ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
TROY, MI 48098

Spring-Summer 2023
Volume 2, Issue 3

THE WITNESS

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRIEST

Invite, Welcome, & Connect

At the end of the Gospel of Mathew, Jesus gives his disciples the Great Commission saying, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." Too often in our parishes the effort toward evangelism has centered around being born into the church. But what about those who have not been born into The Episcopal Church or any church for that matter? What about those who seek a deeper relationship with God but have yet to be invited to church?

Invite, Welcome, & Connect is an evangelism ministry of The Episcopal Church that seeks to invite, welcome, and connect others to the body of Christ. This evangelism program is not simply a program or a curriculum; rather, it is a ministry of transformation that seeks to look at best practices for living as the body of Christ in the world and for inviting others into that body. Seeking to engage clergy and laity in partnership, this national ministry of The Episcopal Church seeks a wholistic approach toward ministry by asking the question: how are we inviting, welcoming, and connecting others to Jesus and to a community of faith?

Transformation is at the heart of Invite, Welcome, & Connect. It begins in the relationship that we discover with Jesus, but it continues as we discover our relationship with a community of faith and as we live that faith out in the world. Invitation is all about cultivating creative ways to reach out to others and to invite them into the mission of our parish. How do we engage in practices of invitation so that others are given the opportunity to discover both faith and community?

Continued on page 4

ST. STEPHEN'S MISSION

Together we will… Sing Out, in worship to God, Reach Out, in service to others, Cry Out, with others in time of need, Find Out, about our faith, and Laugh Out Loud, together…All in the name of Jesus Christ.

ST. STEPHEN'S CORE PILLARS

- DOING CHRIST'S WORK IN THE COMMUNITY
- A NUTURING AND ACCEPTING FAMILY
- A GOOD LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
- TRADITION WITH A DIFFERENCE
- MULTIGENERATIONAL AND DIVERSE

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THE SENIOR WARDEN'S THOUGHTS

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

What a beautiful Easter season we have had! There were many moving services, from the solemn Maundy Thursday to the joyous songs of praise on Easter Morning. It was wonderful to see so many people enjoy the Candlelight Vigil and the celebration after words. Many thanks to all who made it meaningful.

Now as we start our spring, we look forward to growth and renewal as we reaffirm our commitment to the risen Christ.

We have been given the opportunity to review our mutual ministry. Much information has been gathered by Ellen Ekevag of the diocese, from the congregation, Vestry, and Fr. Brian. We've heard about our strengths, the things we do well (being a caring community & hospitality) and about our wishes. We have plans to build on these with our ***Welcome, Invite and Connect*** initiative that Don Ingersoll will be spearheading. This focuses on growing our community by strengthening our vestry, clergy, and parish as a whole to move forward as one.

We continue to meet with Ellen Ekevag to further develop our parish community. We also met with an advisor on financial stability to help us reach our mission goals. With everyone's help we can continue to move forward growing our ministry.

What gets You most excited and engaged? We invite any and all suggestions.

I am blessed by your faith in me.

Thank you,

-Alice Moss, Sr. Warden

AROUND THE DIOCESE OF MICHIGAN

Saturday, June 3rd:

Diocesan Wide Confirmation @ St. John's Royal Oak (see Father Brian if you would like to be confirmed, renewed or received)

Sunday, June 25th 2-4pm:

Bishop's Bash—Cathedral Church of St. Paul

Monday, June 26th to Thursday, June 29th:

Camp Chick Family Camp @Camp Chick-Presque Isle

Sunday, July 30th:

Mission Possible for Youth Emrich Retreat Center

For more information on events around the diocese contact the diocesan office @ 313-832-4400

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings and Salutations!

For many, Easter has come and gone. Only those who look at the liturgical calendar realize that the Easter season is pretty long, seven Sundays worth, until we get to the Day of Pentecost (Happy Birthday to the Church!) on May 28th. Pentecost is a Feast Day, but after that it is Green Season, or Ordinary Time which starts with the First Sunday after Pentecost continuing deep into the fall when we finally get to Christ the King Sunday (Last Sunday after Pentecost) on November 26th. Diehards know that after that Sunday comes the First Sunday of Advent, and we start all over again. The season is ordinary, but also comforting as we continue through the lessons and stories of scripture, both Old and New Testament, and the Psalms. In fact, the First Sunday after Pentecost reminds us that "In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light." (Genesis 1:1)

It is the green season I love the most, not much hub bub, just every day church. An opportunity to connect with others, enjoy the rhythm of the season as life springs into action and we remember all the blessings we have been given.

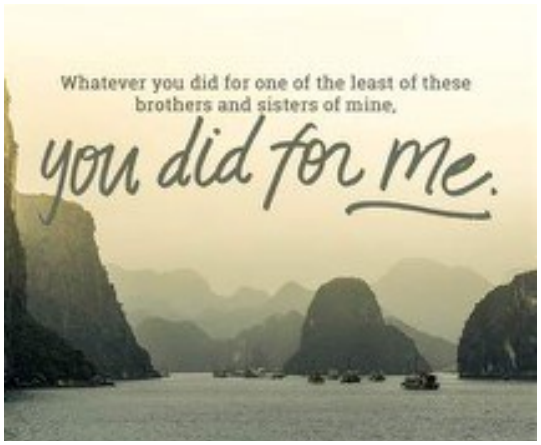
Kris Fuhr, editor

OUTREACH UPDATE

On Palm Sunday, the Lenten Blessing Bag initiative came to completion with over 60 bags for distribution. All age levels of the parish got involved, whether it be a donation, coordination, filling of bags, writing well wish notes that were included, or distributing the bags to the homeless. The items were collected during the Lenten Soup Study. Bag tables were organized by Kathy DeCiantis, Ami O'Neill and the youth. Father Brian blessed them and out they went with parishioners to distribute to our less fortunate sisters and brothers.

