



The WITNESS

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

September 2017

Mother Susan's
Musings

Welcome Back! Let's Go Forward



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 been a lovely summer here in Troy, with lots of occasions to enjoy the great outdoors - I think at least half of our 4:30 Informal Eucharists were celebrated on the back patio. Where did you find holy spaces and moments? My family got close to nature on our visit to the wild coast of Mount Desert Island, Maine, where we saw harbor seals lounging on rocky islets, a small porpoise watching us kayakers go past, two bald eagles guarding their turf, and a variety of Atlantic sea birds that don't make it to the Great Lakes.

Have you missed St Stephen's? I grew up going to church during the summertime, too (sometimes even the main service was held outside, a hundred chairs and a moveable piano). My sister and I went to sleep-away camp for a couple of weeks, that was about it. The rest of the time, weekends were normal. Not every service, not every sermon or hymn, was engaging (at times quite the opposite). But we came for the reunion of all the familiar pieces, especially the people we knew we'd see, making each Sunday important.

If you're feeling the tug back to a pattern of regular communion and community, please act on it! We've missed you, too. All the pieces - music, worship, fellowship, classes, food, and especially those good friends - will be ready to welcome you back.

Do read and mark your calendars for those that particularly interest you, as you peruse this "Welcome Back" issue of The Witness. SUNDAY, SEPT 10 is the day things take off! Classes for all ages of kids and teens will get started, with registration, fun, games and food for everybody. The Hospitality Committee will

be providing a delicious brunch. And special commissionings of Ushers, Eucharistic Ministers, Acolytes and Youth Lectors will happen at the 10 am service.

STAFF UPDATES

If you took off in June before meeting him, **Caleb Sinclair** is the fellow at the keyboards on Sundays (and just wait til you hear him sing). He's a recent graduate of Calvin College's renowned music program, and during the week, Caleb will be teaching vocal music in Capac district schools. This fall we return to **Wednesday** evening rehearsals (7:30 - 9:00 pm), so come on by to sing Hello!

The first week of September (after Labor Day) we will also welcome a new Parish Secretary, **Jacqueline "Jacki" Mudrich**. She has just moved back to our area, having spent the last 8 years living in Texas - I don't know how much *drawl* she will still have. You will enjoy getting to know her, too, so please share a warm welcome and any insights you have about what makes St Stephen's tick. Jacki will be in the office Tuesdays through Fridays, 9:30 am - 2:30 pm.



Welcome back continued on page 2



Around the Parish

September Lectionary

Sept 3—Pentecost 13

Ex 3: 1-15
Psalm 105: 1-6, 23-26,
45c
Rom 12: 9-21
Matt 16: 21-28

Sept 10—Pentecost 14

Ex 12: 1-14
Psalm 149
Rom 13: 8-14
Matt 18: 15-21

Sept 17—Pentecost 15

Ex 14: 19-31
Psalm 114
Rom 14: 1-12
Matt 18: 21-35

Sept 24—Pentecost 16

Ex 16: 2-15
Psalm 105: 1-6, 37-45
Phil 1: 21-30
Matt 20: 1-16

Welcome Back—Continued

The Vestry has been working on improved communications (see inside articles) and will also launch a Strategic Planning project this fall. Currently we are forming the oversight team that will move the process along. Stay tuned for more information about your important role in those efforts.

Mostly, we just want to include as much enjoyment of God and one another, and as little stress or anxiety, as we can on Sundays at St Stephen's. If you've got an idea for something that fits that bill, please share it! But first, read this copy of the Witness to see what's already in the works. There's a great variety in here. Let's do it together.

Faithfully yours,

Mike Wellman

Steve Fragnoli

Joe Hopper

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.

Labor Day Weekend

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 Carnagie 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



Vestry Notes



Building Together

You may have heard rustlings and rumblings about the Vestry working with a consultant these past few months. We are trying to build trust among all members of the leadership and congregation so we can work together to better serve the will of the Lord here on earth.

I'm sure reading this surprises some people. We have been meeting with Rev. Terri Pilarski of Christ Episcopal in Dearborn and we have had as many perspectives about where St. Stephen's is as a faith community, as there have been participants.

Some recognize that we have a roadblock, others think the problem is something else, some feel that it is overblown, etc. So we have been learning to better understand and accept that diversity of opinion, with a view to making it a strength to use for the common mission of our parish community.

