

ST. STEPHEN'S
GROUNDED IN PRAYER
EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT
MOTIVATED FOR LOVE IN ACTION

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 WITNESS

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRIEST

Welcome Back.

One thing I enjoy most about living in Michigan includes the chance to experience the fullness of the four seasons. In the fall, the crisp weather rolls in, the program year begins, and the fall colors remind us of the cycle of life. Feasts central to this season of the year include the feast of St. Francis of Assisi as well as the Feast of All Saints' Day. Two feasts which focus our attention on the infinite value of creation and the ultimate horizon in which our lives are lived. As the days become darker and the leaves lose their color, fall reminds us of the end toward which creation and all of life is moving in the risen and ascended Christ.

The feast of St. Francis falls on Friday, October 4 and is typically celebrated with a liturgy of blessing upon the animals under our collective care. The feast celebrates the spiritual outlook of St. Francis of Assisi, an Italian mystic who aimed to elevate the spiritual value of the natural world and who is remembered for having had a deep love for the environment. The hagiography that idealizes his life story tells the tale of his making peace with the Wolf of Gubbio, a tenuous agreement that rested entirely upon the provision that the surrounding residents of Gubbio agree to feed the poor creature. In another story, St. Francis is believed to have preached the gospel with such eloquence of voice that even the birds of the air came to hear him speak. These stories are of course based in folklore, but they capture for us the spiritual value that Francis imputed to the natural world. In our own blessing of creation, we find the call to steward the beauty that surrounds us. Stewardship is an autumn theme as we take up our own labor and as we ask ourselves what it means to be stewards of creation.

The next feast central to the fall season is the feast of All Saints' Day. All Saints' Day is a principal feast observed in the Episcopal Church on November 1. But historically it has been celebrated in relation to two other days of commemoration:

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THE SENIOR WARDEN'S THOUGHTS

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Hello Family!!

What a wonderful summer God has given us! Soon, the kids will be back in school and Welcome Back Sunday will be upon us ... LOL, but not just yet as we still have the Celtic Concert later this month to which to look forward.

Many hands make quicker work ... with that little pearl in mind, please consider how you may be able to volunteer in the coming year. Altar Guild, Hospitality, Ushers, Choir, Adult/Student Education, Buildings and Grounds, Lay Ministry, Coffee Hour, Vestry, and the many committees who will never say no to a little help!! Welcome back is on September 8th – so mark your calendars.

Thank you to Steve and Corinne Fragnoli and Kathy DeCiantis for the endless hours you put into the events at the church these past years – these are the heart and soul of St. Stephen's, and you did it lovingly, selflessly, and joyfully...a truly wonderful gift and as you step back and enter into a much deserved rest – know how grateful we are. Thank you to Dave Eldon and Mike Brokenshire- who have somehow managed to keep a roof over our heads with duct tape, prayer, and determination. We can never repay the endless hours you dedicate, but can tell you how much you are appreciated. Thank you to Sue Gore for bringing joyful sounds to our sanctuary – coordinating guest musicians and soloists throughout the year and conducting an amazing choir!! Thank you to Alice Moss and the team on Altar Guild who always make sure the table is beautifully set for us to humbly come. Thank you to Jackie Ingersoll and Evan DeCiantis for keeping our youth engaged! Thank you to Ami O'Neill—well, just for everything you and your girls contribute to our Parish Family. Thank you to Kris Fuhr for editing The Witness—and as you step back, please know your contribution was so appreciated in the masterful way you put it all together! Thank you to Phil Pierce for streaming our Sunday Morning Service week in and week out so our parish family has an opportunity to join in when they are unable to attend in person. Thank you to the Ushers, Counters, Coffee Hour Folks, and Greeters! Thank you to the Vestry for your selfless service and dedication to our St. Stephen's Family. Thank you, Family, for making St. Stephen's a loving place for all!!