Also what is planned to be a regular monthly outreach has been started with Bound Together. April 20th at All Saint's Episcopal in Pontiac Father Brian, Joanne Gondert, Gretchen Waters, and Alice Moss went to help prep the dinner, serve it, and sit at the tables with the kids who are part of the program. It was very easy work and fun to chat with the kids who love to share their joys and challenges. No monetary cost, just time. Our next date is May 11th which is the end of the year party. Bound Together creates an opportunity to reach out to young people in need of support. Please see Joanne Gondert if you would like to help and for more details.

The Outreach Committee



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRIEST (CONTINUED FROM PG. 1)

Welcoming is all about engaging in practices of hospitality and offering others the space where they can discover love, compassion, forgiveness, community, and transformation. And finally, connecting is all about discovering a place of belonging, where new relationships are forged, and where one comes to the realization that they too belong in this place, in part because it provides a space for encountering God and for offering spiritual gifts to the church and to the world.

This year, Don Ingersoll has spearheaded an Invite, Welcome, & Connect committee here at St. Stephens to help us all live more faithfully into these practices of inviting others, welcoming them into the body of Christ, and helping them find a place of belonging and connection. What do we do well as a parish? What could we as a parish do better? It is my conviction that part of living into these "best practices" is finding the language to articulate for ourselves what faith means for us personally, and how it connects us to our parish, our community, and our world. More simply, it means telling our story. But beyond finding the language to articulate our faith and tell our story, there are all sorts of things we can do to be more inviting and welcoming. Some ideas that parishes are embracing include MOO.com business cards, a sort of glorified business card for the parish that can be given to your neighbor or friend. Other ideas include hosting community events and activities where a social event can connect others with the larger mission of the church. Still more, parishes are beginning to discover long held community partnerships as places to offer "soft evangelism" by presenting a non-threatening form of invitation.

When I was serving as a Priest in Florida one of the ways I engaged the broader community was by offering Ashes-to-Go to the residents of the downtown historic district who desired ash and prayer on Ash Wednesday. Perhaps such a practice may not fit our neighborhood context, but what idea for engaging others in mission might fit our community? And yet, invitation is only one part of the process of living into these best practices. Learning to welcome others and allow them the space to discover Jesus, and a sense of belonging, is also at the heart of evangelism. Again, it is not a matter of changing one thing or simply facilitating a new program; by contrast, Invite, Welcome, & Connect is all about living more faithfully as the body of Christ by loving our neighbor, and by fulfilling the Great Commission through a life of faith and service to the community. The hope is that by living more faithfully into these practices, we as individuals and we as a community can discover transformation.

Rev. Brian Abbott +

SPECIAL THANKS...

For the Spring Clean-Up of the church yard and kitchen!

Dave Eldon, Mike Brokenshire, Gordon McMullen, Sathi Satyanathan, Don Ingersoll, Jackie Ingersoll, Alice Moss, Diane Kenefic, Ann Williams, Norah O'Neill, Kassidy O'Neill, and Ami O'Neill

For beautiful music at all the Easter services: Sue Gore and the St. Stephen's choir

For beautiful flowers at the altar and silent service to God: Alice Moss, Ami O'Neill, Jan Hopper, Linda Lambert, Jill Stein, Peggy Klempay, Sara Sundareson, and also Kathryn Hassel who arranges for all those beautiful flowers

For Food & Hospitality at the Great Vigil: The Fragnoli Family

For Blessing Bags: Kathy DeCiantis, Outreach Committee, all those who donated, and all those who helped put the bags together on Palm Sunday

OUR PARISH CELEBRATES....

BIRTHDAYS

MAY

Sandy Jose	5/4
Sara Sundareson	5/5
Emily Gerard	5/5
Claire Brumfield	5/5
Justin Przeslawski	5/6
Barb Spina	5/6
Emmett Thiel	5/7
Sue Gore	5/8
David Eldon	5/11
Roy Waters	5/13
Cathy Hoffman	5/13
Kristi Grubb	5/13
Jacob Hardy	5/14
Caleb Sobolewski	5/15
Chase Gunther	5/16
Lucindo Sabino	5/19
Quinn Baker	5/21
Donna Bronsteen	5/24
James Carnagie	5/26
Peter Burean	5/31

JUNE

Bob Baker	6/3
Brady Dengler	6/5
Mary Jane Kerr	6/7
Hannah DeCiantis	6/9
Evan DeCiantis	6/9
Brendan Gerard	6/9
John Morley	6/12
Keegan Dengler	6/17
Kamsi Ezeugwa	6/18
Judy McClendon	6/25
Connie Jose	6/26
Liz Golding	6/27
Connor Duggan	6/27
Paul Kish	6/30
Garret Fragnoli	6/30

