



Message from the Pulpit

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As I write this on a sunny, bright morning in February, it feels like spring is right around the corner. The snow in the yard is melting quickly although the snowbanks along the street have a long way to go. We are in the middle of Lent so we know that spring is soon to follow. But remember, this is Michigan and we can't assume that our calendar and the spring flowers are on the same track!



Usually, we think of Lent as a dark period of time...a time when activity slows down...a time of quiet...a time for deep reflection and prayer...a time for sacrificing pleasurable things. But too often, our best intentions for a disciplined Lent fall away because we are busy with family, friends, jobs, and retirement activities. It seems that many times our "responsibilities" interfere with the spiritual maintenance that our faith needs.

Lent is the perfect time to have those honest, one-on-one talks with God. It is a special time set aside so that we may more fully comprehend the gift God has given us through his only son and to appreciate with humility the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. Lent is the quiet, contemplative path to a joyous Easter filled with song and praise and the promise of eternal life. So let us continue through Lent in a prayerful attitude with our hearts and minds set on Christ and what he experienced during his last days on this earth. And may we be so guided on our Lenten journey that we may enter into Easter with humility and gratitude and joy.

May you enjoy the blessings of a Holy Lent and a joyous Easter!

Mother Sharon

Our Community Center

I grew up in the small town of Romeo, MI. Some of you may know it for its annual Peach Festival over Labor Day weekend. This was just one of the community events I can remember as a kid. In the 50's and 60's, Romeo was a typical small farming community. What wasn't farm was orchards. We had several churches, each with their traditions and rituals. We also had a Community Center.

Tucked away on Morton Street about a half mile from downtown, we had a one story building with a cafeteria, auditorium, stage, activity rooms and outdoor tennis

courts. If there was something going on in town, it probably was happening here. Village stage productions and singing groups used the stage and auditorium. Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts used it. My folks and older siblings were members of the square dance club that met there. We had a village Christmas Party there and a host of family led events like wedding receptions, etc.



Our Community Center was where our community met to sing, learn, laugh and celebrate. Sound familiar?

For our faith community of St. Stephen's, 5500 N. Adams Rd. is where our Community Center is. It is where we come to **Sing Out** for joy, **Find Out** about life and faith, **Cry Out** among friends, **Burst Out** laughing and **Reach Out** to those in need (our Mission Statement). This past year we have not been able to use our Community Center as a place to live out our Mission. But it has been there waiting for us to return and fill it with love, fellowship, outreach and worship.

I wrote an outline for the vestry describing three major areas we need to focus on this year. After we met and discussed them, while I was updating the paper, I realized that these are not just vestry goals, these need to be our parish community goals. As a community we must care for each other, connect with each other in work and play, and, we need to connect to the community around us.

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Connecting to the Community

We have a Community Center for a community within a community – but we have almost no connection to that larger community. I think we all agree that we need more members, younger members, if we are going to see St. Stephen’s grow and flourish. The best place to draw these people from is our community. And the best way to get their attention is to make them aware that we are here – and what we are about. Not just as a church – but as a community.

We have been talking about this for as long as I’ve been a member, but we never seem to get out there and make a connection. I think that almost everything we do for each other can be expanded to include our local community. We need to get the word out there about all we are doing regardless of how big or small it is. “Connecting” must go beyond simply informing or communicating. It needs to include engagement or involvement as well. As we say in business, we need to “Find a need and fulfill it”.

We have recast our Communications Committee to be more outward focused. We plan to visit local city offices, community centers, senior living place, etc. We want to know what they

are working on and how we can help. We are looking for ways to invite community participation in our social and small group activities and create public awareness of our presence and works. We are also working to further develop our on line communications (interactive, two way connections).

The challenge will be finding those channels of communication to the community. Will it be Community Newsletters, websites and calendars?

Possibly informational signage in front of the church? Targeted mailings? Social Media? Most likely, a little of all of it in some fashion. One thing we do know, you can’t communicate too much.

If you have any ideas for making connections with our communities, please let us know. Equally important, if you have something to share – please do!

