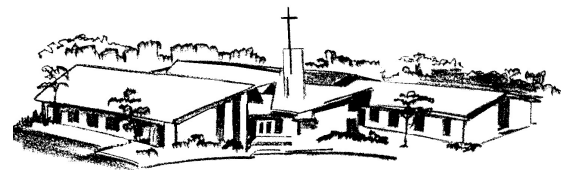


The Witness

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



January / February 2020

A Message from the Pulpit

Dear St. Stephen's Family,

New Year's Resolutions. It's that time of the year again when we vow to undertake a project or to change our lifestyle or to eliminate some bad habit. Unfortunately, some of our resolutions end up as being only good intentions.



Our new year resolutions give us the opportunity to wipe the slate clean, so to speak, and kick off our new year with a fresh spirit and new found inspiration. But the problem with most of our resolutions is that sometimes they really aren't realistic. They are too unattainable and we aren't able to follow through with them. In other words, we've set the bar too high and we've set up ourselves for failure.

Congratulations to everyone who has been able to maintain their resolutions throughout the year...you are an elite group! But that doesn't mean that all of us who didn't meet our goals were failures. No, indeed...we were just gaining experience so we could be better prepared for next year's challenge!

The secret to successfully fulfilling our resolutions is focus, determination, and the ability to keep alive the vision of the end result. Keeping our resolution may not be easy, but the result will make all the effort worthwhile.

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Senior Warden Message

Hello Family!

Welcome to 2020!! A New Year – New Decade – New Future filled with New Possibilities, possibilities you as a family will determine. The Vestry and I worked hard in 2019 to lay the foundation for the future of St. Stephen's. Buildings and Grounds completed much needed improvements to our Parish Home from pews to sound, heating to cooling, improved contracts from lawn to snow, better cheaper insurance, and even a much needed facelift to the Bishop Em room and YOU CAME AND SUPPORTED! Hospitality hosted some of the most AMAZING events we have seen in years and YOU CAME AND SUPPORTED!



We hired Ami O'Neill as our new church Administrator and Mother Sharon agreed to take the reins as Priest in Residence to provide us the spiritual guidance needed during our time of transition and YOU CAME AND SUPPORTED! Outreach – Crafting Kindness – SOS – we asked and YOU CAME AND SUPPORTED! Town Halls – Stewardship Dinner – Advent BY Candlelight – Twelfth Night – YOU CAME AND SUPPORTED! YACAM Youth Events – an amazing Music Program, Pastoral Care – YOU CAME AND SUPPORTED!! You supported with prayer, active involvement, ideas, and most important financially!

We strengthened our bond with the Diocese and provided much needed Diocesan training to our Lay Ministers, Pastoral Care team, Teachers, and staff. Our Interview Committee received candidates and although the interviewing continues we are blessed to have the opportunity. Be patient Family as God works in his time --- NOT ours! God has truly blessed our Parish Family as is

Cont. on Page 4

St. Stephen's in the Community



As I sit to write this and reflect on this past year I realized this year was pretty strange for Jill and I. We had been living in Germany since the fall of 2015 and were just moving back January last. We realized pretty quickly that while we came home to the same place, it was not the same. Stores and restaurants had closed, roads had been widened – or were under construction, friends had moved on. Our families had changed as well. We had missed marriages, births, baptisms and passings. It was all familiar, but at the same time – it wasn't.

And this was true of our re-entry into our faith community here at St. Stephens. I was asked to join Vestry and Jill joined the Altar Guild. We expected to slip back into familiar roles in a familiar place. But St. Stephens had changed and we were no longer “in sync” with the rest of you. Like our family, St. Stephens was the same loving, caring place, but – different. I soon realized I was looking at things with a slightly different perspective, even a bit of an outsider. Just like our neighborhood, it looked the same, walking down the street, but the neighbors had changed. Their lives continued on when we were gone and their experiences of course changed them – just as I suspect our time in Germany had changed us. A friend put it best. “It’s like seeing a person when they are 10 and then seeing them again when they are 15. You will obviously see the changes in the person, but they may say they don’t feel they’ve changed because it’s been gradual.” The turbulent and inherently divisive events you’ve shared these past four years had to have an effect. I discovered that there was a much closer bond between you and an almost defiant defense of the family. While I felt a lot of love and caring for each other, I also sensed a stronger distrust; an anxiety about our place in world and our role in the future. Everybody kept telling me that we had healed and were ready to move on, but I saw signs that we were still working to trust and push our faith forward. And it took me a while to understand that and eventually help (I hope) with healing and now re-energizing our shared purpose as the faith family of St. Stephens.

