



The WITNESS

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

April 2017

Mother Susan's
Musings

Father, Forgive Them



Life is all about change and growth. People come and people go. Life changes, our jobs change, our families change, our children grow, but what always remains the same is that all of us are part of God's family.

Here is where we journey together and know one another. Here is where we laugh and cry together. Here is where we celebrate and mourn together. *Here is where we are known by the One who "created us and through whom we have our being."* Here is where we are always welcome.



Chinese symbol for love

It's April somehow, and around the world the Church approaches Jesus' final, holy week. The Biblical account begins with his palm-strewn procession into Jerusalem as men, women and children hail him as their king. *Hosanna (Save us, we pray)!* Jesus arrives in triumph but the praise is short-lived.

Most of the Gospels attribute Jesus' rapid change of status to his clearing the money-changers out of the Jerusalem Temple. But we know from our Sunday Gospel readings that this tension has been building from the start of Jesus' public ministry, which followed John the Baptist's imprisonment... The world's Powers will always resist the loss of their control or authority. In first century, Roman-held Palestine, both John and Jesus were trouble-makers who had to go.

Fast forward to today. Who has threatened your control over the things you value most? When Powers – the institutions, values and expectations you've given priority -- affect your time, your finances, your home, health, relationships... how have you responded to that threat? Popular options include hostility, fear, hopelessness, anger or cynicism; and very occasionally, prayer.

As we know, Jesus chose the last – prayer – and continued in his deeply-held beliefs' requirements. It did not go so well for him personally; yet his trust in God persisted. I doubt many of us could go through what Jesus suffered, and still pray from the cross: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Of all the ways to address the powers that try to break our resolutions of goodness, forgiveness is probably at the bottom of my list. "Rage, rage against the dying of the light!" advised the poet Dylan Thomas. Jesus did not rage. He accepted the consequences of walking into the territory of cor-

rupt and self-serving "authorities," who would yield nothing to his proclaimed Kingdom of God.

"Father, forgive them" – this prayer is one of the "Last Words from the Cross," seven phrases collected by the Gospel writers from Jesus' lips, as he suffered during his crucifixion. The Gospel accounts don't agree on precisely what Jesus said, but they record his inspiring refusal to curse, berate or give up on God. If you come to the ecumenical service at noon on April 14, being held this year at Central Woodward Christian Church just a couple miles south of St Stephen's (Big Beaver just east of Adams), you'll hear seven of us preachers offer short homilies on each of those phrases. I drew "Father, forgive them." And so I've had to grapple, personally and professionally, with how to forgive in times of pain. Especially when the emotions bubbling up are so different from what Jesus displayed; and the retorts are so different from what Jesus prayed.

Among the many ways to observe and interpret Jesus' crucifixion on Good Friday, is the opportunity to learn from him in that terrible dying. His words, in whatever Gospel they're written, draw our attention to God's insistence that the Powers do not score the victory. God's Kingdom will come, despite all the malign resistance it faces. Following Jesus means we will run smack into those same forces; and our resilience will make a difference to their progress. This Holy Week, come to watch, listen, and learn how to live from our crucified Lord. Then the joy of Easter Resurrection can really take hold!

From the foot of the Cross,



Around the Parish

Easter Week Schedule

April Lectionary

April 2 —Lent 5

Ezek 37: 1-14
Psalm 130
Rom 8: 6-11
John 11: 1-45

April 9 — Palm Sunday The Liturgy of the Palms

Psalm 118:1-2, 29-29
Matt 21: 1-11

The Liturgy of the Word

Is 50: 4-9a
Psalm 31: 9-16
Phil 2: 5-11
Matt 27: 11-54

April 16—Easter Sunday

Psalm 114
Romans 6: 3-11
Matt 28: 1-10

April 23- Easter 2

Acts 2: 14a, 22-32
Psalm 16
1 Peter 1: 3-9
John 20: 19-31

April 30—Easter 3

Acts 2: 14am 36-41
Psalm 116: 1-3, 10-17
1 Peter 1: 17-23
Luke 24: 13-35

Palm Sunday Weekend (Saturday, April 8 & Sunday, April 9)

Blessing and distribution of Palms and the Passion Gospel narrative at all services

10:00 am Palm Procession beginning outdoors, or in the parish hall if rain.