JULY

Erinma Ezeugwa	7/3
Norah O'Neill	7/5
Vickie Saylor	7/6
Darrel Middlewood	7/9
Madeleine Duggan	7/9
Kathy DeCiantis	7/10
Adrian Brokenshire	7/11
Ann Williams	7/15
Jim McQuiston	7/17
Peter Oswald	7/18
Kathy Davis	7/19
Brian Thiel	7/20
Alex Ezeugwa	7/20
Brian Ingersoll	7/22
Daniel Gerard	7/26
Chloe Ingersoll	7/26
Pema O'Neill	7/26
Audrey Brokenshire	7/29
Kay Novak	7/30
Elizabeth Thiel	7/31

ANNIVERSARIES

MAY

Margaret & Steve Brandon	5/2
Karol Sprague & Jim Carnagie	5/2
Elaine & Ed Church	5/11
Jan & Dave Eldon	5/20
Kris & Ken Fuhr	5/24
Sara Sue & Bob Westbury	5/26

JUNE

Katie & Mike Sobolewski	6/2
Kathy & Colin Davis	6/11
Kristi & Dave Grubb	6/12
Donna & Bob Brokenshire	6/18
Peggy & George Klempay	6/19
Melissa & Daniel Duggan	6/19
Melissa & Paul Hardy	6/24
Ginny & Lee Bennett	6/26
Alicia & Bob Baker	6/27
Jill & Dave Stein	6/30
Alice & Chuck Moss	6/30

JULY

Daryllyn & Peter Oswald	7/4
Erin & Mike Brokenshire	7/8
Donna & Rod Johnson	7/11
Connie & Sandy Jose	7/12
Barb & Rick Spina	7/15
Patricia & Joseph Przeskawski	7/21
Corrine & Steve Fragnoli	7/21
Dodie & Bill Waun	7/25

VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS
BY JOHN MORLEY, CLERK

This spring, the Vestry has been working on initiatives to evaluate and revitalize the parish and its leadership.

Cannon Ellen Ekevag met with the Vestry to share the conclusions of the Mutual Ministry sessions. Our many strengths were listed including Liturgy, Preaching, Pastoral Care, Outreach and, of course, Hospitality! A next step will be to facilitate a session on expectations of the Vestry and Staff.

Kristine Miller is a consultant from Horizons Stewardship who specializes in the theology of Stewardship. She has been contracted by the Vestry to give an outside perspective on how St. Stephens manages giving. She has recently met with Fr. Brian and members of the Vestry and will be giving us feedback at a future meeting.

The Vestry is also enthusiastic and supportive of *Invite, Welcome, Connect*, which Fr. Brian discussed earlier.

These initiatives, along with our ongoing stewardship of the budget and facilities, are keeping the Vestry focused on the future growth of St. Stephens and her programs.

Vestry meets the 4th Tuesday of the month

Your cancelled stamps can help to cheer and provide therapy for hospitalized or out-patient wounded veterans. This charitable outreach is *free and easy to do*. Save the cancelled stamps from your mail. I tape a used envelope inside a cupboard door where it is easy to remember to save the stamps. You might also ask a neighbor or family member to do the same. Bring the stamps (or mail them to the church) and drop them in the donation box in the hallway across from the bathrooms. I will collect the donations each month and send them to Stamps for the Wounded in Dunn Loring, VA. Know that this small effort from you is one more way to share Christian love and caring to those who gave so much to all of us. *Norma Ross*

Norma Ross

YOUTH SUNDAY & ANNUAL COMMUNITY PICNIC

Sunday, June 11th will be a wonderful day to be at the 10:00 service and the community picnic that follows. All are welcomed and encouraged to invite friends and family members to also attend.

We will be celebrating three of our graduates Kassidy O'Neill, Chase Gunther, and Audrey Brokenshire along with our youth members who will lead the service.

Following the service we will gather on the lawn and under the tent for our annual community picnic. Hamburgers and hot dogs are provided. Sign up in the gathering area to bring a side dish , salad, or dessert to share. Please also indicate how many are attending so the committee can have enough meat entrée.

See you there on Sunday, June 11th ready to have a great time!

VIEWS FROM THE PEWS...THERE HAVE BEEN SO MANY *BY NORMA ROSS*

Beginning 84 years ago, I was bundled in booties, laces, and ribbons, passed around from one family member to another, and sprinkled with Holy Baptism Water by the Reverend Donald Means at the gothic St. Luke's Church in Altoona, PA. I hope I didn't sprinkle on him.

Generations of my family were among the pillars at St. Luke's; I was also a little pill at times, but that church became the Christian foundation that led me to Confirmation as well as when to sit down, stand up, and not fidget or chew gum during the service.

Sixteen years later, I was bundled again –this time in blue jeans and sneakers –and smushed in the back seat of a used car with two rowdy brothers and a big stinky yellow dog, off to our new home in Flint. A new church was not at the top of my list, nor was having to finish my last year in high school in some terrible, horrible, no good, very bad place. However, Dad made sure we met new folks in the pews at St. Christopher's. One of my dearest memories is the first Christmas there, sitting next to Dad at the midnight service, and thinking "this is not too bad." I realized the truth...the move to Flint was part of God's plan for me. God does not take no for an answer, and neither did Dad.

In a pew at All Saint's in East Lansing was where a student who grew up "in the sticks" gave thanks for God's love and the privilege to be a Green and White fanatic forever. Graduation, marriage, and a rented home found our family of pew viewers at St. Andrew's in Clawson. Ironically, years later, our oldest son Kevin would marry Suzanne, daughter of Reverend Paul Hiyama, Priest at St. Andrews. See, God has plans for all of us. On to Madison Heights, where the pew at St. Patrick's offered a view of an energetic congregation where the Spirit of the Lord guided everyone. Our children were baptized and confirmed at St. Patrick's. I served on the Altar Guild and enjoyed the musical talents of others. No one asked me to sing – they could tell I had frog ancestors.