Peace,
Dave Stein



Our Community Center

Cont. from Page 1

As we continue to move toward something closer to what we used to call “normal”, we all need to make the extra effort to re-connect, to re-engage in person at our Community Center – St. Stephen’s. It is where we will fulfill our mission statement.

Peace,
Dave Stein
Sr. Warden

PS: After you’ve read my other articles, you will probably be rolling your eyes and wondering “how on God’s green earth does he expect we will ever get all that done!” The short answer is I don’t. But, I expect to get started. As a kid, we would complain to our mother about how much work it was going to take to get our chores done. She would tell us to stop focusing on the whole thing, worry about getting that next plant weeded, pretty soon you’ll find yourself at the end of the row. Let’s get together and get the next plant weeded – and then the next



PASTORAL CARE

You'll hear me talk a lot about our community and coming back in person to be part of the St. Stephen's community. However, there is one very important part of our lives as Christians that often works best when it is one-on-one. Pastoral Care.

One of the most important attributes of a community is how well it attends to its senior members. How we care for our parents – and those of their generation in our community says a lot about us. One of the things we have realized this past year is that pastoral care is not just one committee anymore. It is even more than expanding our ministry into several committees (which we are doing), it must become part of our culture, part of our DNA if you will. As our St. Stephen's community continues to age, we will all be engaged in pastoral care one way or the other – receiving or giving. We have several opportunities for pastoral ministries. There are the "traditional" clergy led ministries of Eucharistic Visitations as well as visiting the sick or homebound.



But we are realizing that we have many other opportunities for each and every one of us to participate in pastoral care. We now have a mailing ministry. Birthday cards are now sent to every member, get well cards and congratulations cards as well. Sometimes it is as simple as a phone call. Checking in with someone to see how they are and listening. Reaching out to make a personal connection. Speaking of connections, we want to make sure every member of our community here at St.

"Lend a hand when you can."

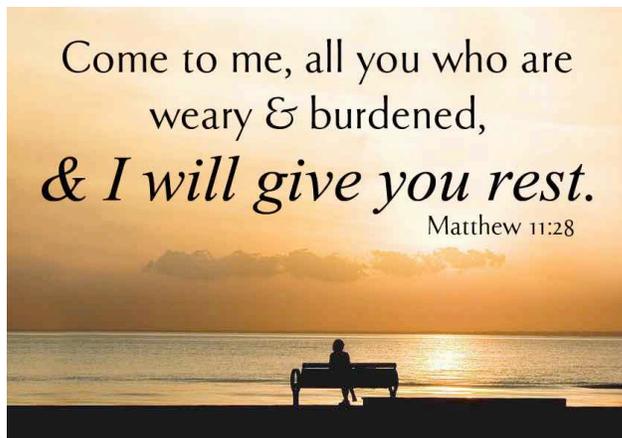
Stephen's can connect to us on line and have access to our streaming services. Once we are back to church on Sundays, we have seniors who will need a ride to church and events – and to appointments.

The most important part of effective pastoral care is communication. It is amazing to me how many times this past year alone I have heard about someone who was in need of pastoral care that we didn't even know about until after the fact. Your most important role in pastoral care may be letting us know that you, or someone else needs help – or a prayer. Please do not assume someone else is taking care of it. Mother Sharon would rather hear about a concern twice, or even three times than not at all.

So while you're waiting for the email that says we're able to return to church, waiting for that first social event to be organized, pick up the phone, send a text or an email to a fellow member of our faith community just to say hello and see how they are doing. Do it! And lend a hand when you can.

Peace,
Dave Stein
Sr. Warden

Come to me, all you who are weary & burdened,
& I will give you rest.
Matthew 11:28



2021 Vestry

Your new Vestry met on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 to begin the year's work. We welcomed our two new members Alice Moss and Paula Somerville. We then voted on the officers for the year. "And the winners are":

Dave Stein – Senior Warden

Ken Fuhr – Junior Warden

Joan Morgan – Clerk

Phil Pierce – Treasurer

Dave Stein presented the Vestry with my view of the priorities for the year. We will be focusing on three major areas. Re-engagement with our faith community in person, pastoral care and connecting to the communities around us. You can read more about this elsewhere in this Witness.