And here I am looking back and wondering where the year went. It usually seems to go by in a blur. But as I reflect on this past year here at St. Stephen's, it doesn't feel like that for me. For me it feels like we have grown so much, maybe “matured” is the proper word, maybe not – maybe just I have. Whatever you call it, I hope you sense it as I do. Are we “healed”? Are we ready to move on? The image of the twelve apostles huddled together in the room at the Pentecost keeps coming to my mind. I sense a lot of us felt like they must have. But I also sense that, like the Holy Spirit came to them, I think we are ready now to come down from the room. Like the apostles, I believe we have been given a gift and we are about to burst forth and do amazing things in Christ's name.

Here we are in January 2020 thinking about our New Year's Resolutions. This past year we have talked a lot about re-inventing ourselves, re-invigorating and re-growing our membership. To do this, I believe we need to stop thinking only about our parish family, but our community. We need to find a way to be visible and engaged OUTSIDE the parish family. Please don't misunderstand me, I think our outreach efforts are



Community

wonderful and show our love for others at its best. BUT, it is an “invisible” outreach, WE are invisible to our community. TO grow, we cannot remain indoors.

So I ask you; will you resolve to continue to BE St. Stephen’s out in the community? Will you resolve to help us discover and pursue a mission that we are passionate about? Will you be an active participant in a faith community that dares to be Disciples of Christ? Back in the 70’s there was a popular saying “today is the first day of the rest of your life.” Remember? Well, today is the first day of the rest of your SPIRITUAL life as well. Let’s put on our sandals, pick up our staffs and get out there.

Happy New Year, St. Stephen’s!!!

Peace,
Dave Stein
Junior Warden

TRANSFORMING FAITH’S 2020 ADULT STUDY PROGRAM

When: Sunday morning between the 8 and 10 am services

Where: Bishop Emerich Room

This 13-week course of study is designed to help you shape a personal approach to passing on the good news of Jesus in natural ways. This is not a system or program, but a collection of biblical practices that you can incorporate into your life starting today. Kevin Harney serves as the lead pastor of Shoreline Community Church in Monterey California. His goal is to help you make sharing your relationship with Jesus as natural as talking about your favorite sports team or telling a friend about a new restaurant. Come explore the life-changing story of Jesus and discover ordinary ways to communicate God’s love and the message of salvation—naturally.



NB: Sessions 7-13 beginning January 12th, 2020! Then the group will take a Lenten break beginning March 15 thru Eastertide.

January / February St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, 5500 N. Adams Rd., Troy, MI 48098

Scenes from Twelfth Night



Attention Kroger Shoppers!!!

Please help support the St. Stephens Outreach Ministry without any cost to you. It's fast, easy and all you have to do is choose St. Stephens Episcopal Church as your non-profit organization of choice. Each year St. Stephens receives several hundred dollars from Kroger Rewards, but we need as many of our St. Stephens Krogers shopping families enrolled.

All you have to do is go to:

www.krogercommunityrewards.com, sign in and designate **82604** (St. Stephens) as the recipient.

Click Enroll and you'll be all set.

Enroll today! Ask your friends and family to enroll! If you are already enrolled and have designated St. Stephens as the recipient of your community rewards then you don't have to do a thing but pat yourself on the back.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Judy McQuiston.

