



WHO WE ARE:



WHAT WE DO WELL:



No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, we welcome you with open hearts and minds!

We are a family of God that provides support , guidance, and encouragement to all who see it.

We know God has a purpose for us all, so we provide opportunities for everyone to find and fulfill theirs.

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THE SENIOR WARDEN'S THOUGHTS

Hello Family!

Is it just me, or do you see it too – this feeling of unrest and anxiety in our country and the world? Seems like every time we turn on our TV or see the news we are bombarded with unrest and anxiety – Tariffs, higher costs, wars, assassinations, protests, our military deployed on our streets, eroding rights, travel warnings, and division. Seems as though Lucifer is working overtime bombarding the faithful!

Where is God in all this you may ask. God is walking with us! Experiencing the unrest and anxiety with us! Through all the unrest and anxiety, God reminds us Love is our path forward. Embracing each other and our community, supporting each other and our community, really listening to each other and understanding. St. Stephen's – you – our Parish Family ARE the blessing. We are a blessing to each other as we come together in worship and fellowship, holding each other up. We are a blessing to our community as our Outreach efforts feed the poor, cloth the poor, serve the community with love, generosity and respect!!

St. Stephen's is not just a place we come to worship God. St. Stephen's is a place of hope and love for the community. Faith and Love are not just words or ideas, they are our central core – our being – our calling from God to take his teachings and use them to promote love, understanding, and caring as we touch the souls surrounding us! How blessed are we to know God is with us, God lifts us, God empowers us, God consoles us, God is our shield!! Let us be a shield to others using our faith and resources to make the difference in the lives of those in our community that are persecuted, helpless, outcast, and hopeless lifting them, empowering them, consoling them, shielding them.

As we move into the summer months and plan our vacations, barbeques, graduation celebrations, let us also remember to remain grounded in our faith, to come together in celebration of God and the many blessings he affords us and too share those blessings wherever we may travel with whoever we may encounter!

Love is the greatest of these, St. Stephen's has so much Love to share so much good to offer, together we can overcome unrest and anxiety and promote LOVE!

Love and Blessings,

Scott, Sr. Warden

Be Optimistic About Our Future Together...Help Make it Happen

Yes, I feel it too...life seems to be getting more chaotic. It bothers me, but not to despair or resignation, which I credit to being part of St. Stephen's. I believe St. Stephen's is a "Blue Zone." A place where people live much longer than usual. While diverse, the zones commonly involve having friends you care about and who care about you, a sense of purpose, and an affiliation with a house of worship.

Historically St. Stephen's has been known for being welcoming, friendly and fun-loving as we worship God and serve His people— each other and our neighbors near and far. We think that, but are we? Several new individuals and families have begun worshipping and engaging with us during the past few months, which suggests we are. And, Fr. Geoff Piper thinks so and mentioned it in his sermon to us on June 1st . Check it out via the link on our website www.ststephenstroy.org. His powerful sermon begins at minute 12 and after telling us what Jesus expects of his followers, at minute 26 he says that "St. Stephen's Troy is at the head of the class." He considers us "one of the most buoyant, affectionate, open-hearted communities of worship I have known. You get it. You do it. Keep it up, you are doing great!"

We have been following guidance from a national Episcopalian movement called **Invite Welcome and Connect [IWC]** that draws from thought leaders and the practical experiences of regular churches. Our subscription covers all our members, so **let me know if you wish to subscribe** to access the materials and training.

Review our website! Look at it from the perspective of someone looking for God, friendship and "something more." It was redesigned to capture the national IWC's knowledge about what unmet needs "seekers" have, and what they want to know about our beliefs and programs as they compare us to alternatives. As you review it, think about family or friends who might benefit from what we have to offer. Connect them to the site or inform them about things they might enjoy. If they aren't ready to "join a church" maybe they would enjoy one of our social or community service activities. Exposure to our members and "feel-good" functions may help them meet more immediate needs and ultimately lead to the church part. And if not, everyone still gains.