Maundy Thursday, April 13

7:00 pm Communion Liturgy commemorating the Last Supper and Jesus' betrayal

8:00 pm All-night Vigil Begins; *sign up to keep watch for one hour*

Good Friday, April 14

8:00 am Prayers and Communion to conclude the Vigil

12 noon Ecumenical Good Friday Service at
Central Woodward Christian Church,
3955 W. Big Beaver Rd, (just east of N. Adams)

1:30 pm Stations of the Cross (at St Stephen's)

7:00 pm Choral Service with Cantata, *The Day He Wore My Crown*
Readings and Prayers for Good Friday

Easter Eve (Saturday), April 15

10:30 am Rehearsal for the Vigil

7:00 pm The Great Vigil of Easter, followed by an Easter Party
Music by St Stephen's Band

Easter Sunday, April 16

8:00 am Easter Service with Choir and Hymns

9:30 am Annual Easter Egg Hunt

10:00 am Festival Eucharist with Choir, Children's Bell Choir and Brass
Child Care available



Church Notes

Keeping Vigil with Jesus

“Jesus went with his disciples to a garden called Gethsemane and told his disciples, “Stay here while I go over there and pray.” Taking along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he plunged into an agonizing sorrow. Then he said, “This sorrow is crushing my life out. Stay here and keep vigil with me.” Matthew 26:36-38, *The Message*

On the night between our Maundy Thursday service and Good Friday morning, you are invited to a garden setting, inside our church, to keep watch with Jesus. By praying with candles, quiet music and the Reserved Sacrament from Communion, we do this in memory of him and his final hours of self-sacrifice.

A sign-up is now posted in the Gathering Area, and members of the Youth Groups and their mentors will serve as hosts. Come to the front entrance to be let into the building and directed to the Altar of Repose.

The Message continues the story and coaxes us to test our intentions:

When he came back to his disciples, he found them sound asleep. He said to Peter, “Can’t you stick it out with me a single hour? Stay alert; be in prayer so you don’t wander into temptation without even knowing you’re in danger. There is a part of you that is eager, ready for anything in God. But there’s another part that’s as lazy as an old dog sleeping by the fire.” Matt. 26:40-41

Join us at any hour of the night. The Garden Vigil concludes at 8:00 a.m. with a short service of prayer and Communion from the Reserved Sacrament. All are welcome.

Susan

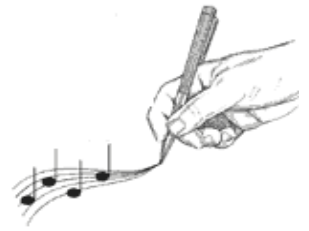
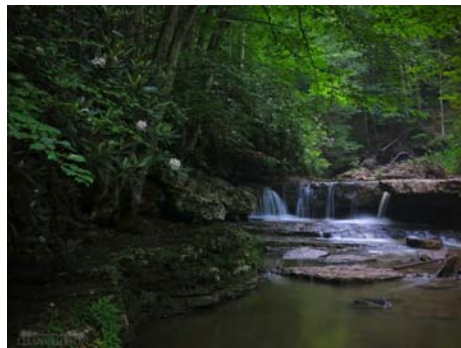
Summer Youth Trips

This June, the J2A and YAC groups will be traveling in opposite directions for faith-filled adventures. The J2A Urban Adventure is planned for June 16 to 18 and will include traveling by van and train to Chicago, “urbaneeing” around the city on the busses and commuter rail, preparing lunch for 140 homeless folks, and worshipping at St. James Cathedral. This is a wonderful experience that is an important element in the Journey to Adulthood program.