Blessings and Love

Scott, Sr. Warden





OUR PARISH CELEBRATES

BIRTHDAYS

**IN SEPTEMBER,
OCTOBER, AND
NOVEMBER**

Marilyn Elwarner 9/6
Lachlan O'Neill 9/9
Dominic Piantedosi 9/10
Philip Pierce 9/10
Alan Giles 9/11
Nancy Fischer 9/11
Bonnie Gross 9/15
Debbie Pincura 9/22
Scott Armstrong 9/22
Barbara Whitaker 9/22
Jane Wellman 9/24
Ethan Sobolewski 9/29
Sandra Martin 10/1
Corinne Fragnoli 10/15
Robert Thatcher 10/17
Donna Brokenshire 10/19
Gretchen Waters 10/20
Margaret Klempay 10/23
Darra-Lee Walker 10/23
Patricia Buller 10/25
John Pincura 10/27
Karol Sprague 10/28
Melissa Hardy 11/1
Elaine Church 11/2
William Langridge 11/4
Alistair Sundaeson 11/5
Kachi Ezeugwa 11/7
Lee Bennett 11/8
Dominic Perod 11/8
Edward Church 11/9
Karen Morley 11/14
Shannon Weigant 11/19
Lani Nolan 11/21
Gianni Perod 11/22
Anthony Johnson 11/22
Paula Somerville 11/24
Joan Thunder 11/25
Joanne Gondert 11/25
Kate Pincura 11/29

ANNIVERSARIES

**IN SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, AND
NOVEMBER**

Ed & Kathy DeCiantis 9/6
Shanker & Sara Sundaeson 9/10
Liz & Larry Sinkovich 9/25
Jim & Judy McQuiston 10/1
Richard & Diane Kenefic II 10/11
Philip & Linda Pierce 10/15
Tom & Cindy Vida 10/15
Donna & Richard Bronsteen 11/10
Michael & Martha Szott 11/11
Lucinda & David Sabino 11/28



Join us for Popcorn & Prayer

Friday, October 4th at 7:00pm.

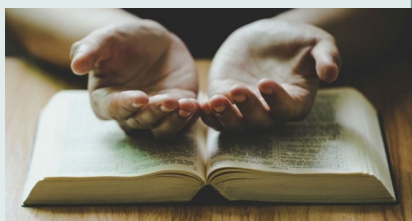
We will be hosting Movie Night and Popcorn Bar at St. Stephen's with the faith-based drama "All Saints." It has a PG rating and is suitable for ages 8 and up but is probably geared more toward teens and adults.

This film is based on a true story of a salesman turned (newly ordained) Episcopal pastor, Michael Spurlock, in which his position appears to be to close down his small church. Instead, he attempts to save the church, as well as a group of Anglican refugees and help the community.

This is a comfy evening event. Come in your favorite t-shirt, sweatpants, and slippers and bring a blanket if you choose. Bring a friend too. There will be some interactive paper pencil activities for us all too!

With Love and Faith.

Mary Loree Rini



PRAYERS FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY

Long Term Prayer Concerns:

Meghann Armstrong, Georgiana Badalow, Bob Bagnall, Lucy Beall, Linda Bethany, Mary Bishop, Bob Brokenshire, Steve Brokenshire, Scott Carruthers, Bill Chamberlain, Noah Cuthbertson, Colin Davis, Ed DeCiantis, Jan Eldon, Marilyn Elwarner, Jim Elwarner, Jane Essian, Liz & Ray Forrest, Hollis Gallagher, Ron Goetzke, Mike Goldwasser, Walt & Betty Herrmann, Greyson Ingersoll, Kenneth Ingersoll, Diane Jarvis, Connie Jose, John Oliphant, James Oliphant, Anne Oliphant, Mark Oliphant, Sharon Petrie, Sharon Pruitt, Sallie Salanty, Sharon Sands, Michelle Sauers, John Spates, Sara Sundareson, Joan Thunder, Dante Vannelli, Virginia Wagner, Sophie Wasik, Katie Yant, Ged Youngman,

Those we pray for serving in the military:

Joren Moos, Nate Adkins, Ian L'Hommedieu, Jim Sands, Kyle Rogowski, Nathan Cremeans, Gordon Bagley, Capt. John Zimmer

Thank you for your service!