Visiting a new church is stressful, and everyone is in a different place and on their own timeline. So, as you seek to help visitors find out about us, be friendly and informative but give them space. It isn't hard. It is safe to start with "Hi, thanks for worshipping with us today. My name is _____. Do you have any questions about us?" Then follow their lead and comfort level. Some visitors engage in conversation while others keep moving toward the door. If it feels right, mention that we have refreshments in the Fellowship Hall and you would be happy to take them to it. If they go with you to the Fellowship Hall our folks are great about welcoming and supporting conversations.

Don Ingersoll, IWC Coordinating Team Chair

IWC Coordinating Team: Dave Stein, Diane Kenefic, Jackie Ingersoll, Joanne Gondert, John Morley, Karol Sprague, Susan Russell.

IWC Committee: YOU and everyone else



PRAYERS FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY

Long Term Prayer Concerns:

Meghann Armstrong, Georgiana Badalow, Lucy Beall, Linda Bethany, Mary Bishop, Diane Branch, Bonnie Broadhead, Steve Brokenshire, Claire Brumfield, Scott Carruthers, Bill Chamberlain, Noah Cuthbertson, Ed DeCiantis, Jan Eldon, Marilyn Elwarner, Jane Essian, Ray Forrest, Hollis Gallagher, Ron Goetzke, Mike Goldwasser, Sally Granger, Kathy Herderich, Dean Hyrkas, Kenneth Ingersoll, Beverly Jackson, Connie Jose, Scott Kuntz, Julie McCarney, Anne Oliphant, Sharon Pruitt, Sallie Salanty, Michelle Sauers, Joan Thunder, Dante Vannelli, Greg Wank, Sophie Wasik, Alan Youngman

PRAYERS FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY

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

Thank you for your service!

PARISH CYCLE OF PRAYER

July 6	Michael & Martha Szott Robert Thatcher
July 13	Brian & Liz Thiel, Tristan, Emmett & Lydia Charles & Michelle Tisler & Carl
July 20	Tom & Cindy Vida, Evan & Megan Sharon Voelker
July 27	Darra-Lee Walker Gretchen Waters
August 3	Bill Waun Shannon Weigant
August 10	Mike & Jane Wellman Bob & Sara Sue Westbury
August 17	Barb Whitaker Ann Williams
August 24	Pat & Inge Wojas Bob Wolf
September 7	Lee & Ginny Bennett Robert & Belinda Birk
September 14	Dennis & Mary Bishop Sam & Michelle Bitar
September 21	Mike Boland Pam & Mike Bonkowski
September 28	Marilyn Borowski Nikki Braidwood & Bill Perod, Nico, Gio, Luca, and Tyler

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

It is my great pleasure and honor to edit and celebrate this newsletter. Thank you to those who reached out with feedback after our Spring issue. Your words and encouragement were very welcomed!

As you will see, as more and more of these newsletters are published, there is a theme I will try to follow. The theme of this issue is INVITE. Don has a good article on page 3 on this theme. There are also opportunities to invite other parishioners, friends, and public scattered throughout the pages. In the last issue, I started a feature section called "Food for Thought". Our new Little Pantry seemed to be the perfect thing to feature this month. This month I am starting another section that features seasons of time and our lives called "There is a Season...." Check it out!

As I said in the last issue, I am still learning so I beg your patience with this process. It will get better and more efficient. With that said, I will try to use articles as written to the best of my ability. Some articles may have to be trimmed for space or theme. I will always try to notify you if I am changing any part of your article with the exception of grammatical edits.

I hope you enjoy this issue! Happy Summer!! With care and gratitude, Joanne

OUR PARISH CELEBRATES

BIRTHDAYS

JULY

Erinma Ezeugwa 7/3
Norah O'Neill 7/5
Darrel Middlewood 7/9
Kathy DeCiantis 7/10
Adrian Brokenshire 7/11
Ann Williams 7/16
James McQuiston 7/17
Kathy Davis 7/19
Brian Thiel 7/20
Alex Ezeugwa 7/20
Brian Ingersoll 7/22
Danieal Gerard 7/26
Chloe Ingersoll 7/26