The older youth (YAC) will be traveling to do mission work in West Virginia as well as make a visit to Gettysburg, the National Cathedral, and other sites. They will be traveling from June 18 to 25. This is a combination mission trip/pilgrimage and is designed to facilitate a greater awareness of how Christ works through us in the world in which we live.

The support of the parish makes these trips possible. Although parents pay a significant amount of the cost, these would not be possible without your support. Please continue to keep our young people in your prayers. Your support is recognized and felt by each of them. Thank you for all you do.

Ken Fisher



One Voice

Please join a remarkable group—the St. Stephen’s Choir.

As we look for a permanent replacement for our choir director, come on Thursdays and join the singing!



From the Back Pew

one World

Summer Weekend VBS

Tell your family, friends, and neighbors to come to St. Stephen's for the Weekend VBS Adventure! This will start at 5:00 on Friday, June 30 with a kid-friendly dinner and our first adventure, ending at 8:30.

Then we will reconvene for more adventures on Saturday and Sunday from 9 am to Noon. Kids will enjoy crafts, music, stories, games, and fun! We will end the weekend with an ice cream celebration immediately following the 10 am services.

Mark your calendars now and be sure to share the dates. This is always a great time for our parish families as well as guests. Want to help? Contact Ken



Blood Drive

You Can Make a Difference! St. Stephens is hosting a blood drive in on Wednesday, May 31st from 1 pm to 6:45 pm. The drive will be held at St. Stephens in the Fellowship Hall.

Benefits of Donating

- It feels great to donate!
- You get free juice and delicious cookies.
- It's something you can spare – most people have blood to spare... yet, there is still not enough to go around.
- You will help ensure blood is on the shelf when needed – most people don't think they'll ever need blood, but many do.
- You will be someone's hero – in fact, you could help save more than one life with just one donation.

Please make an appointment to donate blood and encourage others to give at the drive too. You can schedule an appointment on line by clicking on the Red Cross link at the St. Stephens website or by contacting Judy Lazzaro McQuiston at judyLazzaro75@gmail.com or 248-860-6213.

A Great Deal!

SHARP (Senior Home Assistance Repair Program) helps Troy seniors 60 and older and persons with disabilities with home repairs. The work is done by volunteers and usually involves jobs that take an hour or two. **Labor is free.** Tipping is not allowed. *You must pay for supplies*, although assistance may be available if a need exists. If you have a need for a repair, call SHARP at 248-528-2929. Allow two weeks to hear from SHARP. Requests for outside work accepted April 1 – October 15 only. Donations Accepted by the North Woodward Community Foundation SHARP fund.



Norma Ross

How About Lunch?

A very good deal can be found at the Troy Community Center, 3179 Livernois, Troy. 248-524-3484. Lunch is served Monday-Thursday, 11:45-12:30, and on Friday, 11:30-12:15 pm. Reservations are not required. Suggested donation: \$3.50. Under age 60, must pay \$6. See the Lunch menu on the Senior Moments bulletin board across from the drinking fountain.

Norma Ross

Inside the Parish Walls

J2A Auction Time

We will once again be enjoying a night of celebration and support of the youth of St. Stephen's on Saturday, May 6th at 6pm. The evening will begin with a wonderful dinner with delicious food, beverages, and silent auction bidding, followed by the J2A Live Auction. This year we will feature many delicious, fun, useful, and entertaining items for everyone to bid on and enjoy. We will also continue to accept credit cards as well as checks and cash for all the treasures you win!