All Hallows Eve and All Souls' Day. These later two days are not part of our church calendar, but they make up what amounts to an autumn easter. The ancient pagan harvest festival of Samhain was by the 11th century appropriated and sanctified by the western church, giving rise to the celebration of All Hallows Tide — a series of three days inclusive of All Hallows Eve (Oct. 31), All Hallows Day (Nov. 1), and All Souls Day (Nov. 2). The pagan belief in the afterlife, once believed to be populated by various gods, spirits, and fairies, was transformed by the light of the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the gift of eternal life.

Where Easter centers our prayer upon the final events of Christ's life to bring forth the Good News of the resurrection, All Hallows Tide focuses Christian prayer upon the ongoing significance of the risen and ascended Christ, to speak of the unique way in which Christ's redeeming work extends beyond the world of created being to involve the supernatural world of the dead and departed. Our remembrance of the dead — saints, martyrs, and the faithful departed alike — coincides with the natural signs of life's mortality: the September equinox, the deciduous cycle of plant life, and the diminishment of daylight in the northern hemisphere. In autumn the cycle of life draws to a close and yet even here — especially here — the horizon of Christ's redeeming work illuminates the darkness.

The feast of St. Francis of Assisi and the Feast of All Saints' Day speak to the mystery of both creation and salvation. As much as these feasts call us to hallow the world in which we live and work, so also, they speak to the deeper concerns and anxieties of the fall season. Our labor finds its natural end not in endless toil but in the stewardship and contemplation of created things. The end of our life cycle is consummated not in the darkness of a final autumn, but in the mystery of Christ who has already spoken for last things.

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

It is time for this editor to put down her keyboard and turn the Witness over to a new editor. I have enjoyed gathering information, articles, pictures, and news to share with St. Stephen's parish family. However, circumstances beyond my control will be taking me away from Michigan more this coming year as I assist my younger sister in her fight against ovarian cancer and still help Ken manage his World's Finest Chocolate business. I know you will be in good hands with Ami O'Neill for the time being, but I encourage you to consider taking over this worthwhile position if you have an interest in writing, publishing, editing, and spreading the joy of what St. Stephen's is all about to our parish family and beyond. Thank you to all who have contributed, commented, and critiqued my past two and a half years as your editor.

Kris Fuhr





Are you ready to package 15,000 meals again?

If so, mark your calendars for Saturday, **September 21, 2024**. That's the date for this year's Rise Against Hunger Event.

For those who worked at last year's event, you know the meal packaging event was a fun, high-energy way to engage everyone at St. Stephen's (and even our community) in hands-on service. Rise Against Hunger brings all of the equipment, ingredients, and staffing to us to host this impactful, easy service project! Last year about 60 volunteers packaged over 15,000 in around 2 hours' time. This year we plan to package 15,000 meals again. To make this happen, we will first need to raise at least \$6,500. We have a great start with just over \$3,400 already collected. 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 made significant donations.

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 us to package nutritious meals that are then distributed to partners in need all around the globe. Rise Against Hunger works 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.

