I find, the time a parish is without an appointed spiritual leader is the time when Satan finds us most vulnerable to temptation and begins to sow the seeds of doubt – testing our faith – as he tested Jesus in the desert. The calling of a new priest will be at God's discretion and in God's time. We must not make a hasty decision simply to have a priest in place. Like choosing a life-long mate, calling a priest to shepherd us requires knowing who and what we are and what direction we wish to follow. Finding our perfect

Continued on pg 3

SOS 2019

Coming this Fall

St. Stephen's will be hosting our guests from South Oakland Shelter the week of **September 22nd – 29th**.

In the coming weeks, there will be sign up sheets available for you. Please consider assisting in any way you are able. As always, the generous St. Stephen's family comes together to make the clients of SOS feel welcome and well cared for.

Please consider assisting in the following areas:

- Drivers for the morning and evening
- Set-up and Tear-down the church
- Volunteer to be an overnight host
- Help with client intake and arrange driver schedules
- Be a Saturday volunteer so guests can stay in if the weather is bad
- Help in the dishes and dinner set-up
- Do a load of laundry of towels and sheets
- Help with morning breakfast and getting the kids ready for school
- Assist with tidying the church in the morning after guests leave
- Help with evening dinner and lunch preparation
- Prepare an appetizer or dessert for evening meal
- Make cookies for lunches

There are many ways you can help and it only takes a couple hours of your time to make an impact. Keep an eye out for more information in the near future. In the meantime, mark your calendar and be ready for an amazing week of love and compassion.

For questions, contact Corinne Fragnoli at (248) 515-2651 or cfragnoli@att.net or Miranda Spates at (248) 842-6073 or deaconmom1@yahoo.com

A View from the Pew

You Get What You Give

Our journey with St. Stephen's began more than 27 years ago. We were expecting our first child and wanted to find a church where our son could be baptized. I was brought up Presbyterian and my husband was raised Catholic. I was always fairly regular in my church attendance. For various and understandable reasons, my spouse took the usual path of a young adult and church attendance dropped off significantly. Ironically, we were married in the same Catholic Church as all of his brothers, sisters, and extended family were married, but we both knew the Catholic Church was not for us. We casually stumbled around various churches in the area but struggled to find the one with the right fit. We wanted a church where both of us felt familiar with the service and where we were able to find some similarities to how we remembered church on a Sunday morning. Fortunately for us, the morning we walked into St. Stephen's, Jonathan magically incorporated fly-fishing and hunting into his sermon. One look from my husband said it all, "I think I found my church!" As they say, the rest is history...

Well, not quite...

We were young and little did either of us realize we had much to learn about the importance of community and family within a church. For us, church was what you did on a Sunday morning to fulfill your Christian obligation. Attending church on Sunday mornings was also necessary to set a good example for our children. We did not consider parishioners as family. No one other than immediate family needed to get involved in our personal life or know of any health issue; these were personal and private matters not to be shared with others. In our early years at St. Stephen's our attendance was sporadic, our involvement was nonexistent, and our financial contribution was minimal. When we did attend church, it was our practice to slip out the front doors to avoid fellowship hour so we wouldn't get trapped in a conversation with someone, make new acquaintances, or perhaps even worse, to be asked to get involved!



As time marched on our family grew and my husband's career advanced. We settled into a convenient pattern for church attendance that fit our life. Every fall our attendance was fairly regular, consistent with the whole back to school so back to church philosophy. We attended almost weekly through the end of the year, until our attendance dropped off again in the beginning of the year. We would get motivated and start back again around Easter and then as the school year ended, so did our attendance at church. Going to church in the summer was never tops on our list until one day, my middle son asked if he could attend Vacation Bible School since we don't go to church in the summer. He made it very clear to us he wanted to go to any VBS at any church that caught his eye. Out of the mouths of babes...so much for setting a good example for our family.

We cringed when we would get the occasional phone call from Jonathan subtly inquiring about our spotty attendance. He had that special gift of not making you feel guilty when he could have easily done so. Jonathan's phone call would prompt us to pick up our attendance for a short period. As the years went on our attendance gradually increased and Jonathan gently convinced my husband to join the vestry. A few years later as our two older boys were in middle school, St. Stephen's started the Journey to Adulthood program and I joined the program as an adult leader.