Past items include:

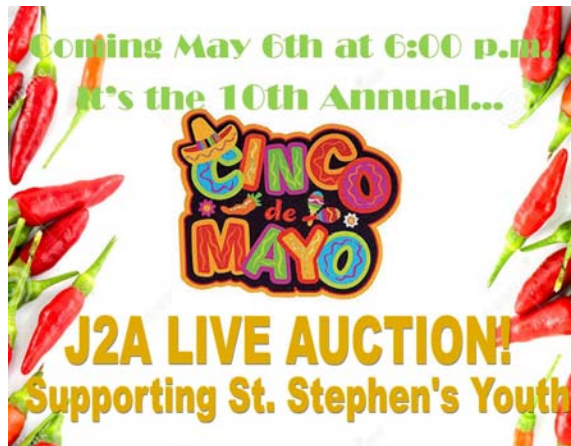
- Tickets to Michigan and Michigan State Football
- Vacations
- Delicious Foods
- Tickets to the Tigers
- Handyman/Landscaping Services
- Meals at local restaurants
- Specialty Baskets
- Tickets for the Symphony, Opera, Musicals, etc.
- Art created by parishioners
- Technical Services
- And much, much more

This year, Crafting Kindness is donating two beautiful quilts to the auction! After Easter you can preview them in the parish hall.

April 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Please check the website for the most up-to-date calendar of events
www.ststephenstroy.org

This event is the only significant fundraising that is done by the youth and will help support this summer's YAC mission trip and J2A Urban Adventure. Your presence is greatly appreciated, whether you bid 'em up or just enjoy fun night of fellowship, so please plan to come. Tickets are just \$5 and are available in advance and at the door.



Save Your Cans & Bottles

The Sunday School needs your help to donate an animal to their needy brothers and sisters for Easter. Collection will be Palm Sunday so start hanging on to your "returnable's" now!

Thanks!



One Family

Bible Study

For all who are interested in weekly Bible Study, the "no experience necessary" bible study is held in the Bishop Emrich lounge, each Wednesday at 10 am. Newcomers are always welcome! Join Mother Susan each week and explore!



April Birthdays

Mike Wellman.....	3
Tyler Braidwood.....	3
Arch Coran.....	5
Mary Ann Kish.....	5
Margaret O'Neill.....	6
Ken Fuhr.....	8
Joe Przeslawski.....	12
Cheri Salanty.....	14
Ronnie Karlsson.....	14
Tammy Gerard.....	14
Mark Pierce.....	14
Don Ingersoll.....	16
Paul Hardy.....	18
John Thunder.....	20
Peter Goulding.....	20
Sara Sue Westbury.....	21
Bob Hoffman.....	22
Daryllyn Oswald.....	23
Katy Allen.....	24
Karen Mirzoian.....	27

Reaching Out

Agency of the Month

Thank you! for supporting generously our first two “agencies of the month,” Catholic Community Resource Team (CCRT) of Pontiac (addressing us on Feb. 19, when we provided over \$1400 in donations); and the Faith Communities Coalition on Foster Care (here on March 26; we collected more than \$450 in cash and many requested products). The donations for graduating teens headed out of the Foster Care program can still be brought over to church, through Easter Day.

Our Agency of the Month in April is Mai (pronounced “my”) Family Services, based in Livonia. MaiFS is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization serving the South Asian community. St. Stephen’s immediate neighbors include many South Asian (Indian) families, who arrive in Michigan for work or study with varied levels of fluency in English. They have little to no familiarity with American institutions that might help in time of trouble. Mai Family Services seeks to fill that gap. Their mission is to provide confidential, professional, culturally-sensitive counseling services to people in need; and also to increase awareness of mental health, domestic violence, and other issues affecting their clients. They provide holistic intervention and support services to men and women through referral and resource services. Scores of committed volunteers have served this organization since its founding in 1986, with continual and unconditional support, involving countless hours.

Join us on **April 30** to learn more about **Mai Family Services**, as our guest at the 10 a.m.



service will be Anu Gopalakrishnan. Check out their website, www.maifs.org.

And you can look forward to learning about our May Agency, the **Baldwin Center** in Pontiac. We mention their services frequently during the year, but do you know what all is offered over there? Find out during and after the 10 a.m. service on **May 21**.

Susan

Crafting Kindness

All ages and skill levels welcome at the April Crafting Kindness session April 29th. Join us in the parish hall as we work together on creating comfort for God's creatures. Can you tie a knot? Use scissors? Sew? Knit? Put those talents to work on one of our projects! Materials provided. We will be there from 10 am to 2 pm. Bring a brown bag lunch if you can craft the whole time. For more information contact coordinator Barb Whitaker at 248-373-9392.