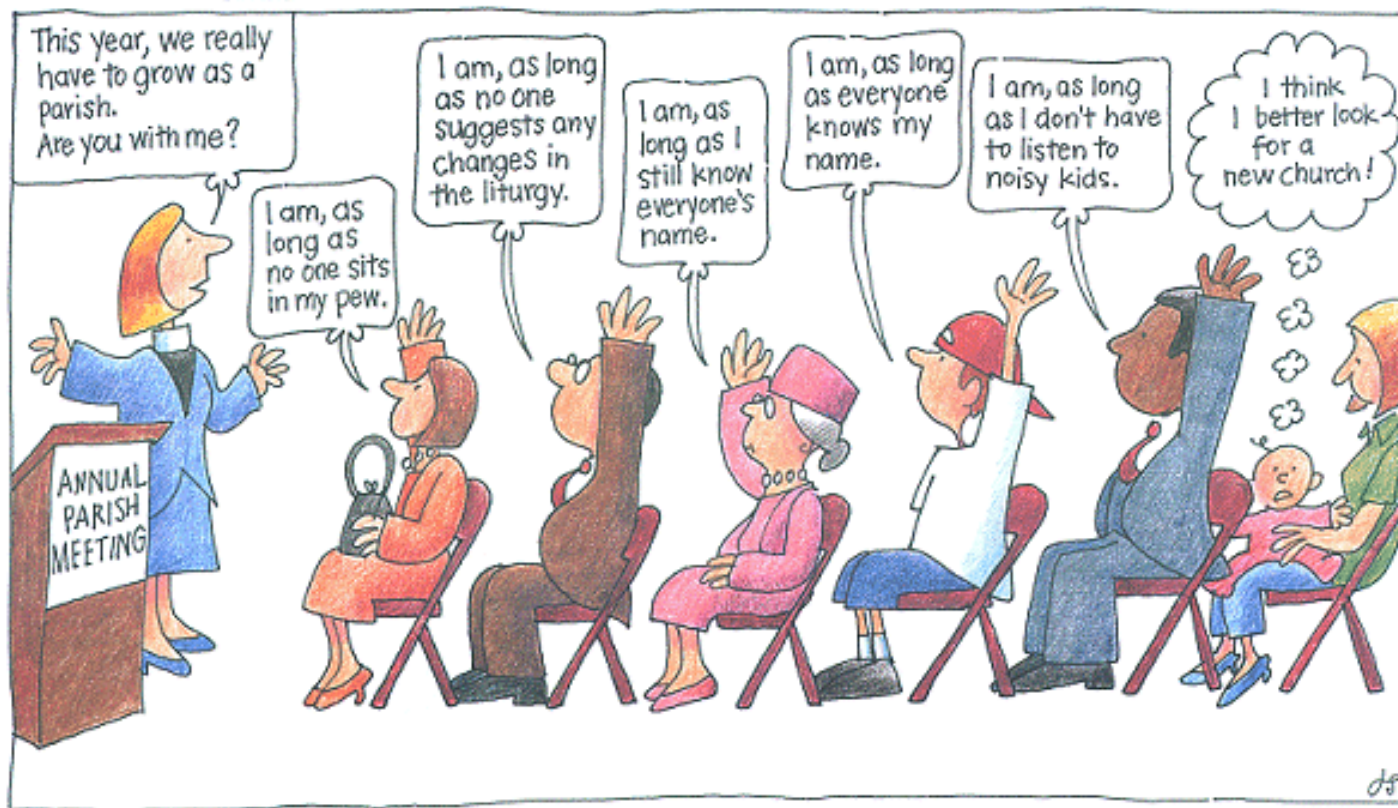
so evident to me by all we accomplished in 2019 – coming together as a Family to build the future of our parish with love and understanding and YOU CAME AND SUPPORTED!!

The Annual Meeting will soon be upon us and a new Vestry will be elected. My time as Sr. Warden will come to an end and the Vestry will elect a new leader and together with our love, support, and input and by God's Grace, will begin to explore the future of new possibilities for St. Stephen's and set the path we will walk with God.