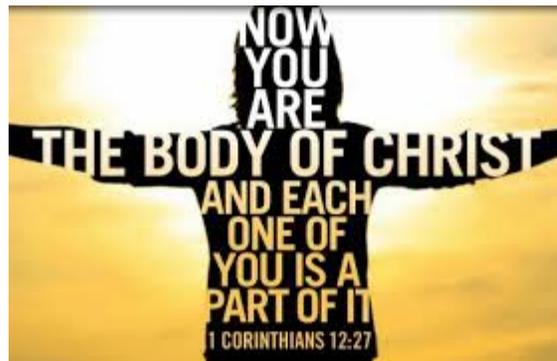
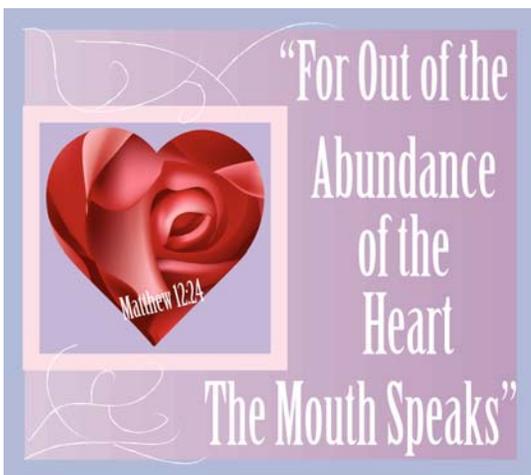
The Vestry feels an urgent need to develop St. Stephen's, on the solid faith foundation we have had up to now, at the

same time not neglecting upkeep on the existing structure.

We have struck a Strategic Planning Oversight Committee, separate from the Vestry, to focus on growth. We are staffing the committee now with nominees. Please know that we will be reaching out to all members of the parish for your input. I hope you will share the gift of your insight with us!

Katy Allen for

Alice Moss, Senior Warden; Rob Redmer, Junior Warden; Scott Armstrong; Alan Giles; Jackie Ingersoll; Richard Kenefic; Norma Ross; Paula Somerville; Karol Sprague; Roy Waters; Justin Wojas



Church Notes

Making a Difference

We are very blessed to have such a wonderful group of volunteers that teach our children and lead our youth. Sunday, September 10 is the start of another year of the sharing, direction, and fellowship that is such an important part of our children and youth program (YACYM). One of the common themes I hear from our teachers is that they feel they grow as much or more from the experience as the kids.

There is currently a need for one more "10:00 Sunday School" volunteer to work with the younger children along with Jackie Ingersoll and Kris Fuhr and we are also in need of a woman to help Scott with the YAC group, a role which was not filled last year either. The two important qualifications for both these positions is that you love kids and you love Christ. The rest takes care of itself.

Even if you feel you can only do a portion of the year or a couple Sundays per month, let me know. Since all of the classes currently have teachers you would be in a team, so when life gets in the way, we have your back.

If you fit these qualifications and feel that this is a ministry that may be calling you, please contact me. You will be richly rewarded – just ask any of the current or past teachers.

Kris Fuhr



Seeds of Faith

This fall our Sunday School activities will be centered on the parables of Jesus. One of the most famous of these is the "Parable of the Sower", which is found in all 3 synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This rich story is a vivid tale that speaks to people of all ages about our faith in a powerful way, so we are using that for our theme, although many of Jesus parables will be presented.

Each week the children will have stories from scripture, activities, and music that will help bring the parables of Jesus alive. We will also occasionally present a musical gift to God during the 10am Eucharist by offering a song or, yes, maybe even playing the bells!

As in the past, the Pre-K through 6th grade students will meet at 10am during the first portion of the service and then join their parents in the Sanctuary during the announcements.

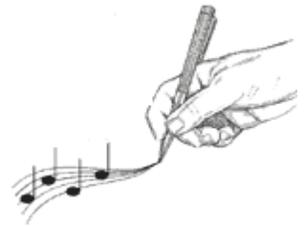


Kris Fuhr

Bless the Beasts

St Francis of Assisi was reported to have conversed with the animals, long before Dr. Doolittle came along. He considered all creatures – even the stars and planets -- as brothers and sisters within God's grace-filled family. Let's celebrate his vision of worldwide harmony by bringing our animal friends to church for a blessing, at **4:30 pm on Saturday October 7** (the Saturday after St Francis' feast day, Oct. 4). All sorts of portable pets are welcome; tell your human friends too! Just please make sure the pets are properly constrained by leash, carrier, etc. so we don't have any mishaps.

Juan



One Voice

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

Come and join Caleb and the rest of the choir to make some beautiful noise. Rehearsals are Wednesday from 7:30 to 9 pm.



From the Back Pew

Episcopal Relief

Episcopal Relief & Development invites you to join us in prayer and support for communities affected by Hurricane Harvey. Episcopal Relief & Development is working with dioceses in the hurricane's path to best support responses and address needs as more information becomes available.

Local churches and partners are assessing damage, confirming the safety of members and others in their communities and using available facilities and resources to respond to immediate concerns.

Your contribution to the Hurricane Harvey Response Fund helps Episcopal Relief & Development support Church and other local partners as they provide critical emergency assistance. To help care for those affected by this crisis you may fill out the form found on the information page at www.ststephenstroy.org and mail it in with your check or credit card information. You can also contribute online at episcopalrelief.org/hurricane-harveyresponse.

Thank you for your compassion and prayers. With your partnership, we are healing a hurting world.

Turning to Fall

As the new program year approaches we will move from the "summer" bulletin to a regular weekly bulletin. When that happens for Welcome Back Sunday on September 10, the prayer list will be refreshed.