On my own years later, I had the bittersweet opportunity to view St. Paul's in Flint. I spent every weekend caring for my seriously ill mother who still lived in Flint. On Sunday mornings, I sought comfort and peace in the beautiful downtown church, where members welcomed me as a stranger; I felt the love of God in the compassion of that congregation.

St Stephen's in Troy offered a home for worship with a congregation whose original members founded the church as a mission from Christ's Church Cranbrook. As opposed to the majestic view of Christ's Church, the simple beauty of St. Stephen's speaks to strength that pervades the ministry, knits the community of faith, and brings to mind a song from Oliver –"Food, glorious food."

Continued on page 16

A MEDITATION TO PONDER FROM ST. AUGUSTINE

SEE GOD IN YOUR NEIGHBOR

You who do not yet see God will, by loving your neighbor, make yourself worthy of seeing Him. By loving your neighbor, you cleanse your eyes so you can see God.

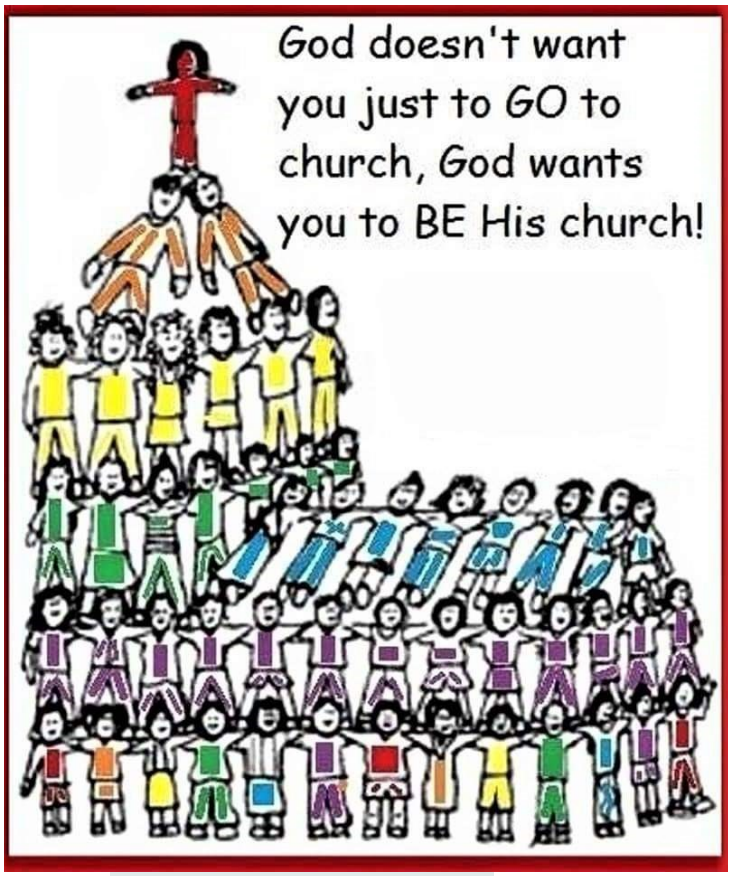
Love your neighbor, then, and see within yourself the source of this love of neighbor. There you will see God insofar as you are able.

-Sermon on John 17:8

Prayer: O Lord, my God, pay heed to my prayer. Look with mercy on my desire, which is not concerned with myself alone but with my neighbor's good as well. *- Confessions 11, 2*

From Augustine Day by Day , July 10th , page 104

A BIT OF HUMOR TO LIGHTEN THE DAY



Did you remember to do your taxes in April?

Ring, Ring! Father O'Malley answers the phone.

"Hello, is this Father O'Malley?"

"It is!"

"This is the IRS. Can you help us?"

"I can!"

"Do you know a Ted Houlihan?"

"I do!"

"Is he a member of your parish?"

"He is!"

"Did he donate $10,000 to the church?"

"He will!"

(Thanks to Scott Armstrong for this funny!)

Dear God, So far today, I have done all right. I have not gossiped. I have not lost my temper. I have not been grumpy. I have not been nasty, selfish, or greedy and I am really thankful for that. But in a few minutes, God, I am going to get out of bed, and from then on, I need some help. Amen

FROM THE KITCHEN OF HUDSON'S DEPARTMENT STORE

Picnic season is upon us, but so it what I like to call summer salad season. I came across this on a Facebook Page I like about Detroit. Not being from Detroit, but being a historian, I really like discovering where this salad came from. I had never heard of it until we moved here, and now I know…the *Maurice Salad* was born at Hudson's Department Store. Here is the actual recipe from Hudson's.

