



The WITNESS

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

July-August 2017

Mother Susan's
Musings



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

Playing with Parables

One of my favorite Bible scholars is a Jewish Professor of New Testament (yep, you read that right) named Amy-Jill Levine. I've had the pleasure of hearing her lecture on the topic of Jesus the Rabbi, especially on his use of the illustrations and short stories we call *parables*. Prof. Levine insists that a good teacher like Jesus would leave his stories open-ended, forcing the listener (back then and us now) to draw their own conclusions.

This summer, our Sunday Gospel passages have featured some of Jesus' best known. The word "parable" is related to the word "parallel," and means "set alongside." Imagine parallel bars for gymnasts: they don't intersect, but they are related. A parable is not an *allegory*, where each character or action is meant to be something else, though you would get this idea from Matthew's telling.

For instance, Matthew 13:1-9 tells the familiar parable of the sower tossing seed onto all kinds of soil. Later in the chapter, there's the explanation that "The seeds are God's words, the soil is people, the birds are Evil One..." This tidy correlation is likely a later insertion by "Matthew" to help his confused audience. Which was nice of him, but maybe not what Jesus had hoped for, because it directs one's imagination.

I think Jesus wants his audience to be imaginative, to associate his illustrations with other things they know (like farming, or fishing, or bread-baking, depending on the parable). Similarly, I think we could develop our own parables the draw on what we know best! Come on, use your imagination with me.

The reign of God is like secretary who knows every client by name and makes them each feel like an old friend when they stop by her desk.

Or, *The work of God's people is like sprinklers going off in the early morning before the household wakes up, watering the yard secretly so the children have soft, green grass that gives them joy at playtime.*

Here's my idea for a fun summer challenge: Think up some parables or metaphors of your own, write them on a card or paper, and drop them into the collection box I'm placing at the back of the worship space. This is an All Ages Challenge. Later in September we will open the box and let the Sunday School illustrate our parables, creating a home-grown collection as part of their own study of parables this Fall.

I encourage your creativity! If you need more inspiration, take another look at Matthew ch. 13, which contains a string of short parables. Or Luke ch. 10 for a long one (the Good Samaritan). And enjoy the journeys your imagination might take, as you enter the scenes our Savior describes.

Fruitfully and faithfully yours,





Around the Parish

August Lectionary

August 6—Trasfiguration

Exo 34: 29-35
Psalm 99
2 Peter 1:13-21
Luke 9: 28-36

August 13— Pentecost 10

Gen 37:1-4, 12-28
Psalm 105, 1-6, 16-22, 45b
Rom 10: 5-15
Matt 14: 22-33

August 20—Pentecost 11

Gen 45: 1-15
Psalm 133
Rom 11: 1-2a, 29-32
Matt 15: (10-20), 21-28

August 27—Pentecost 12

Exo 1: 8-2:10
Psalm 124
Rom 12: 1-8
Matt 16:13-20

Vestry Notes

Summer is a busy travel time for many at St. Stephens, vestry members included. Yet we have not forgotten the importance of our church and continue to work towards the future.

We have been involved in some workshops to help with our communication and relationships within our church. As well as preparing a strategic plan for our growth and development.

We look forward to a productive fall as people return from summer travels - back to school and back to church.

See you soon,
Alice Moss
Senior Warden

Celebration

Please join us in a celebration supper honoring the work of Father Jim Maxwell with the South Oakland Shelter.

Reverend Maxwell helped establish the organization in 1985, and has remained a committed supporter through the years. We will celebrate his work with a dinner prepared by Mike Wellman and Stephen Fragnoli, along with assistance from the Hospitality Committee, on Sunday, September 10th in the St. Stephen's Fellowship Hall.

Social hour will begin at 5:30 pm and dinner will be served at 6:30 pm. Tickets can be purchased for \$15 per person with all proceeds going to support South Oakland Shelter. Seating is limited, so please contact Mike Wellman, Stephen Fragnoli or Joe Hopper as soon as possible.



Mike Wellman
Steve Fragnoli
Joe Hopper

Party Ahead

Past, present and potential Choir Members are invited to a musical party on Wednesday August 30th. Get to know our new Music Director, Caleb Sinclair (yes, he's staying!) and enjoy a preview of the fall repertoire.