AUGUST

Audrey Brokenshire 8/2
Liz Sinkovich 8/3
Olivia DeCiantis 8/4
Paul McClendon 8/8
Jan Hopper 8/11
Linda Lambert 8/11
Joe Hopper 8/14
Richard Kenefic II 8/21
Helen Giles 8/21
Lydia Thiel 8/21
Ami O'Neill 8/26
Kathryn Hassel 8/27



SEPTEMBER

Marilyn Elwarner 9/6
Lauchlan O'Neill 9/9
Dom Plantedosi 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

ANNIVERSARIES

JULY, AUGUST, AND SEPTEMBER

Mike and Erin Brokenshire 7/8
Rod and Donna Johnson 7/11
Sandy and Connie Jose 7/12
Rick and Barb Spina 7/15
Alex and Erinma Ezeugwa 8/3
Brian and Liz Thiel 8/6
Alan and Helen Giles 8/24
Robert and Cathy Hoffman 8/31
Ed and Kathy DeCiantis 9/6
Shanker and Sara Sundareson 9/10
Larry and Liz Sinkovich 9/25



Are you ready to package 15,000 meals?

Mark your calendars for **Saturday, September 20, 2025.**

For those who worked the Rise Against Hunger events before, you know the meal packaging event was a fun, high-energy, way to engage everyone at St. Stephen's (and possibly even our community) in hands-on service. Rise Against Hunger brings all of the equipment and ingredients to us to host this impactful, easy service project! Last year we 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 just over \$2,000 collected so far this year. Last year the Beverly Hills Lions, Royal Oak Lions and the Rochester Hills Lions each made significant donations.

By the time you are reading this, we will have raffled off a couple gift baskets at the Church Picnic. Alice Moss came up the idea to raffle off gift baskets as a fund raiser for Rise Against Hunger. Dave & Jill Stein have made one basket and Alice made another.

Celtic Isle will be back to regale us with their wonderful music again this summer. Mark your calendars for **Sunday, August 24th.** There will be hot dogs, chips and soft drink for sale, a 50/50 raffle. A good will offering is also requested. All net proceeds will go to help fund our Rise Against Hunger fall event.

Please make a donation to help make this event happen. Make sure to note "Rise Against Hunger" on your check. And don't forget **September 20th** will be the date to help pack the meals.

Peace,

Dave Stein

Rise Against Hunger Chair



CRAFTING KINDNESS

The current project is baby shower items for our annual baby shower that St. Stephen's that will occur on **July 20, 2025** after 10am service. We also will be helping to make blankets for children at Penrickton Children's Home downriver. We often work with another sewing group from Birmingham, and between the two groups we try to help share some kindness one stitch at a time.

We are always looking for new members to help share some ideas and love, any questions reach out to Jill Stein.



SEARCH COMMITTEE NEWS

After being VERY busy earlier this year, we are now learning to be patient. Your Search Committee did a GREAT job pulling together all the required documents necessary to post the opening for our Priest in Charge (they are also posted on our St. Stephen's website).

Now that the position is posted, we are in the next phase of our journey, the search and discernment phase – also known as "the wait". As we wait, we are meeting with Rev. Canon Susie Shaefer, Canon for Transitions and Formation, to discuss interviewing techniques, etc. Once a potential candidate surfaces, we will be well prepared to begin the interviewing and discernment process.

Please keep our search committee and vestry in your prayers.

Dave Stein

St. Stephen's Search Committee

Outreach Happenings – Summer 2025

Weekly Lighthouse food donations have been simply fantastic! Having a focus on specific needs seems to help the contributions. Mike & Martha Szott have led our efforts in this ministry. They deliver all the contributions to Lighthouse and bring back the requested needs for the next month. They made a nice display and signage to draw attention to the effort. In April they delivered 55 lbs. of pasta and 81 lbs. of sauce. Thank you to everyone who has brought food in for this very important ministry – and **THANK YOU** Mike and Martha for leading the way.

Serving dinner at Hope Shelter in Pontiac. Jackie Ingersoll led the effort as our chief chef. Seven of us met at noon on Wednesday, April 9th and prepared a meal to serve about 80 guests at Hope. The meal consisted of chicken ala king, green beans, mashed potatoes, dinner rolls and desert. Once prepared and cooked, five of us took the food to Hope and served it. It went very well and they were VERY appreciative. The highlight was the dessert – Brian Ingersoll made over 80 cupcakes to go with the brownies Jackie made. We would like to repeat this ministry several times a year. If we could get 2 or 3 teams of 6 people, we could make a HUGE impact at Hope Shelter. We have already planned our next dinner for **Wednesday, October 15th** – come give us a hand!