Dressing:

2 t white vinegar
1 1/2 t lemon juice
1 1/2 t onion juice
1 1/2 t sugar
1 1/2 t Dijon mustard
1/4 t dry mustard
1 c mayonnaise
2 T chopped fresh parsley
1 hard cooked egg, diced
Salt to taste

Salad ingredients:

14 oz. ham, cut into strips

14 oz. cooked turkey breast, cut into strips

14 oz. Swiss cheese, cut into strips

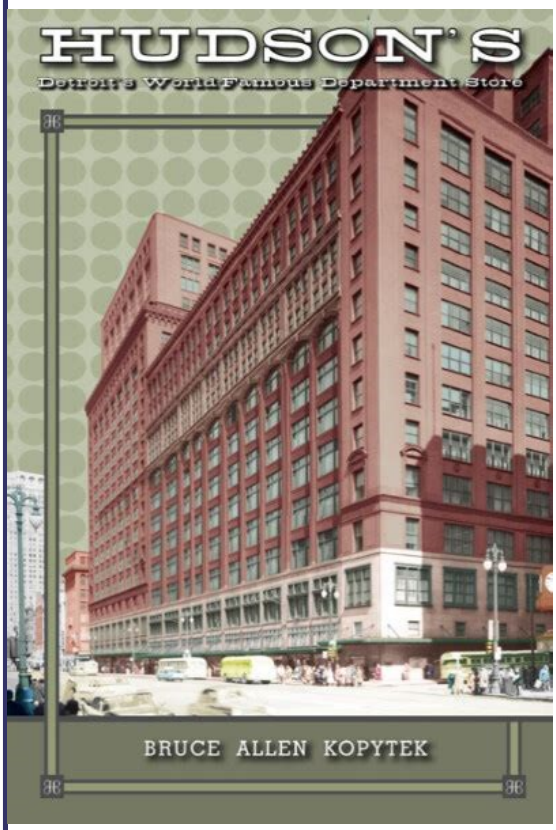
1/2 c slivered, sweet Gherkin pickles

1 head iceberg lettuce, shredded

12-16 pimento stuffed green olives

Combine the first 6 dressing ingredients, and stir to dissolve the sugar. Add the remaining dressing ingredients and mix well. Combine the ham, turkey, cheese and pickles together in a large bowl. Toss together with the dressing. Divide the lettuce among plates, and top with salad and garnish each plate with 2 olives. (serves 6-8)

Do you have a favorite recipe to share? Send it to witness@ststephenstroy.org Everyone enjoys a new or old dish. Looking for winter favorites for next issue.



PHOTOS FROM AROUND THE PARISH —IRISH NIGHT

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

OUR EASTER CELEBRATION IS NEVER COMPLETE WITHOUT THE BUNNY!

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

DID YOU KNOW?... *BY DON INGERSOLL*

THE PARABLE OF SUSAN RUSSELL

@Westminister Abbey

Susan Russell's story vividly demonstrates to all of us the importance of being alert for opportunities to connect others to St. Stephen's. A simple invitation with the promise of a leg of lamb dinner enabled God to miraculously put Susan on a phenomenally rewarding journey of service that has been touching countless members of St. Stephen's and its neighbors for over 50 years.

Susan was born and raised in Alpena, [northeastern lower peninsula on Lake Huron], where she and her family were active in the Methodist Church. After high school Susan attended Alpena Community College before transferring to U of M. During the year she lived in a dorm, she heard stories about the challenging lives many of her classmates had been living and realized how privileged and blessed her family life in Alpena had been.

After a year as a student and another year as an employee, Susan and her good friend Jill moved to Highland Park to take classes at Wayne State. Soon, Jill's mother invited the girls to join the family for church at the relatively new St. Stephen's, followed by a leg of lamb dinner. Susan felt welcome and immediately connected. Future legs of lamb were appreciated, but not needed to get her to church regularly.

Susan's first involvement was supporting the Episcopal Church Women's group [ECW] and, among other things, their Make/Bake/Sew/Grow fundraiser. The women's creations were sold at a big evening auction and used to support outreach. Susan's first contribution was probably baked. Her toe was in the water, it felt good, and she took root as a dedicated member of the St. Stephen's family.

Susan met her future husband Brian through friends and in 1974, Fr. Carl Sayers married them at St. Stephen's. They had a son Charlie in 1978 and a daughter Kerry in 1981. Both grew up in St. Stephen's Sunday school and programs.

As can happen, Susan and Brian parted ways congenially when the kids were in elementary school. Susan recalls the church family [especially Betty Hotten] rallying to her support and encouraging her through this transition. Susan never forgot the power of kindness and has committed herself to passing it on through St. Stephen's. Her involvement since ECW has been varied:

Sunday School teacher [kindergarten], Singles GEM, Eucharistic visitor, hosting Fellowship Hour and various committees including Adult Faith, Outreach, and Pastoral Care . Last Fall, she volunteered to organize the book group, Novels & Nibbles.

(continued on page 13)

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Did you Know,? continued from page 12)

Susan is serving on the Vestry for the third time and has joined Diane Kenefic in organizing funerals. Most recently she has joined the new Invite, Welcome and Connect Committee. Outside St. Stephen's she enjoys reading [currently mysteries], gardening and travel. Her prayer is that this involvement continues, which will mean that her health is still good, which will mean she can enable others, too, to get out and participate in this amazing Life.

The St. Stephen's Novels & Nibbles Group met on April 17th to discuss *Born a Crime: A Memoir of Love, Hope and Resistance (2016)* by Trevor Noah. Discussion leader was Susan Russell, who provided the group with interesting facts about Trevor Noah after the timeline of his book.

Our next book chosen is *Lessons in Chemistry (2022)* by Bonnie Garmus. This is a New York Times bestseller written with humor on the evolutionary roles of women and men in society and science in the 50s-60s.We will be meeting on May 22nd from 2-4 pm to discuss this book. All are welcome. We have no set limit on those who attend, but might need to move to a larger space now that we are growing. A nice problem to have.