All will be flavored with friendship and an assortment of hors d'oeuvres, desserts and beverages (please bring something for the feast). The fun begins at 7:00 pm, the vocal warm-ups at 7:30. RSVP in the gathering area!

Talk with Caleb if you're interested but unsure of his expectations. (Hint: They start with "Enjoyment.")

>

Juan



Congratulations

Congratulations to Bob Westbury (an "8 o'clocker") who was recently named Volunteer of the Year by the Salvation Army of Metro Detroit. Bob started ringing the bell for their Red Kettle Campaign back in 1980.

More recently he started volunteering with their "Bed and Bread" program, delivering lunches around the city. Bob's accomplishments on behalf of the Salvation Army were featured in the *Troy Times* newspaper on July 20. Good work, Bob!

Church Notes

An Adventure in the City

The Urban Adventure in June was an excellent example of our youth in action on many levels. From the very beginning of the three-day weekend the J2A group looked for and found numerous opportunities to grow as individuals and as a community.

Highlights included a wet Friday night as we all experience the fountain at Navy Pier, failing quickly in our plans to dodge the water and stay dry. Since we had traveled by van and then train to Chicago that day, then walked with our bags to the hotel and to dinner, we were all ready for some cool-down time, so it worked out just fine.

Saturday, walking wasn't the problem, but the bus and commuter rail system was the challenge of the day. From Wrigley Field to the "Bean", the crew rode and trudged around the city finding over a dozen landmarks and executing a route that was challenging for even the seasoned city traveler. With the exception of one bus ride that was so long it created some "facility-challenged moments", the group survived the trek.

Sunday was an amazing day of service, starting with Eucharist in the chapel at St. James Cathedral. The church provides a wonderful meal for the area homeless twice each month in the diocesan center adjacent to the Cathedral. We specifically planned to be there to help with this incredible outreach event.

All of us were put to work immediately after the Eucharist ended, setting tables and preparing food for about 140 people. This meal included ham, chicken, grilled sausage, tossed

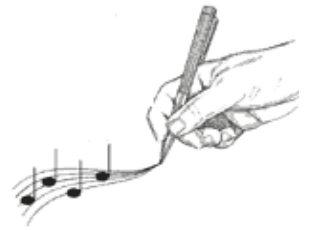
salad, grilled onions and peppers, rolls, and more! It was a feast and everyone ate all they wanted, including seconds and thirds for those who wanted it.

Desert was ice cream and fixin's lovingly served by our youth to the very, very appreciative recipients. In addition, our kids had fixed bag lunches for all the folks as well, so the folks all left with another meal for the day!

When it was over, all of us felt so blessed to have been there to experience this incredible gift to the homeless and to us by the people of St. James. They were so appreciative that one of the staff who works at every meal made it a point to say several times that our youth were the best workers he had ever had! And they were.

Thanks to all of you who made this incredible trip possible by your prayerful support and thanks especially to Alan Giles and Anna Dorsey for their amazing leadership and guidance. I know that the Urban Adventure for our J2A group was an important rite of passage and that the weekend will be valuable as a key element in their continued growth as a community in Christ.

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!



More Summer News

And Then Came Charleston

At the end of June the YAC youth went east on a very unique trip that included opportunities for growth through mission, adventure, and discovery activities. Those involved were Evan DeCiantis, Garret Fragnoli, Joey Kennedy, Margaret O'Neill, Kate Roberts, Paula Schuster, and Emily Williams, along with leaders Scott Armstrong and Ken Fuhr, and Mo. Susan as Spiritual Director.

The trip began with a long day of driving followed by two days of mission work in Charleston, WV. This included cleaning, scraping, painting, and even repairing a cement step.

The days were hot but all of us were refreshed by the overwhelmed appreciation of those we were helping. During our evening reflections several in the group mentioned that they had been told by the ladies we were assisting that nobody in their neighborhood would help them and that the work they had done was a blessing.

The next stop was the New River for a day of whitewater rafting. This was the real deal. With many class 5 rapids to negotiate, every-



one got wet, laughed all day, were seriously challenged by the river and shared an experience they

will never forget. Since the previous night was in a bunkhouse with hard beds and no air, the ride to DC after the raft trip was pretty quiet!

In Washington D.C. Mo. Susan led us on a journey that would last two days in Washington and conclude at Gettysburg on Saturday. We considered our freedom and the price that

has been paid for that freedom, as well as what our own convictions are and what sacrifices we would make.