Senior Warden (continued)

match may take more time than we would like, but will be well worth the wait and the effort!! The season of Lent is the perfect time – through discernment for us ALL to reflect, prepare, and renew the course of St. Stephen's and our Parish life!

Through our Faith in God and LOVE for one and other, we can lean on each other strengthening our resolve, discerning our relevance to our parish family, resist temptation and ultimately CELEBRATE together the renewal of St. Stephen's – our faith – and our PARISH FAMILY!

In the meantime, I plan to enjoy the Friday Fish Fry!!!

With much love and Blessings,

Scott, Sr. Warden



Crafting Kindness

You are invited to the SPRING CRAFT DAY -

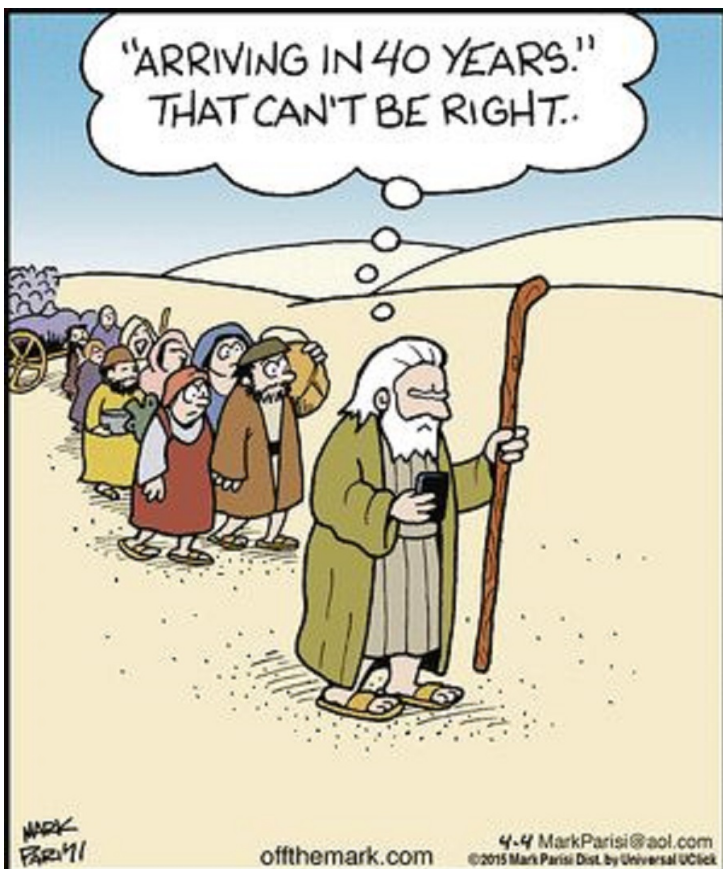
Saturday, April 27th 10am-2pm

You may sew, crochet, knit, or assist with one of our projects.

Bring your brown bag for lunch and fellowship.

If you can't join us on Craft Day, kits for many of our projects are available in our "Grab N Stitch" boxes in the Outreach area.

This year we have donated 149 items including prayer shawls to individuals, breast cancer pillows to St. Joes, walker totes and fidget aprons to a local nursing home and dresses and backpacks to Haiti. With your help, Crafting Kindness will be able to keep making donations to those in need.



You Get What You Give (continued)

Over the years, our family has become entwined in so many facets of life at St. Stephen's. We have made many deep and long lasting relationships with fellow parishioners we now consider part of our family. Some of our closest and long-time friends are here at St. Stephen's. We feel blessed to call St. Stephen's our home. Today, Sunday morning is our time to be with all of you, our friends and family. We believe seeing all of you each week feels right, it feels comfortable, it feels like home. There isn't anything we wouldn't do for our friends and family at St. Stephen's.

As we all know, nothing stays the same. We also know, all families have "stuff". Change happens and stuff happens too. Like any family, St. Stephen's has to face change and has to deal with its own version of stuff. My question to you is "How do loving families handle stuff and change?" What do we do when we have to face change and deal with our stuff? Do we turn and walk away from problems? Do we bury issues deep down and never address them because it's too difficult? Do we hope whatever it is goes away by itself? Do we slip out the front doors so we don't have to confront any of our stuff? The answer is NO! A family needs to embrace change and address their stuff together. A family needs to support each other during life's challenges. When we tackle our issues together, we grow as a family. We get stronger as a family. We become more resilient and our relationships grow closer and deeper because we all shared the experience together. My husband and I are grateful to be on this journey right along side all of you.