If there is someone currently on the prayer list that you wish to have on the list after September 3rd, please contact the office and let us know. We don't want to miss anyone who needs our continued prayers and support.

Remember, you can call the office about this at any time, day or night, and leave a message, send an email to office@ststephenstroy.org, or put the request in the mailbox in the office when you are at church. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thanks.



(248) 894-2614

formation@ststephenstroy.org

one World



Inside the Parish Walls

Welcome Back!

Welcome back to Sunday School. Sunday, September 10th is the start of our program year, so we invite parents to register your kids for the Sunday School and Youth Program starting at 9:30 that day. We will have a table outside the front entrance if the weather allows and in the gathering area if it doesn't.

All youth and their parents are asked to complete a new permission form that covers the program year. If for some reason you are unable to register that day, please complete the forms the next Sunday. These must be completed before our first off-site event, which is in October.

Ken Fuhr



September 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

Teachers

Our Sunday school teacher and youth leaders this year are:

- Nursery – Quinn O’Neill
- 10:00 Sunday School – Jackie Ingersoll & Kris Fuhr
- Rite 13 – Liz Sinkovich & Brent Fragnoli
- J2A – Anna Dorsey Pierce & Allan Giles
- YAC – Scott Armstrong & Ken Fuhr

Upcoming Events

Put these events on your October calendar...

Monday, October 2 – St Stephen’s hosts the monthly meeting of the Troy Interfaith Group. Join us from 7-9 pm for an overview of the Baha’i Faith, called “Centuries of Light, a Celebration of the Birth of Baha’u’llah.” All are welcome and it’s free of charge. (Parish Hall)

Friday October 20 – Family fun hayride! Meet in the parking lot at 6:30 pm, to carpool over to Upland Hills Farm in Oxford. We will bring hot-dogs and marshmallows for the big bonfire. A tractor-pulled hayride makes this a quintessential Fall Event in Michigan, great for all ages.

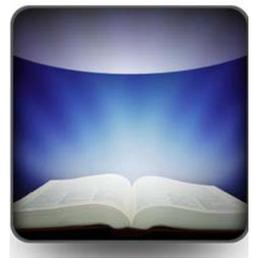


One Family

Bible Study

Back to the Bible!

Our popular Wednesday Morning Bible Study resumes at 10 a.m. on Sept. 6, after our summer hiatus. All are welcome, always. Our tagline is, “No experience necessary!” Coffee, tea, treats and great conversation flow from our time with the Scriptures. Currently we’re about halfway through Matthew’s Gospel. Join us in the Emrich Library each Wednesday morning from 10:00-11:30.



September Birthdays

Brenda Abitheira	1
Daniel Terlecky	4
Marilyn Elwarner	6
Emily Williams.....	7
Amy Boldt	8
Lachlan O'Neill.....	9
Dom Piantedosi	10
Don Hotton	10
Nancy Fischer.....	11
Alan Giles	11
Bonnie Gross.....	15
Stan Terlecky	18
Barb Whitaker.....	22
Debbie Pincura.....	22
Scott Armstrong.....	22
Matthew Woodruff	23
Jane Wellman.....	24
Molly Neumann.....	24
Lauryn Przeslawski	26
Kyle Church	27
Lori Podsiadlik.....	29
Ethan Sobolewski...	29
Thomas Palmer.....	30

Reaching Out

SOS 2017

Our greatest outreach event as a loving and giving parish is the week we host the clients of SOS (South Oakland Shelter) each year. The gift of our time, talent, treasure, compassion, and love of each other and our neighbor is the most beautiful expression of God's love among His children.

It is an amazing week to experience and it is only able to come together when we all come together. Please consider volunteering and showing our love for the clients during the week of September 24th - October 1st.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Corinne Fragnoli or Miranda Spates.

Corinne Fragnoli



Crafting Kindness

The Crafting Kindness group keeps on giving! But we need your help!

The Grab and Stitch box has been refilled with several knitting, crocheting and sewing projects. Please stop by and pick up a kit. Projects should be returned by Oct 15 so we can be delivered before the holiday rush.

And thank you!

Katy Allen

Barb Whitaker



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

9/3 Dominic & Penny Piantedosi
Mark & Anna Dorsey Pierce
9/10 Phil & Linda Pierce
John & Debbie Pincura
9/17 John & Lori Podsiadlik
Joseph, Patricia & Justin Przeslawski
9/24 Rob & Amy Redmer
Jerred, Rachel & Savannah Rich

The Departed

Larry Nunn
Member of St. Stephen's



September Anniversaries

Ed & Kathy
DeCiantis.....6
Don & Linda
Hotton.....10
Shanker & Sara
Sundareson.....10
Adrian & Bonnie
Gross.....23
Jim & Anne
Miller.....24
Larry & Liz
Sinkovich.....25
Jon & Jeralyn
Burrell29

How to Contact Us

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

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

Jacki Mudrich, Parish Administrator

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: 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

SEPTEMBER 2017