This journey included visits to Arlington National Cemetery, the Vietnam, Korean, and WWII war memorials, the National Cathedral, and finally the battlefield at Gettysburg.



The reflections and discussions that were part of this were thought-provoking and indicative of the considerable spiritual depth of our youth. We all learned much from the experience and from each other.

Along the way we all were thoroughly entertained by the lively discussions that covered every imaginable topic and were often punctuated with the unmistakable, infectious laugh that Mr. Armstrong shared liberally. The group traveled together effortlessly, making the most of every opportunity.

Through days of hard work, aggressive recreation, lots of walking, long drives, meals on the run, and varying sleeping conditions, this group was always positive. The result was a blessing to all and a week everyone was very, very thankful for.

To all of you who help through your prayers and many gifts, thank you for making this possible. These trips have many rewards and this particular experience will have a lifetime of impact on all who were involved and on those they impact through the years



one World



From the Back Pew

Fireflies

I just attended a workshop that started with the statement that we are a highly anxious society. Statistics show anti-anxiety medication sales are rising. News reports lead with “what you need to know” to keep yourself and your children safe. Students start studying, WITH TUTORS, for the SAT in the ninth grade. I thought it was just me. Apparently not.

I frequently do feel anxious. I am stressed about this contribution to The Witness. I worry about my health care, global warming, North Korea, sorting my recycling correctly and I just learned that I am not storing my toothbrush properly in order to avoid bacterial buildup.

So I try to relax, look at the fish in our pond, take out frustrations on the weeds in my garden. I take yoga. It is not always effective. At times the world seems like a confusing mess and it keeps coming at me.

Last week Jim and I were sitting on the front porch after a hot day. It was cooling off and very pleasant. Kids were shouting and playing across the street. Our young neighbor headed out with a buddy and waved hello. Our dog stopped barking for the moment.

And then the fire flies started. They were suddenly everywhere. There was a light

breeze and the stars were coming out. I really love summer. I slowed down and felt peaceful. This minute God was spreading out beauty and love right in my front yard.

Our neighbor came over and we talked for a while mentioning that summer is going fast. It made me a little sad. But then it will be autumn with the crunchy red leaves and we’ll wear sweaters when we walk the dog and we will have bonfires in the backyard. I really love fall. After enjoying summer, autumn will come.

And it will come without any assistance from me. The a-ha moment. Without any work, or planning, or worry, or angst, or input from me, summer came and fall will come.

God is giving me today and tomorrow, each one unfolding as it should. That was a calming thought. I felt reassured that while some things will change, many wonderful things will continue. God said “I’ve got this”. And I feel better.

Karol Sprague



Disclaimer: I strongly dislike late February and all of March

August 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	31		

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

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!



July Birthdays

Erinma Ezeugwa..... 3
 Norah O'Neill..... 5
 Janet Satyanathan.. 6
 Vickie Saylor..... 6
 Darrel Middlewood.. 6
 Madeleine Duggan.... 9
 Kathy DeCiantis..... 10
 Adrian Brokenshire 11
 Rob Redmer..... 13
 MaryJane Johnston14
 Kathryn Buller..... 16
 Jim McQuiston..... 17
 Peter Oswald..... 18
 Josephine West..... 18
 Kathy Davis..... 19
 Jeremy Taylor.....20
 Alex Ezeugwa.....20
 Brian Ingersoll.....22
 Mike Herderich.....26
 Daniel Gerard.....26
 Pema O'Neill.....26
 Cloe Ingersoll.....26
 Audrey Brokenshire...29
 Kay Novak.....30
 Shannon Cowie.....30
 Justin Wojas.....31

Reaching Out

Labor Day and Baseball

St John's Episcopal Church at 8714 Woodward Ave. invites us to worship with them on Sunday, September 3, 2017. Stay to enjoy a hot dog lunch or go elsewhere on your own, and park free in the church lot to cheer on the Tigers at 1:10pm at Comerica Park VS. the Cleveland Indians. Tiger tickets are \$18.00 and they are under the shade, only three steps up!

Sign up for carpooling, leaving St Stephen's at 9:00 a.m. There are only 25 tickets available so sign up at church soon OR email Kris at kfuhr08@gmail.com to reserve your spot. Ticket money needs to go to Jim Carnegie as soon as you make your commitment, please. Thanks, and we hope you will join us for all or part of this fun day.