We will then not meet again until August 21st, and that book chosen is *Ordinary Grace* (2013) by William Kent Krueger. This is a murder/mystery book that takes those involved to the edges of faith in humanity and God. Kris Fuhr will be the discussion leader.

Our design is a book every six weeks or so, meeting on Mondays from 2-4 pm. Tea, coffee and nibbles will be served. Everyone is welcome to come for discussion even if you have not read the book. For more information see Susan Russell.

Winners of the first Blast from the Past Challenge were Jim Carnagie and Susan Russell who correctly named the people, and event of these pictures.

Featured are acolytes Aaron Herfurth, Jackie Klempay, Melissa Klempay, Elizabeth Waters, and Meg Raczowski. Middle picture Daniel Cho, Alice Brandon, Joan Knapp, and Chris Herfurth. At St. John's Detroit are Gwen Kirby, Val Thompson, Susan Russell, Alice Brandon and Helen Slater.

BLAST FROM THE PAST
BY GRETCHEN WATERS

Can you solve Gretchen's challenge? Can you name the people in the picture, the event and/or place? Gretchen has a plethora of pictures so for this year at least we thought it would be fun to expose them, and also our younger selves.

Here are the Rules of the Contest. You must email your answers to kfuhr08@gmail.com and you may not question Gretchen about the shot. You also may only win once a year. Last issues winners were Jim Carnagie and Susan Russell. They correctly identified the pictures between the two of them. You can be a person in the picture too. If you are correct, you win chocolate from the World's Finest Chocolate guy!

Here are this issues pictures to challenge you.

Picture 1

Picture 2

INTERESTING STOPS ALONG THE WAY…THE HOPPER'S ESCAPE TO SOUTHERN SPAIN *BY JAN & JOE HOPPER*

We were fortunate to fly to Madrid in late October. This was our first big trip "post Covid". We had a marvelous time and would go again!

The Prado Museum in Madrid is a definite must see. It features masterpieces by El Greco, Valaquez, and Francisco de Goya. In Toledo, we toured the Damascena steel workshop. In addition to swords and suits of armor, they design beautiful jewelry. We walked the narrow streets, up and down the hills, visiting the Jewish quarter and wonderful churches. .

A highlight was a stop in Granada to visit Alhambra. The complex was started in 1208 by the Moors. In 1492 it was the royal palace of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. It became famous for the Decree of Alhambra of 1492, resulting in the expulsion of Jews who refused to convert to Catholicism. An interesting thing we noticed was that the Jewish Quarters in the cities of Spain exist with no Jewish people living there. The complex was left uncompleted in the early 17th century. Restoration of Alhambra began in 1828. The original main entrance gate, palaces, gardens, church , mosque, baths, and water supply system remain in use. Thanks to Washington Irving's "Tales of the Alhambra", this is now the major tourist attraction in Spain.

Costa del Sol was a day to relax on the Spanish Riviera. Our hotel room overlooked the beautiful Mediterranean Sea. We enjoyed walking along the beach, shopping, and sampling restaurant fares.

The fascinating city of Rhonda, which has a huge gorge dividing the city, came next. They are famous for Plaza de Tores which features a bullring that was established in 1780. We were able to wander around the bullring and visit the museum which features bullfighting memorabilia. The bullfighting begins in late-March running through mid-October.

We enjoyed the Plaza de Espana in Seville. Several of the buildings in Luisa Park were designed for the Ibero American exhibition of 1929. The tiles memorializing cities in Spain were spectacular.

Then came Cordoba, with the Mosque / Cathedral of Cordoba. Building of the great mosque began in 786. The building was later enlarged with a prayer hall filled with columns, in the Islamic style. The mosque has been transformed into twelve Christian churches, with the organ and choir in the center of the hall. They also claim Christopher Columbus was buried in one of the churches.

After 10 days of traveling by bus with Globes, we logged in 845 miles. We enjoyed seeing the endless rows of olive and pistachio trees during the drive. The farmers were planting their winter crops. We would recommend touring southern Spain to everyone. The people are friendly and helpful, the food and wine are wonderful, and the history is amazing.

(Pictures left to right—Cathedral of Seville, Plaza de Tores, and Plaza de Espana tiles)

Let GEM Jumpstart Your 2023-2024 Social Life!

Our **G**reet, **E**at & **M**eet program is back and full of flexibility.

In general, GEM provides small group settings that enable us to make new friends or strengthen old bonds. Participating is "a piece of cake," an appetizer, salad and entrée! And perhaps a molecule of your favorite beverage too.

GEM participants are assigned to groups of 3 or 4 pairs [not necessarily couples]. Then each pair hosts one event during the year. If the host has room and the inclination, they are free to invite others [Fr. Brian, parishioners, neighbors, family or friends]. Everyone shares a meal and fellowship. Most have been dinners, but there is no rule against breakfast, brunch, or lunch. Your group decides.

But that's not the only option! Have a meal at a restaurant or at other venues such as plays, concerts, sporting events, an Oktoberfest, etc.]. GEM groups may wish to use the same format all the time or mix it up. It's up to each group to decide.

Typically, when held at someone's home, the host provides the main course, and each of the other pairs brings an appetizer, salad or dessert. **GEM is not a cooking contest**. **The food is the pretext for getting folks together in a friendly setting**. The main course can be anything from hot dogs to your family specialty. Not a cook? Pick up 2 rotisserie chickens at Kroger and we'll call it good.

Lame reasons for saying "No" to GEM:

I'm too busy to commit to anything else! We are talking about 3 or 4 meals during the rest of the year. You have to eat.