Crossroads – Sunday, May 25 eleven parishioners went to Crossroads at 8am. Our committed team from St. Stephen's sponsored, prepared, and served 400 warm and delicious lunches at the Crossroads Soup Kitchen in Detroit. With us were several Wayne State students. Together we made quick work putting the meals together. We made a huge vat of chili and toasted garlic bread, packaged with a banana, cookie, sour cream, and shredded cheddar cheese. A sincere thank you goes to St. Stephen's Parish for your continued support in making this crucial ministry possible for the Detroit community. We will be serving lunch again on **Sunday, November 16th**. If you're interested in joining our team, please reach out to Judy Lazzaro! Many thanks to those who served: Judy Lazzaro, Gretchen Waters, Katie Waters, Jill & Dave Stein, Martha & Mike Szott, Susan Russell, Jo Gondert, Paul McClendon, and Joan Morgan.

Baby Shower – This year's St. Stephen's Baby Shower will be on **Sunday, July 20**. The day will be celebrated with a cake and goodies at the Sunday Fellowship hour. While ALL donations are welcome, there is always a significant need for diapers in various sizes. Baby wipes are also in demand. Every year your generosity for giving to this much needed ministry is wonderful. Can we beat last year's 42 boxes of diapers and 12 packs of wipes? Plus all the other items donated?



INVITE AND LEARN

FIRE! It only takes a minute



Making a fire plan for your family

A house fire can become deadly in two minutes. You need to make a plan and practice

how to get your family to safety. Troy firefighter, Keith Young, tells you how to create

and practice making an emergency fire plan for your family.

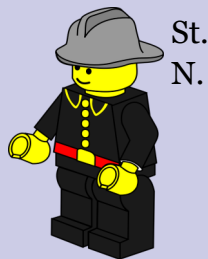
Everyone is welcome to attend this program and no registration is required.

The program will be presented at
Stephen's Episcopal Church, 5500
Adams

Road, Troy, Michigan 48098.

(248)641-8080

office@ststephenstroy.org



St.
N.

WATCH OUT! For Fraud



More than \$12 billion dollars, that billions with a B, are lost by Americans every year through fraud via credit cards, and internet scams. Everyone is at risk ... from teens to seniors.

Troy police officer, Greg Pokley, will be speaking about how to guard against becoming a victim and

what to do when it happens to you.

Everyone is welcome to attend, and no registration is required.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

5500 N. Adams Road

Troy, Michigan 48098

(248) 641-8080

office@ststephenstroy.org

NOVELS AND NIBBLES BOOK CLUB

UPCOMING BOOK:

HORSE

By: Geraldine Brooks

ALL WELCOME!

Join us for discussion and treats

SEPTEMBER 22, 2025 2-4pm



Bouncing Youth Group

As described in the last Witness, St. Stephen's has joined with St. John's Royal Oak and St. James' Birmingham to provide a joint program for middle and high school-aged kids.

On June 1st the program "bounced" to St. Stephen's. Pizza, "ice breakers," Bible study and games [including Gaga ball] were enjoyed by the kids and attending adults.



Our next outing will be bowling on Sunday evening July 20. Details will be coming soon.

St. Stephen's will host again on August 3, from 6-8 p.m. with a barbecue, games, a sing-a-long and toasting marshmallows at our prayer circle/fire pit.

Kids who will be going into 6th grade in the Fall are welcome to join the summer meetings. If you have questions or know any kids who might like to join this fun group, please let me know.

Jackie Ingersoll [248 703 3476]

Paeon to a Pope

As a cradle member of the Episcopal Church, (albeit one devoted to its own doctrines, liturgical flourishes & ecclesiastical hierarchy), I have never been a fan of the papacy. Then along came Franciscus, revealing a humble, unpretentious, hands-on brand of orthodoxy that was a starting departure from what anyone might have expected.