We also discussed and assigned Vestry Liaison roles for the year. The Liaison to the Vestry for a given ministry is not necessarily the Chair of that committee, but they are a member of the committee and are tasked with making sure the vestry is aware of the activities the committee is pursuing- and more importantly, what assistance the vestry needs to give to make the work a success. For this year the Liaison to the Vestry assignments are:

Adult Faith – Paula Somerville

Buildings & Grounds – Joan Morgan

Communications – Dave Stein

Finance & Stewardship – Don Ingersoll

Hospitality – Alice Moss

Outreach – Kathy DeCiantis

Pastoral Care - Miranda Spates & Sheryl Schmitt

Worship – Mother Sharon

YACYM – Ken Fuhr

If you're interested in working in any of these areas, please contact any of us. We're more than willing to explain our ministries and welcome any help you may offer. If you have an idea for a ministry you don't see here, please contact Dave Stein and let's see if we can make it happen! Please keep us and St. Stephen's in your prayers.

Peace,

Your Vestry

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 5500 N. Adams Rd., Troy, MI 48098

Greetings St. Stephens

I am glad to be rejoining the Vestry.

I hope you all will feel free to contact me with any suggestions or concerns, as we move forward.

I would love to reconnect with our parish family and extend a welcome to any looking for a caring spiritual home.

Though we've been apart, you are all in my prayers.

Thank you for putting your trust in me.

Alice Moss

phone (248) 840-3631

email: alicemoss@hotmail.com

Address: 1184 Dorchester Rd.

Hi Everyone...

I'm Gracie, the Parish Pooch. I haven't been in the office very much because Mom says I'm disruptive. I don't know what that means, but it must be important 'cause I have to stay home and guard the house while she's gone. I'm not sure what it means to guard the house...mostly I just nap while she's not here so I'll be able to play a long time when she comes back.



That cold white stuff that's all over the ground is wonderful! It makes me so happy that I just have to roll in it and then push my nose in it and run all over...it's so much fun! I don't think Mom appreciates it very much, though. She grumbles about me bringing icebergs on my belly and legs into the house. But I like it because I get wrapped up in a towel until I'm soaking wet and then we have fun with the hair dryer!

I have to go to the doctor soon to get my shots to keep me healthy...I hope everyone will get their shots, too. I don't know what it's like to be sick, but Mom says it's a terrible thing. So please be good to yourselves so you can come to the office and meet me. I LOVE to meet people!!!

Barkingly yours,

Gracie Anne





Amy Ambry	Mike Montgomery
Meghann Armstrong	Dylan Moose
Mary Bandsuch	Kim Morrow
Tyler Braidwood	Kenny Nelson
Marge Coughenour	Mayme Oliver
Jenny Dolan	Zoey Rose
Betty Feighner	Emily Thompson
Harold Ford	Greg Thompson
Ron Goetzke	Joyce Vance
Adrian Gross	Michelle Walter
Leroy Gutierrez	Sophie Wasik
Greyson Ingersoll	Inge Wojas
Mary Koske	Jerome Wojas
Helen Livitzky	Ed Yates
Rick Lowery	

These Parish Families

3/7 Jim Carnagie & Karol Sprague
Barbara Cavendish

3/14 Ed & Elaine Church and Amy
Byron Converse

3/21 Arch & Kay Coran
Colin & Kathy Davis

3/28 Ed & Kathy DeCiantis
Olivia DeCiantis and Gabriel

4/4 Donovan & Caroline Dengler and
Brady & Keegan
Melissa & Daniel Duggan and
Madeleine, Connor and Emmett

4/11 Sharon Eck
Jay & Emily Edwards

4/18 Dave & Jan Eldon
Marilyn Elwarner

4/25 Alex & Erinma Ezeugwa and Kamsi
& Kachi
Sarah & Brian Fanning

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
Gordon Bagley - friend of Vida family
Capt. John Zimmer - friend of Vida family

Reconnecting with Each Other

When was the last time you were at the church – our Community Center? Probably been a while. We need to make our way back to church – physically. Not just for Sunday services, but to reconnect in-person with each other. Our connection to “St. Stephen’s” is much more about our connections to each other, than to just our shared Episcopal faith. We need to focus on the social as well as spiritual activities and events. We each need to make the EXTRA effort to participate! To re-engage! Oh yea, and we need to do it for our kids, the next generations of our community.