I've got food allergies and hate liver! This is common among GEMers. Just let the group know in advance.

I don't know anyone to pair with. This is not a reason to say "No." This is why you should sign up. We will help find someone mutually compatible. You may not know how compatible at first, but you will soon learn.

Life is about memories and connecting with people who care. St. Stephen's is full of caring people who come together to do God's work. GEM makes both easier.

Sign up as a pair or an individual in the Gathering Area, or let Jackie or Don know you are interested, and they will sign you up.

Got questions? Call or see me. Don [248 515 9646] don@doningersoll.com

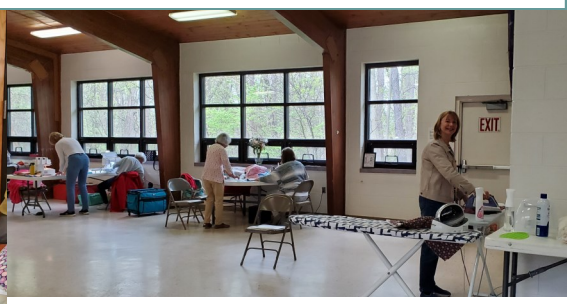
Views from the Pews...There have been so many by Norma Ross continued from page 7

In my travels, I have been blessed to view other sacred places, including St Paul's Cathedral, St. John's, Mariner's Church, and Sweetest Heart of Mary in Detroit, St. Mark's in Venice, FL, St. Raphael's in Fort Myers Beach, FL., the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi in Italy, The Sistine Chapel in Rome, and King's Chapel in Cambridge, UK. I could almost envision Henry VIII, the rascal.

These views from the pews gave witness to the infinite breadth of God's love, to acknowledge differences yet common purpose, to focus on God's plan for us, to restore our heart's intent to reject evil and hatred, and to accept a call to continue God's work in this world.

CRAFTING KINDNESS UPDATE *FROM JILL STEIN*

Crafting Kindness met on April 21st. They sewed almost 100 mastectomy pillows that are being donated to the Karmanos Cancer Institute. They had help from a sewing group who are friends of our co-chair Carol. We hope to see more folks from Crafting Kindness and St. Stephen's at our next meeting TBA where we will be making baby blankets for Lighthouse's baby shower. We can make a difference, one stitch at a time!



MORE TIDBITS OF NEWS

FOR SALE...USED COMMERCIAL FREEZER 21 CUBIC FEET see office or Dave Eldon for more details.

Don't forget that people are still hungry out there so bring in food items for Joan Morgan to take to Lighthouse, please.

Please be sure to pick up your dishes from past events in the kitchen. They need to find their way home.

LECTORS are needed! Our Lector Ministry needs more volunteers! A once a month commitment to read the lessons. See Father Brian if you are interested.

Are you ready to package 15,000 meals?

If so, mark your calendars for Saturday, **September 23, 2023**. That's the date for this year's Rise Against Hunger Event.

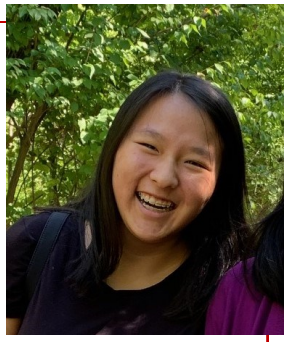
In case you missed it last year, Rise Against Hunger is an international hunger relief organization that is growing a global movement to end hunger by nourishing lives, empowering communities, and responding to emergencies. They work with groups like ours to package nutritious meals that are distributed to partners in need all around the globe. Rise Against Hunger engages with international partners to create sustainable solutions to hunger and equip them with agriculture training, business skills, and more to create and sustain food in their own communities.

For those who worked at last year's event, you know the meal packaging event was a fun, educational, high-energy, turn-key way to engage everyone at St. Stephen's and our surrounding community in a hands-on service. Rise Against Hunger brings all the equipment, ingredients, and staffing to us to host an impactful, easy service project! Last year about 50 volunteers packaged 10,152 in around 2 hours. This year we want to "up the ante" and shoot for 15,000 meals. To make this happen we will first need to raise at least $6,500. We have a great start with $1,880 already collected from last year! We are hoping organizations like the Rotary, Lions, Optimist Clubs, etc. will pitch in with a donation. Last year the Beverly Hills Lions and the Rochester Hills Lions each donated $500.

Please consider a personal donation to help make this event happen. Be sure to note "Rise Against Hunger" on your check, and don't forget September 23 will be the date to help pack the meals.

Peace,
Dave Stein
Rise Against Hunger Chair

CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATING YOUTH
CLASS OF 2023



Kassidy O'Neill is a senior graduating from Troy High School. She currently works as a caretaker at the Troy School District Preschool which teaches about 400 children ages 3-5. After graduation she plans to continue her work at the preschool before attending Oakland Community College (OCC) in the fall of 2024. She loves her job and working with the little ones. Kassidy plans to become a preschool or kindergarten teacher.

In her spare time, Kassidy likes to read, listen to K-pop, snuggle with her cat and dog, and play video games.

St. Stephen's has been a big part of Kassidy's life. She loves all the people and particularly being an acolyte. She has spent many hours at St. Stephen's volunteering her time. Kassidy feels she has become a better person with all the support she has received from her St. Stephen's family.