How many of us, much less a Pope, can say: "Who am I to judge?" This statement alone, which he appears to have lived by throughout his tenure, makes him a unique human. Many of us outwardly religious folks waste considerable energy judging others. The mean-spirited tenor of our culture & politics, along with its toxic public discourse has made it difficult to take people at their face value.

Francis had his own personal slant on the matter, choosing instead, a path of acceptance without preconditions, in keeping with his simple Jesuit faith. In the context of his position as Holy Father, this posture must have been quite uncomfortable at times. However, it was the vital ingredient that made him so irresistible to legions of followers who felt affirmed & liberated by his presence. His example should remind us of a role model we all have in common.

Penelope Piantedosi

April 26, 2025

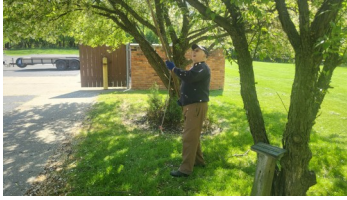


Free coffee. Everlasting life.
Yes, membership has its privileges.



THERE IS A SEASON.....

TIME TO GROW



TIME TO CHANGE

TREES

*I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.*

*A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;*

*A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;*

*A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;*

*Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.*

*Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.*

By Joyce Kilmer 1886-1918



FOOD FOR THE SOUL

Little Food Pantry Installed at St. Stephen's

“Give what you can. Take what you need”

St. Stephen's is the location of the very first “Little Food Pantry” (LFP) in the City of Troy, set along the sidewalk of the south entrance to our property. Based on the grass-roots mini pantry movement started in 2019 in Arkansas, our Little Free Pantry (LFP) contains food, personal care and paper items accessible to everyone all of the time. 24 hours each day. No questions asked.

“Give what you can. Take what you need” is shown on both sides of our Little Free Pantry and that simple statement best outlines this special outreach ministry. Just as we do with Rise Against Hunger as well as our contribution to Lighthouse, Little Food Pantry is yet another example of St. Stephen's living its faith by reaching out into our community.

Our Financial Accountant, Pam Bonkowski and her husband Mike are responsible for bringing this innovative idea to St. Stephen's. In addition, Pam was successful in applying for a \$1,000 Diocese of Michigan grant to buy the materials, build the Pantry and help stock it with food and personal items.

The original concept has been sweeping the nation, spurred on by the COVID crisis in 2020 when people found themselves often needing a helping hand with basic food and personal needs. Today, there are hundreds of Little Free Pantry location across the country – BUT this will be the **very first such location in the City of Troy, MI.**



Parishioners can help stock the Little Free Pantry by placing donated goods on the marked shelves in the narthex. Non-perishable, shelf-stable and sealed foods (e.g. dried pasta, rice packets), canned meats, vegetables and fruits, bottled spaghetti sauce, soups, are preferred. A complete “shopping guide” is posted on the Gathering Area bulletin boards.

*Picture from dedication and blessing on June 8, 2025

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

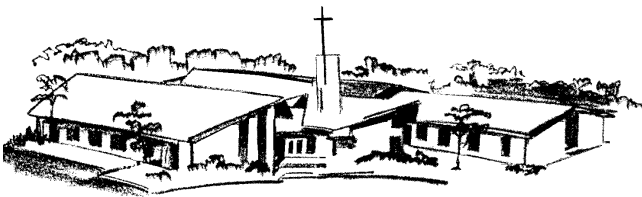
The QR Code (below) will take you to our Website, just take a picture of it with your phone or use a QR reader app.



DATES TO REMEMBER

July 14	Fraud-presentation
July 20	Annual "Baby Shower" collection
July 20	Bouncing Youth Group
July 25	Fire-Presentation
August 3	Bouncing Youth Group (at St. Stephen's)
August 24	Celtic Isles RAH Fundraiser
September 20	RAH* 15,000 Meals Packaging
September 22	Novels and Nibbles Book Club
October 5	Thanksgiving Food Bags Begins
October 15	Outreach-Hope Shelter
November 2	Christmas Giving Tree Begins

*** Check the Key News for upcoming events and the church calendar on the website.**



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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