Although we lack a permanent rector for the time being, we have been blessed with spiritual leadership from our two primary supply priests, Sharon Voelker and Chris Berg. They have been exceptional in their genuine care and concern for our church family far beyond Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning services. As we continue to navigate our way through the transition process, I am encouraged by the renewed energy I see among us. I have witnessed first hand more patience and a greater understanding of one another in ways I have not seen before. The future of our St. Stephen's family is in God's hands. He is walking this journey with us. He will bring to us the rector He has chosen in His time. We must not forget a rector does not define St. Stephen's, nor does the building. Our friends, family, and the programs we do together are what define us. The individuals and families who come and participate in the life of our parish and call this blessed church their home are what makes St. Stephen's special to me and to so many others. Let's continue our work and come together as the loving, caring, and welcoming family we have always been. St. Stephen's is on a journey and you need to be a part of this journey. You are a vital member of this amazing family. Our parish is bigger and better than any one person or any opinion. I urge you to roll up your sleeves with us and take part in our church family's story as an active member of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. As a family we are stronger together.

One lesson my husband and I have learned over the years and have shared with our boys is you get out of life exactly what you put into it. Whether it's faith, love, relationships, or family; you get what you give. We have also learned how important all of you are to us and how we feel blessed to be loved by this church family. We never slip out the front doors anymore. Heck, usually we are one of the last to leave!

As for me, I will continue to give everything I am able to my St. Stephen's family. I will keep building our connections to each other and make our bond stronger any way I can. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for loving, caring, and sharing life with me!

Our journey together continues. Be patient, good things are coming!

Hugs to all,

*Corinne Fragnoli
(and Steve)*

April / May 2019: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 5500 N. Adams Rd., Troy, MI 48098

We ask Your Prayers for the Following People

Joe Simler	Mayme Oliver
Jenny Dolan	Paige Emery
Linda Dolan	Melissa Stein
Linda Lou Vance	Sue Sprague
Jim Whitaker	Val Thompson
Richard Creameans	Rick Lowery
Shawna Collins	Theresa Martin
Judy Ford	Bob White
Harold Ford	Colin Davis
Jeralyn Burrell	Greg Thompson
Mary Bandsuch	Lon
Betty Feighner	Robin Cameron
Zoey Rose	Deputy David Hack
Jennifer Penokie	Jim McMullen
Kay Novak	Amy Ambrey
Cynthia Tischer	

Those in the Armed Services

Nathan Creameans—grandson of Barb Whitaker

Ian L'Hommedieu—godson of Linda Pierce

Stephen L'Hommedieu—godson of Linda Pierce

Kyle Rogowski—nephew of Ken & Kris Fuhr

Jim Sands—grandson of Sharon Sands

Brendon Church —Grandsons of Ed and Elaine Church, Nephew of Amy Church

Gordon Bagley - friend of Vida family

Capt. John Zimmer - friend of Vida family

Capt. Scott Wright - friend of Ann Williams

These Parish Families

2/17 *Pauleen, Sandra, Jeff and Dave Ottenhoff
Betty Padilla*

2/24 *Bruce & Nancy Papet
Jeff, Renee, Samuel & Jacquelyn Parent*

3/3 *Dom and Penny Piantedosi
Mark Pierce and Anna Dorsey*

3/10 *Phil, Linda & David Pierce
John, Debbie & Kate Pincura*

3/17 *John and Lori Podsiadlik
Joseph, Patricia and Justin Przeslawski*

3/24 *Rob and Amy Redmer,
Kendra Redmer , Alexia & Blake Frydrych
Jerred, Rachel and Savannah Rich*

3/31 *Patrick, Elizabeth and Kate Roberts
Norma Ross*

4/7 *Susan Russell
David, Lucinda and Mary Laura Sabino*



Bring Your Children to Church

There you are sitting in worship or Bible study. Your child, or toddler, is restless. Perhaps they're even a little boisterous. You try to silence them, and nothing. You try to pacify them with food or toys, and nothing. Eventually, you resort to the last thing you wanted to do: you pick them up, and before a watching audience, you make the march out of the auditorium. All the while, you're a little embarrassed. Maybe you're a little frustrated too. You might even think to yourself, "There's no point in coming to church. I get nothing out of it because I have to constantly care for my kid."