Thanks so much
Katy Allen



Easter Flowers



EASTER FLOWERS 2017

The Altar Guild provides flowers and greenery to decorate the church for Easter. Gifts from the congregation may be given as memorials, as thank offerings, or anonymously. Memorials will be printed in the Easter service bulletins. If you wish to give, please complete the following:

Given by (PLEASE PRINT) _____

Address _____

In Memory of _____

(or) in Thanksgiving for _____

Amount _____

Please turn in this form (place in the offering plate or the Altar Guild mailbox in the church office) with your check by deadline:

Palm Sunday April 9, 2017

Make checks out to: **St. Stephen's Altar Guild**

The Altar Guild thanks you for your donation.

We Ask Your Prayers for...

Prayer Concerns

Ron Converse
Thelma DePew
Cathlynn Duncan
Betty Feighner
Gary Feighner
Ron Gural
Charmel Maki
Betsy McLachlan
Larry Nunn
Zoey Rose
Charles Saylor
Joe Simler
Greg Thompson
Joyce Vance
Tom Vida
Tristyn Yant
Kyle J
Beth L

These Parish Families

4/2 Don & Linda Hotton
Brian, Jocelyn & Chloe Ingersoll
4/9 Don & Jackie Ingersoll, Peter & David Burean
Rod & Donna Johnson
4/16 Mary Jane Johnston
Sandy & Connie Jose
4/23 Ronny, Silvia & Diana Karlsson
Richard & Diane Kenefic
4/30 Mary Jane Kerr
Gwen Kirby

April Anniversaries

Richard & Winifred
Lowery.....5
John & Joan
Thunder.....7
Paul & Mary Ann
Kish.....13
Robert & Lynette
Cline.....18
James & Marilyn
Elwarner.....19
Bob & Sara Sue
Westbury.....21
Daniel & Tammy
Gerard.....27

Those in the Armed Services

Stephen Armstrong—nephew of Linda Pierce
Rachel Barton—granddaughter of Jane Frank
Nathan Cremeans—grandson of Barb Whitaker
Tom Fydrych—known to Rob Redmer
Peter Hughes—nephew of Bruce & Nancy Papet
Stephanie Herderich—member of St. Stephen's
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
Clayton Ulrich—nephew of Jeralyn Burrell

Brendon Church
Kyle Church
Grandsons of Ed and Elaine Church & Nephew of Amy Church
Benjamin Church
Great Nephew of Ed and Elaine Church & Cousin of Amy Church

We constantly review and renew the lists for prayers. Please call the church office, or e-mail us at office@ststephenstroy.org, to ask that a relative or friend be added to those in need of our church's prayers.



How to Contact Us

Church Office: (Open 9:30-1:30 weekdays)

Tel: 248-641-8080 Fax: 248-641-8067

Cathy Hoffman, Parish Administrator/Accountant
office@ststephenstroy.org

The Rev. Susan Anslow Williams—Rector

Cell: 716-397-0997 (voice or text)

Home: 248-732-7955

rector@ststephenstroy.org

The Rev. Jim Maxwell, Retired Priest in Residence

jimmardi@wowway.com

Ken Fuhr—Director of Christian Formation

formation@ststephenstroy.org

Jim Trask, Treasurer

Cathy Hoffman, Assistant to the Treasurer

treasurer@ststephenstroy.org

Church Website: Ken Fuhr, Webmaster

www.ststephenstroy.org (password: coffeeshour)

The Witness, Liz Sinkovich, Editor

witness@ststephenstroy.org

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

Weekly Services:

Sat. 4:30 p.m.

Informal Service

Sun., 8 a.m.

Early Eucharist

Sun, 10 a.m.

Eucharist with Music, Nursery and Sunday School

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

Change Service Requested

Dated Material

APRIL 2017