The bottom line here is that we need to feel – and feed - our emotional connection to each other and St. Stephen’s as a community.

Of course, we need to get back to church on Sundays. Just as importantly, we need to get together for social gatherings – as many as possible. These can be family affairs, small groups as well as parish wide events. Our committee meetings should get back to being in person and on a regular schedule. And they should be as much a gathering as much for social as business purposes.

As much as we need to get back in the habit of getting together at our Community Center, we need to bring our children back. We need to host youth focused events – not just for our kids, but their friends and eventually, kids in the community.



Not only do we need to increase our opportunities for engagement, we need to communicate that we are having them and follow up with stories about them. We need to get into the habit of sharing our stories and experiences with each other and the local community about what we are doing at St. Stephens.

One of the “silver linings” I hope we realize out of this pandemic is the importance of physically getting together and sharing. Sharing a meal, a glass of wine, a story or joke, and especially times of joy and sorrow. As the motel ad says, “come see us, we’ll keep the light on for ya.”

Peace,
Dave Stein
Sr. Warden



Growing Church Seeking Musician

Must be saved, sanctified, & filled with the Holy Ghost

Be able to play Contemporary and Traditional songs

Be able to "back up" the Preacher

Be able to teach vocal parts and lead songs

Be able to play the songs EXACTLY like the album
(and create stems when necessary)

Must attend: Monday Night Leadership Meeting,

Tuesday Night Prayer Meeting,

Wednesday Night Bible Study,

Thursday Night Choir Rehearsal,

Friday Night Deliverance Service,

Saturday Morning Youth Choir Rehearsal,

Sunday 8am, 10am, 12pm, and 7pm Services

**Must provide your own keyboard and speakers*

****Pay is \$125/week (minus \$12.50 [ATW] Auto Tithe Withdrawal)**

*****You may have to wait around after service for your check!!!**

@PrettySimpleYou



March

Name	Date
Patrick Roberts	5
Dan Stewart	5
Elizabeth Roberts	6
Richard Lowery	8
David Burean	8
Margaret Brandon	9
Judy McQuiston	9
Elijah Samuel	11
Pat Wojas	14
Ed DeCiantis	18
Bob Wolf	19
Georgiana Badalow	20
Gillian Grubb	20
Alice Brandon	21
Alicia Baker	22
Jack Oswald	22
Jerry Nolan	24
Mary Bishop	27
Gwen Kirby	27
Gabriel Valdez	28
Jackie Ingersoll	29
Martha Szott	31

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
Don Ingersoll	15
Paul Hardy	18
John Thunder	20
Sara Sue Westbury	21
Bob Hoffman	22
James Luzod	22
Daryllyn Oswald	23
Karen Mirzoian	27
Ginny Bennett	30

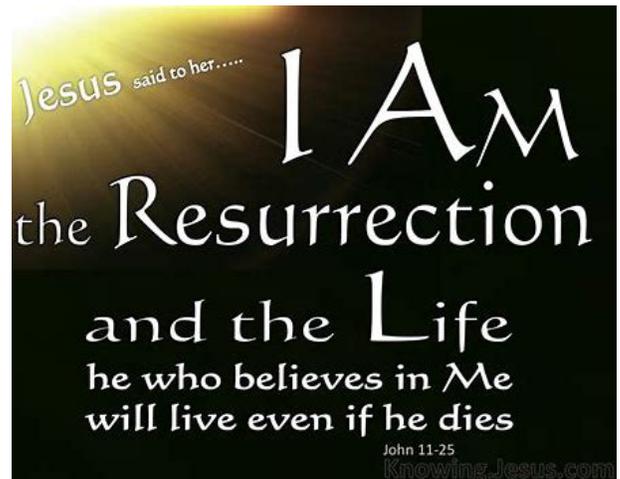
March

Name	Date
Lani & Jerry Nolan	2
Jan & Joe Hopper	9
Karen & John Morley	21
Marilyn & Tom Borowski	30
Debbie & John Pincura	31

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

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.