I have been truly blessed and surely humbled by the outpouring of Trust, Love, and Support you have shown me these past two years as Sr. Warden of this AMAZING Parish Family!! Thank you – Thank you for being there – YOU CAME!!!

Much Love,

Scott, Sr. Warden



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We ask Your Prayers for the Following People

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Jennifer Penokie | Emy Pheil |
| Jenny Dolan | Kenny Nelson |
| Linda Dolan | Bob Mayer |
| Linda Lou Vance | Emily Thompson |
| Shawna Collins | Ron Lee |
| Harold Ford | John Thunder |
| Mary Bandsuch | Marilyn Elwarner |
| Greg Thompson | Kay Smith |
| Zoey Rose | Michelle Walter |
| Kay Novak | Pattee Saylor |
| Mayme Oliver | Betty Feighner |
| Sue Sprague | Terry Flynn |
| Rick Lowery | Meghann Armstrong |
| Theresa Martin | Joe Havachek |
| Bob White | Michelle Tobin |
| Colin Davis | Ron Goetzke |
| Robin Cameron | Lynn Davidson |
| Deputy David Hack | Orrin Nieberger |
| Amy Ambry | Joyce Vance |
| Carol Mikols | Tom Warner |
| Dorothy Langridge | |

Those in the Armed Services

Nathan Cremeans—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

How many Episcopalians does it take to change a light bulb?

Three. One to change the bulb, one to mix the drinks, and one to talk about how much better the old bulb was.

These Parish Families

| | |
|------|---|
| 1/5 | Ken & Kris Fuhr Daniel & Tammy Gerard Katelyn, Andrew, Brendan, Emily |
| 1/12 | Marilyn Gilbert Alan & Helen Giles |
| 1/19 | Liz Goulding Sue Gore |
| 1/26 | Adrian & Bonnie Gross Kristi & Dave Grubb |
| 2/2 | Claire Grutta Paul & Melissa Hardy Jacob, Cathryn, MacKenzie |
| 2/9 | Kathryn Hassel Chris Herfurth |
| 2/16 | Joe & Jan Hopper Rona Howell |
| 2/23 | Shirley Huber Brian Ingersoll & Jessica Back Greyson & Chloe |



Birthdays

January

| Name | Date |
|---------------------|------|
| Marilyn Borowski | 3 |
| Gordon McMullen | 3 |
| Joann Morelli | 3 |
| Jim Trask | 3 |
| Alice Moss | 5 |
| Dorothy Landridge | 6 |
| Marilyn Gilbert | 8 |
| Winifred Lowery | 8 |
| Nancy Papet | 8 |
| Gloria Christiansen | 11 |
| Michael Giles | 12 |
| Kate Roberts | 12 |
| Dave Stein | 12 |
| Rod Johnson | 14 |
| Donna Johnson | 21 |
| Sathi Satyanathan | 21 |
| Diane Kenefic | 22 |
| Cece Loua | 22 |
| Sue Russell | 22 |
| Jill Stein | 23 |
| Jill West | 23 |
| Molly Grubb | 24 |
| Cindy Vida | 24 |
| Jim Maxwell | 25 |
| Inge Wojas | 26 |
| Greyson Ingersoll | 27 |
| Chris Herfurth | 28 |
| Jen Trask | 30 |
| Jim Whitaker | 30 |

February

| Name | Date |
|--------------------|------|
| Steve Fragnoli | 1 |
| Frances Hammond | 3 |
| Megan Vida | 3 |
| Katelyn Gerard | 4 |
| William Waun | 4 |
| Jacquelyn Parent | 8 |
| Evan Vida | 9 |
| Amy Church | 10 |
| Tristan Thiel | 11 |
| Jan Eldon | 13 |
| Meghan Brokenshire | 16 |
| Kassidy O'Neill | 16 |
| Helen Slater | 17 |
| Sheryl Schmidt | 17 |
| Colin Davis | 19 |
| Tom Vida | 20 |
| Mackenzie Hardy | 23 |
| Katie Sobolewski | 24 |
| Mary Lou Bryson | 28 |
| Andrew Gerard | 28 |



Message from the Pulpit

Cont. from Page 1

In the same respect, this new year at St. Stephen's will be a great adventure for us. What will our resolution be? We have a clean slate and we need to decide what we are going to do with it. We want to grow our congregation and be healthy, but first we need to focus on the direction to get us there. Then we need to channel our efforts toward ensuring that our plan will provide the results we are seeking and then we must work together to accomplish that task.