The Adult Faith Committee

August Birthdays

Bob Brokenshire.....2
 Bruce Papet.....2
 Liz Sinkovich.....3
 Olivia DeCiantis.....4
 Sharon Sands.....7
 Paul McClendon.....8
 Geoff Walter.....9
 Jan Hopper.....11
 Linda Lambert.....11
 Sarah Cowie.....12
 Melissa Duggan.....13
 Joe Hopper.....14
 Emmet Duggan.....16
 Richard Kenefic II.21
 Helen Giles.....21
 Quinn O'Neill.....21
 Bryon Converse.....22
 Joan Knapp.....25
 Chibuzo Okeagu.....26
 Ami O'Neill.....26
 Theresa Haba.....26
 Kathryn Hassel.....27
 Bob Westbury.....29
 Lou Mirzoian.....30
 Jon Burrell.....30
 Benjamin Buller.....31
 Cathryn Hardy.....31

Emergency Contact Information

Dear St. Stephen's Family,
 In recent months, some of our members have been hospitalized and/or transferred to rehabilitation centers. Friends and other members have been unable to locate them or reach their families.

Please complete the Emergency Contact Form and leave it in the offering plate or the church office.

The contact information will be secure, available only to church members who need to know how to reach your contact person/s.

Thank you for taking part in this important process.

The Adult Faith Committee

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

for _____

The following person/s should be contacted in case I/We have an emergency, or the church needs to reach me.

Contact name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Today's date _____

Additional contacts may be listed on the back. May include primary physician or usual hospital

We Ask Your Prayers for...

Prayer Concerns

Ron Converse
Charles Saylor
Zoey Rose
Betsy McLachlan
Kyle J.
Joyce Vance
Thelma DePew
Gary Feighner
Beth L
Charmel Maki
Joe Simler
Greg Thompson
Tristyn Yant
Jerralyn Burrell
Dante Vannelli
Enid Hausding
Mark Hetzel
Kyle Merian
Annie Sharp
Diane Kenefic
Owen Canavan
Betty Feighner
Dave Berube
John Thunder
Betty Sage
Judy Ford
Mary Bandsuch

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.

These Parish Families

7/3 Lou Mirzoian
Karen Mirzoian
7/10 Joann Morelli
Joan Morgan
7/17 John, Karen, Alex & T.J. Morley
Alice & Carolyn Moss
7/24 Jac, Katy, Anais & Paulina Allen-Ndione
Jerry & Lani Nolan
7/31 Kay Novak
Cathy O'Brien
8/7 Amy, Quinn, Margaret, Pema, Norah, Lachlan & Cassidy O'Neill
Ben, Chibuzo, Chinwenwa, Uzoma, Chikezie & Chinedu Okeagu
8/14 Peter, Daryllyn, Colton & Jackson Oswald
Jean Otoo
8/21 Pauleen Ottenhoff
Betty Padilla
8/28 Bruce & Nancy Papet
Jeff, Renee, Samuel & Jacquelyn Parent

July

Anniversaries

Mike & Erin
Brokenshire8
Jeff & Renee
Parent10
Rob & Donna
Johnson22
Sandy & Connie
Jose12
Brian & Megan
Mullin14
Rick & Barb
Spina15
Steve & Corinne
Fragnoli 121
Joseph & Patricia
Przeslawski21
David & Jodi
DeMay38

August

Anniversaries

Michael & Rhonda
Allen5
Alan & Helen
Giles24
Geoff & Cheryl
Walter25
The Rev. Jim & Mardi
Maxwell28
Bob & Cathy
Hoffman31



How to Contact Us

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

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

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

Caleb Sinclair—Music Director

musicdirector@ststephenstroy.org

Jim Trask, Treasurer

Pam Bonkowski Assistant to the Treasurer

treasurer@ststephenstroy.org

Church Website: Ken Fuhr, Webmaster

www.ststephenstroy.org (password: coffeefhour)

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 Communion Service, with music. Sometimes held outdoors in the summer!

Sun., 8 a.m.

Quiet Eucharist, short and sweet

Sun, 10 a.m.

Holy Eucharist with music, nursery care available. Stay for fellowship afterwards.

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

JULY-AUGUST 2017