Happy February. We all thank Barbara Whitaker for creating Crafting Kindness and leading us for seven years. Barb asked Carol Koenig and I (Jill Stein) to co-chair the committee. Under Barb's guidance we are learning.

For a review of 2020, we could not meet the last ten months of the year. CK still playfully sewed, knitted and crocheted items. The group donated over 1,425 craft items in 2020.

The bulk of the items were face masks. We sewed and donated over 1,031 masks to Baldwin Center, State of Michigan Faith Based Coalition and hospitals. We sent masks to doctor offices, nursing homes and individuals. The need was great and the group rose to the occasion.



We mailed Military Boxes with homemade quilts to all the servicemen and women on our roster. We made Christmas Felt Stockings and stuffed them with personal hygiene items, and delivered them to St. Matthew and St. Joseph Episcopal Church in Detroit. Many seniors of our own church received the stockings as well.

We sewed and delivered Teddy Bears to doctor offices to help relieve the anxiety of some of their younger

patients. We also distributed both to local police departments and Alzheimer patients in a nursing home.

We knitted, crocheted and delivered 65 baby hats to

The University of Michigan C. S. Mott Children Hospital. The love and care that goes into all the items CK makes helps to make the world a bit warmer and



brighter. I want to thank each one of you for helping to share God's love in a world that's in need of extra care.

This year, we are still praying and working from our homes. No meetings are planned yet, and won't be until it's safe to do so. Our Ortonville group provided us some lovely quilts which we will find homes for. We have given many prayer shawls out this January in an effort to warm some seniors in our parish. But Crafting Kindness has many opportunities to help. There are kits for quilts, bears and burp cloths in church narthex. Please grab a kit to help pass the long winter days.

All stay well and let's continue to do crafts that show Gods love. Knitters and those that crochet- we have lots of yarn, both skeins and smaller amounts which need to find new homes. Barb will be boxing the yarn up soon as it needs to move to a new place.

Jill Stein



Outreach Thanks You

Throughout Covid, you have been so generous with your donations of food and other items. Some of you have also sent checks with which we buy what Lighthouse needs. We are so grateful to you.

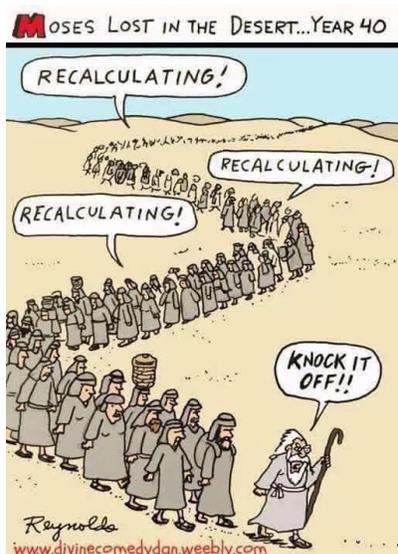
Please continue to help us by contributing what you can. We appreciate all food, cleaning items, and paper products. If you write a check, please write "Lighthouse" in the memo line. Finally, if you have any reusable shopping bags to donate, please drop those off at the church, too.

Please Help on May 30th to Serve Lunch at Crossroads

We will be serving lunch to about 400 people at Crossroads on Sunday, May 30, 2021 from 8:15 am to 1:30 pm. We have six volunteers and need 4 more. If you can help, call me at 248-877-4207 or email me at joanmorgan127@gmail.com.

I recently did this with Christ Church Cranbrook and found it rewarding.

Joan Morgan



"St. Stephen's Episcopal Church seeks to be a vibrant, multigenerational Christian Community combining Tradition with Humanity and Humor as we worship God and serve the community and each other."



Together We Will...

Sing Out, in worship to God,

Reach Out, in service to others,

Cry Out, with others in times of need,

Find Out, about our faith, and

Laugh Out Loud Together...



Contact Us

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Ken Fuhr	YACYM		
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E-mail, bring to church or fax your articles			

Weekly Service Schedule (until further notice)

Weeknight Compline	9:00 pm
Prayers / Sermon on Facebook	Sunday, 7:30 am
Eucharist with instrumental music (currently Livestream only)	Sunday, 10 am
Livestream Video	Sunday, 10 am

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.