Is resolution- keeping a challenge? Most definitely! But if we work together toward a common goal, we will be successful.



My friends, what will our New Year's resolution for St. Stephen's be? Let's work on this one!

Happy New Year!

Mother Sharon

Anniversaries

| Name | Date | Name | Date |
|-----------------------|------|------------------------|------|
| Gretchen & Roy Waters | 7 | Jackie & Don Ingersoll | 3 |
| | | Miranda & John Spates | 3 |
| | | Sue & Dan Stewart | 4 |
| | | Judy & Paul McClendon | 21 |
| | | Barb & Jim Whitaker | 27 |



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.

St. Stephen's Youth Happenings

Christmas Party

The J2A/YAC party was held at Jackie Ingersoll's home this year. Dinner was followed by several games. A spirited game of pop the balloon was won by Lachlan O'Neill when she finally got the best of Peter Burean. At times my tree was in danger of being toppled but all was well in the end. Next a marathon game of twister ended with flexible Molly Grubb beating out long-legged David Burean.

The finale of the evening was the white elephant exchange. A stuffed sloth was the popular item of the night with several trades. Sloths popular? Who knew? Everyone really seemed to have a great time including Scott and me. There was lots of laughter and bonding. This is a wonderful group of kids and I so enjoy their company. They are such fun.



Acolyte Recognition



Christmas Pageant Rehearsal



A View from the Pew

It wasn't intentional but if you look closely there is an underlying theme in this issue of the Witness. Along the lines of getting out in the community, and communicating God's love to others, I'd like to discuss a topic near and dear to my heart. It's about making an impact on someone else's life.



This can come in many forms, and sometimes we may not realize we're doing it. Helping a friend in a time of need, listening when words aren't needed, offering encouragement when someone needs it, transporting kids or grandkids, buying braces for your kids, paying for someone's college, delivering Meals on Wheels, helping with SOS or Baldwin Soup Kitchen, or teaching someone to drive. The list is endless of the many things we do every day to help each other. Some of it comes easy, especially when the person we're helping is related to us or is a friend. Some help is impersonal, yet important, like donating to a charity.

It's amazing the impact we can have on someone else's life. It may last a moment or affect someone for their entire life. Even if we never receive a thank you or recognition, we are here to help each other.

Yours in Christ,

Rob Redmer



Crafting Kindness



HAPPY NEW YEAR

2019 was able to finish the year with donating over 100 Christmas Socks. They were delivered to "The Specials"-a special needs group, babies at Troy Beaumont, and children at St. Matthew & St. Joseph, Detroit.

The Coast Guard based at Selfridge thanks all who donated cookies and goodies. They were amazed at the 17 boxes they received from our church.

Mark the date - SATURDAY, JANUARY 25th for our first Craft Day of the new year. We will be cutting, sewing, knitting, crocheting, and tagging blankets, quilts, hats and scarves. Come join us, there is always something you can do.

We will meet on February 27th and will take time for some 'show and tell' along with learning some new stitches or quilt squares. **YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.**

There is a continuing need for scarves and hats throughout the winter. You can knit, crochet, sew, or cut fleece. Folks in need will be very thankful for your kindness.

Any questions – please call or text at 248-373-9392 or email barbwhitaker137@gmail.com

The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.

-- Mark Twain

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!



"For every church there is one infallible authority. For fundamentalist Protestants, it is the Bible; for the Catholics, the Pope. And for the Anglicans, it is the previous Rector."

How to Contact Us

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

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

5500 North Adams Road
Troy, MI 48098

Please remember St. Stephen's in your will.

Who's Missing?

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