I want you — you mothers and/or fathers — to know just how encouraging you are to so many. The little elderly woman who often feels alone beams with a smile at the sight of you wrestling with your little one. She's been there before. She knows how hard it can be, but she smiles because to hear that brings back precious memories. To see young parents and their small children brighten her day, and she may have just received bad news this week about her health, but seeing the vitality of young ones removes — if but for a moment — her fears.

The older man who always seems to be grouchy notices you too. He's always talking about how children in this day have no respect or sense of good. But, he sees you — a young family — in church, and you don't miss any gathering. Like clockwork, he can depend on the sight of you and your young family. You give him hope that maybe the church isn't doomed after all, because there are still young parents who love God enough to bring their restless children to worship.

Bring your children to church. If you don't hear crying, the church is dying. As hard as it might be for you as a parent who's half-asleep, keep on doing what you're doing. You are an encouragement, and you're starting off your children's lives as you should.



Birthdays

April

Name	Date
Mike Wellman	3
Tyler Braidwood	3
Arch Coran	5
Mary Ann Kish	5
Margaret O'Neill	6
Ken Fuhr	8
Joseph Przeslawski	12
Alexia Frydrych	14
Tammy Gerard	14
Cheri Salanty	14
Mark Pierce	14
Don Ingersoll	15
Paul Hardy	18
Peter Goulding	20
John Thunder	20
Bob Hoffman	22
James Luzod	22
Daryllyn Oswald	23
Katy Allen	24
Karen Mirzoian	27



May

Name	Date
Thomas West	1
Sandy Jose	4
Sara Sundareson	5
Emily Gerard	5
Claire DeCiantis	5
Justin Przeslawski	6
Barb Spina	6
Emmett Thiel	7
Sue Gore	8
David Eldon	11
Roy Waters	13
Cathy Hoffman	13
Krista Grubb	13
Jacob Hardy	14
Caleb Sobolewski	15
Lucinda Sabino	19
Quinn Baker	21
Donna Bronsteen	24
Adrian Gross	26
James Carnagie	26
Peter Burean	31

Claire Grutta

Outreach Volunteer

Claire, age 94, has been a member of St. Stephens since 2002, and a consistent community volunteer. She has cooked dinner at Bound Together, the after school program at All Saints in Pontiac, and currently knits baby hats for Crafting Kindness, serves lunches at the Baldwin Center, and volunteers at the St. John Food Pantry. She says outreach activities keep her busy and out of mischief.



Claire loves the people at St. Stephens. The night before I interviewed her, she went to a GEM group dinner with a wonderful group of people. Claire likes all of the activities at St. Stephens but she sure wishes we would get a new minister.

Claire is a role model for us. She is smart and active, and isn't afraid to try new things. She always has a positive attitude and sees herself as part of the community, both at church and in the larger community. If you would like to be featured in the Witness, or want to nominate someone else, contact me at joan_morgan@fd.org or 313-980-2328. *Joan Morgan*

Anniversaries

April

Name	Date
Winifred & Richard Lowery	5
Joan & John Thunder	7
Mary Ann & Paul Kish	13
Marilyn & James Elwarner	19
Sara Sue & Bob Westbury	21
Tami & Daniel Gerard	27

May

Name	Date
Margaret & Steve Brandon	2
Karol Sprague & James Carnagie	2
Lori & John Podsiadlik	11
Elaine & Ed Church	11
Jan & David Eldon	20
Dorothy & Bill Langridge	20
Amy & Rob Redmer	23
Kris & Ken Fuhr	24

Grant them your blessing, O God, and assist them with your grace, that with true fidelity and steadfast love they may honor and keep their promises and vows; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Youth Auction Is Coming - May 4th!

Mark May 4th so you won't miss the fun at the 2019 Auction. Help support our St. Stephen's kids' trips and programs. This year the high school youth will be traveling to Kentucky and Tennessee for their Pilgrimage/Mission trip. In February, they had a fantastic retreat weekend in Cleveland.

Of course, May 4 is for all practical purposes Cinco de Mayo, so we are planning a Mexican buffet. Prior attendees will attest that the evening is fun even for those who don't intend to buy anything. Just being there shows the kids you care about them.

NOW is when we need you to begin figuring out what you might wish to donate for the silent or live auctions. Don't have any "things?" Gift cards will work just fine. Too big to handle? We can pick up items for you. It takes time to get the items organized and bid sheets prepared, so the sooner we know what you have, the easier it is to prepare. But, keep thinking as we are very flexible and can take things until the day before the event.