Please make a donation to help make this event happen. Make sure to note "Rise Against Hunger" on your check. **And remember September 21 will be the date to help pack the meals.**

Peace,
Dave Stein
Rise Against Hunger Chair

PRAYERS FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY

Cycle of Prayers

- September 1 Robert & Donna Brokenshire
Steve Brokenshire
- September 8 Donna & Richard Bronsteen
Patricia Buller
- September 22 Holly Burean—Sam & Jake
Jeremy Burean—Max & Madi
- September 22 Tony & Kim Burean—Peter & David
John Burrell
- September 29 Ed & Elaine Church—Amy
Basil Considine
- October 6 Colin & Kathy Davis
Ed & Kathy DeCiantis
- October 13 Olivia DeCiantis and Gabriel
Evan DeCiantis
- October 20 Paul & Stefanie Deller
Dave & Jan Eldon
- October 27 Marilyn & James Elwarner
Alex & Erinma Ezeugwa—
Kamdi, Kamsi, Kachi
- November 3 Jessica & Jeff Firman
Nancy Fischer
- November 10 Matt Fox
Steve & Corinne Fragnoli
- November 17 Ken & Kris Fuhr
Daniel & Tammy Gerard
- November 24 Helen & Alan Giles
Joanne Gondert



SUMMER AT ST. STEPHEN'S: OUTREACH BABY SHOWER, DETROIT TIGER'S GAME, CROSSROADS LUNCHEON, GARDEN SNAPSHOTS.



YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

It's not too late to sign up!

Celtic Evensong and Holy Eucharist

Summer has come to an end and parish life is returning to its normal rhythm. The Celtic Evensong with the beautiful candlelight service and Celtic music is back on the schedule. If you would like to host an afterglow the sign up sheet is in the gathering area. Here are the dates for the remainder of the 2024 calendar year;

September 22 October 27 November 24



Coffee Hour

Everyone loves our coffee hour gathering after the 10:00am service. There is always an opportunity to host- Just sign up— (see form on the kitchen door). Need help? Ask a friend or vestry member.

If you can bring baked goods, that is very helpful, too. We will keep them in the freezer for a future date when the host needs to use them.

SEARCH COMMITTEE

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20-21

The vestry met with Rev. Ellen Ekevag, Rev. Susie Shaefer, and Fr. Brian Tuesday evening to begin our first steps in the search process. We reviewed the diocesan process, clarified roles/responsibilities for this process and determined our next steps. We will keep the parish informed of the work of the vestry and search committee throughout this time of transition.

As laid out by the diocese, our first step will be for the vestry to appoint a search committee of 6 people, 2 of which will be vestry members (not wardens). Miranda Spates and Anne Williams have agreed to serve. We invite members in good standing to prayerfully consider putting your name forward. This will be a commitment of time and collaboration to help move our parish forward into the future. Is God calling you to participate?

Please discern if you hear God's call to this important ministry and grab one of the Vestry members during Coffee Hour and let them know you are interested in serving. The vestry will meet in September to finalize the remaining search committee members. Your wardens and vestry are here to answer any questions.

**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

Bible Study-Wednesday 10AM in Bishop Emerich room-all welcome

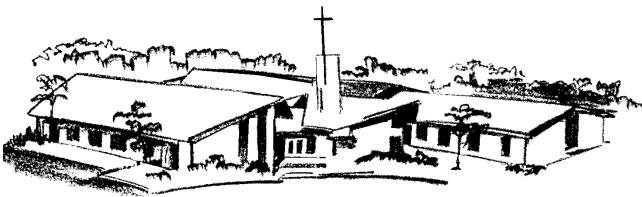
Men's Bible Study-Fridays 9 AM at Leo's Coney Island on Opdyke Rd

The QR Code (below) will take you to our Website, just take a picture of it with your phone or use a QR reader app.



DATES TO REMEMBER

- * August 25th, Celtic Isle Concert
- * September 8th, Welcome Back Sunday
- * September 13th, Bluegrass Mass
- * September 21st, Rise Against Hunger
- * September 22nd, Celtic Evensong and Holy Eucharist
- * October 2nd, Blessing of the Animals
- * October 4th, Movie Night
- * October 27th, Celtic Evensong and Holy Eucharist
- * November 17th, Celebration Sunday
- * November 24th, Celtic Evensong and Holy Eucharist
- * December 2nd, Advent by Candlelight
- * Check the Key News for upcoming events and the church calendar on the website.



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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