Audrey Brokenshire is a 3rd generation member of St. Stephen's: daughter to Mike and Erin, granddaughter to Bob & Donna. She is graduating with honors from Troy High School where she performed in the marching band color guard, participated in student government, and played softball. In addition to school activities, she has danced for 15 years with Dance Class Inc. (Shelby), babysat, tutored, and even runs her own small custom sugar cookie business.

Audrey is headed to Grand Valley State University in the Fall to pursue a degree in Psychology on her quest to become a clinical psychologist.

Chase Gunther – Hard to believe the little 3-year-old that came joyously running down the center aisle after being baptized during the Easter Vigil 2008 is graduating this year.

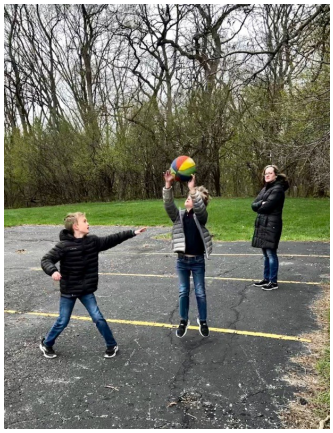
Chase is a cradle Episcopalian and has been attending St. Stephen's literally since birth. He served as an acolyte, helped in the kitchen with a multitude of hospitality events, supported and attended youth events and has a deep love for his church community.

Chase is an avid gamer, movie buff, and rollerblader. He has a deep love for family and his values are deeply rooted in his faith and church community.

Chase attended Stevenson High School in Utica and was among an elite group of students accepted into Stevenson's fledgling Manufacturing, Automation, Design, and Engineering Program (MADE) as a freshman where he flourished and eventually decided to pursue a degree in Mechanical Engineering. Chase will graduate from Stevenson High School on June 10th and will be attending Lawrence Technological University, Southfield Michigan in August pursuing his Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Chase is deeply grateful for the love, support and guidance of his St. Stephen's family helping to shape him into the man he is becoming.

THE YOUTH PAGE



The Sunday School class learned a new prayer method to help them to remember who to pray for. It's called the **Five Finger Prayer.**

The thumb is the thickest and strongest digit, and when the hand is at rest, the thumb is the nearest to the rest of the body, reminding us to pray for family and friends—people who are closest to us.

The pointer finger, or the index finger, reminds us to pray for people who point the way—teachers and church leaders.

The middle finger, is the tallest finger, and it reminds us to pray for our leaders.

The ring finger is usually the weakest of our fingers, and it reminds us to pray for the weak and the sick among us.

The little finger, or pinkie, is the smallest finger, and it represents the individual who is praying. We need to pray for ourselves, but in humility we need to remember that we are least important.

Amen (out of the mouth of babes)

Night Watch

by Jackie Ingersoll

Night Watch is a youth program by the Diocese and held at St. Paul's Cathedral. Four of our high schoolers, Chloe, Chase, Max, and Kassidy attended and had a fantastic time. After registering, the group walked over to the DIA where they met a guide who took them on a tour of many of the religious art works on display. A pizza dinner was then on the agenda followed by a game of gaga ball, a scavenger hunt in the cathedral, and a movie and popcorn. After breakfast on Sunday, they attended church service in the cathedral. Not only did they get to bond with each other, but they also met and made new friends.

The Youth group signed up for Fellowship Hour In April. They provided lots of delicious goodies which were enjoyed by all. This photo shows how serious they were with the task at hand!

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Ladies Lunch Bunch @ Camp Tioconderoga May 11th 11:30 a.m. Contact Judy McClendon
- Novels & Nibbles Book Club May 22nd 2:00-4:00 p.m.
- Crossroads Soup Kitchen May 28th 8a.m.-2:00p.m.
- Celtic Evensong & Holy Eucharist May 28th 6:00 p.m.
- Confirmation @ St. John's Episcopal Church Royal Oak June 3rd
- Healing Service June 4th after 10:00 a.m. service
- Annual Community Picnic and Youth Sunday June 11th 10:00 a.m.-?
- Celtic Evensong & Eucharist June 25th 6:00 p.m.
- Healing Service July 2nd 10 a.m.
- Celtic Evensong and Eucharist July 23rd 6:00 p.m.
- Healing Service August 6th 10 a.m.
- Novels & Nibbles Book Club August 22nd 2:00-4:00 p.m.
- Celtic Evensong and Eucharist August 27th 6:00 p.m.
- Welcome Back Sunday September 10th
- For up to the minute current events at St. Stephen's see Key News and the website calendar

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Weekly Opportunities

Eucharist Service Rite I on Sunday at 8 am

Choral Eucharist Service Rite II on Sunday at 10 am

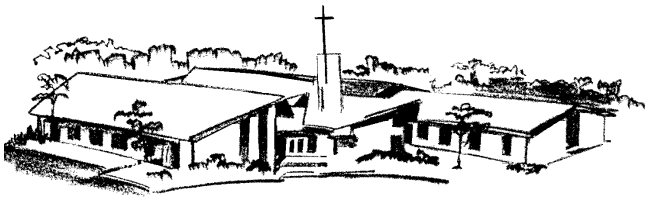
Live Stream of Sunday 10 am on St. Stephen's Private Facebook page and YouTube Channel

Wednesday Bible Study 10am BE

Choir Practice 7:30 pm-9:00pm

Men's Bible Study-Friday's 9 AM at Leo's Coney Island on Opdyke Rd

The QR Code (right) will take you to our Website, just take a picture of it with your phone or use a QR reader app. See Kris Fuhr if you need assistance doing this.



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