Got questions? Want to help? Contact Jackie (248-703-3476) jackie@doningersoll.com or Don Ingersoll don@doningersoll.com.



High School Retreat

For the youth trip this winter, the high school group went to Cleveland, Ohio. On the way down, we had a lovely American breakfast at the classic IHOP. Our first stop in Cleveland was the West Side Market. Many of us spent all of our money buying sweets that were definitely necessary, while David bought celery. We bought food for dinner, which was garlic noodles with palomino sauce, and chicken for those who wanted it. Afterwards, we went to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and had a fantastic time.

After arriving at our Airbnb we began supper. We all pitched in with Gillian as the lead cook. David's said celery became a pre-dinner snack. The dinner was delicious. After dinner, we settled down to a fun game of spoons, Scott read us a bedtime story, and we headed to bed.

Over breakfast, which the adults cooked, we played two truths and a lie and found out that Scott is related to Neil Armstrong which was weird. We then packed up our stuff and headed to Trinity Episcopal Cathedral to attend the service. We were warmly welcomed and after the service we took a tour of this beautiful church before heading home. Thank you to Scott Armstrong, Paul Hardy and Jackie Ingersoll for chaperoning. It was a fantastic trip, and I'm very glad I got to spend a fantastic weekend with my church family.



Greyson Ingersoll

How to Contact Us

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Scott Armstrong, Senior Warden
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Sue Gore—Choir and Music Director
248-852-1379

Phil Pierce, Treasurer
treasurer@ststephenstroy.org

Pam Bonkowski—Assistant to the Treasurer
bookkeeper@ststephenstroy.org

The Witness: Rob Redmer and Jacki Mudrich
witness@ststephenstroy.org
office@ststephenstroy.org

E-mail, bring to church or fax your articles to
248-641-8067

Who's Missing?

If someone you usually see in church hasn't been there in a while, please give them a call.

A Sign

Reverend Boudreaux was the part-time pastor of the local Cajun Baptist Church and Pastor Thibodaux was the minister of the Covenant Church across the road.

They were both standing by the road, pounding a sign into the ground that read: "Da End is Near. Turn Yo Sef 'Roun Now Afore It Be Too Late!"

As a car sped past them, the driver leaned out his window and yelled, "You religious nuts!"

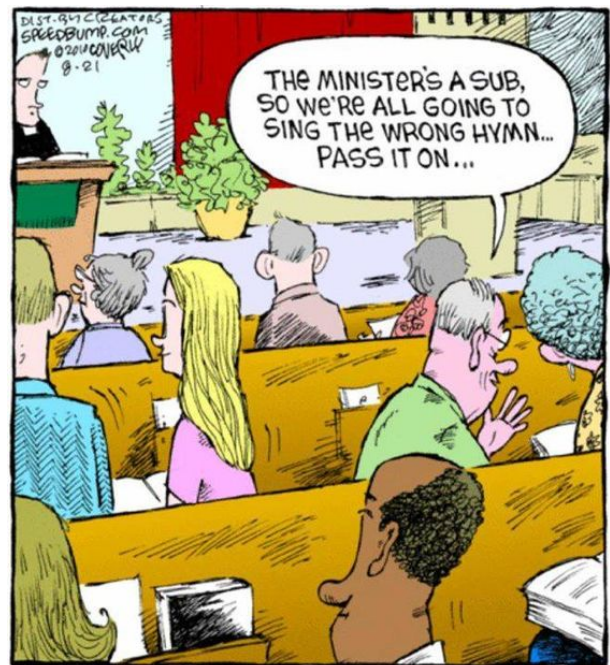
From the curve they heard screeching tires and a big splash.

Boudreaux turns to Thib and asks, "Do ya tink maybe da sign should jussay... 'Bridge Out?'"

Weekly Services

Sat. 4:30 p.m.	Informal Service
Sun., 8 a.m.	Early Eucharist
Sun, 10 a.m.	Eucharist with Music

If you have e-mail, you can receive our newsletter faster! Please send your e-mail address to office@ststephenstroy.org. Thank you in advance for helping us with our continued effort to.....THINK GREEN!



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

5500 North Adams Road
Troy, MI 48098

Please remember St. Stephen's in your will.