



Newsletter October 2016

Build Up and Bless Creation

In Bible Study in September, our first evening reading the Book of Genesis brought us stories of creation in which God gives humans the responsibility to care for creation. In the First Letter to the Corinthians, Paul suggests, “Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries.” And in the First Letter of Peter we hear, “Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.” God depends on each of us using our gifts for the building up and blessing of all God created.

With Living Word Worship focusing on Stewardship and the Pledge Campaign kicking off with Con Squire’s pledge talk on October 2, now is the moment for each of us to think about how we care for all God created. Or, in the language of this year’s pledge campaign, how will each of us “Let our light shine” for the good of St. Stephen’s and the world.

At St. Stephen’s, one of our Mission Goals is to be “Good stewards of our physical, financial, and human resources.” This goal has to do with the maintenance and restoration of our physical plant as well as the use of our buildings for the good of the congregation and community. The care of our financial resources relates to both our revenue streams and our use of the money we have. How willing are we to give sacrificially through our pledges to make sure that St. Stephen’s has enough money to fund its operating budget? How do we balance our reliance on pledge, grant, rental, endowment, and fundraising income? How do we oversee our endowment for the long-term financial health of St. Stephen’s? Finally, being good stewards of our human resources requires that each of us uses our gifts for the building up and blessing of St. Stephen’s and our community. We need to support existing leaders even as we raise up new leaders; and we must treat one another respectfully, and not lay inappropriate or too heavy burdens on any individuals or groups.

In our typical Trinitarian way, October draws us in three directions as we strive to be good stewards. We will spend the month working toward Pledge Commitment Sunday on November 6, the Parish Harvest Fair on November 19, and our political elections on November 8. In October, all three require commitments of our time, talent, and treasure.

Between now and Pledge Commitment Sunday, each of us needs to think and pray—“How will I commit my human and financial resources to St. Stephen’s so that I let my light shine and so that we can shine?” Every year, the Fair is our most significant fundraiser, which succeeds only if everyone does something. In October, we focus on gathering donations of gift cards, services, and items as well as soliciting Program Book ads; in November, we will shift to selling raffle tickets, spreading the word, and volunteering at the Fair. Finally, our political elections give us an opportunity, as we engage and educate voters on Thursday evenings (5-7pm) and Sunday afternoons, to invite others to join us in considering how we use the tools of democracy to make the world a more just and peaceful place.

Building up and blessing creation is the work God has given us to do. As we “seek transformation of our lives and our community through Christ’s Gospel of love, compassion, and justice,” may we be good stewards of all creation. JSG+

“And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new.’” Revelation 21:5

Dear Friends,

At the end of September the brave Bible Study group completed their long journey through the book of The Revelation to John, commonly known as Revelation. Reading descriptions of deadly plagues, cosmic earthquakes and fiendish beasts wasn't easy but the group's determination pushed them forward chapter by chapter. After reading the last words Pam Alleyne, Robert Whitney, Joanne Droppers, Amy Inez and I joyfully shouted "Hooray" followed by a round of applause.

As you can see from the above quotation Revelation does end on a high note. The destruction and violence that John describes is followed by a new peace in the new city of Jerusalem. Sitting on the throne God claims his/her ability to re-make the world. Throughout Revelation John reminds us that the present suffering is only temporary although it may feel permanent in our human time frame. God's renewal of the world proves John's point.

John wrote Revelation with the deep-seated knowledge that Jesus of Nazareth was the physical embodiment of God's ability and desire to "make all things new." In his preaching and teaching Jesus continually offered something new—a new reality in which God was at the center of life, not the human ego. The books of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible speak to the fact that this reality had been accessible to men and women but on the whole was being ignored. And so Jesus comes into the world with a new twist based on his two commandments: love God and love your neighbor as yourself.

Receiving or buying new things can be exciting: a new car, a new phone, a new outfit etc... We cherish the newness of the item treating it with love and care. But just as often we resent new things: a new boss at work, a new traffic pattern, a new worship style etc... We rebel at this kind of change either with outright refusal or passive aggressive silence. In the former case our brain soon loses interest and looks for another new item, in the latter case even when the new thing is no longer "new" our brain holds onto initial resentment.

As a person with ADHD I have a high tolerance for renewal brought about by change. For me, most types of change are a breath of fresh air. So I love to start new projects and new hobbies but my brain quickly gets bored. So I find newer projects and newer hobbies. At the same time I'm scared of the changes that may occur after we elect our new president.

As Christians we live between the desire for God to make all things new and the fear that God WILL make all things new. In Revelation we see John and his community struggling with this desire and fear. They long for God to send Jesus back to earth while they fear what may happen in the meantime. Their faith, like ours, is built on the new reality of Jesus but their brains, like ours, are too quickly distracted looking for the next "new" thing. I pray that you find joy in the newness that God is bringing to your life and the lives of those you love.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah".

A View from Beyond the Pew

We have been blessed by so many gifts as the parents of Bill Rodrigue. His life, death and our grieving have taught us many lessons we couldn't have learned any other way. Among Bill's pictures, returned to us from Okinawa, was a picture of one of the original Peace Poles, planted after World War II. The Pole is standing straight and strong on a pristine beach at Hedo Point, the site of bloody conflicts and great suffering. "May Peace Prevail on Earth" I proclaims in Japanese and English. Despite our tears, this picture of the Peace Pole and its words brought us comfort and, in a mysterious way, a soul connection with Bill. We felt the message of hope and peace.

It has been many years since Bill passed on. Many synchronistic blessings have occurred since which have nourished us and coaxed us along when we were very weary, blessings for which we are very grateful. The most recent unexpected blessing is St. Stephen's planned Peace Pole. This Pole will stand as a beacon in the neighborhood where Bill grew up, played football for Classical High School with Joe Brown and walked, sometimes ran, through the Commons on the way to and from school. To us, it feels like a full circle message of eternal love across time and space from Okinawa to Lynn.



The neighborhood around the Commons has changed, more languages are spoken, many cultures celebrate their diversity, and Lynn Classical is now a Middle School.

We are convinced the mysterious, deep well of human longing for Peace and Hope, expressed by former enemies on the Okinawa Peace Pole has not changed. The message of Peace in many languages on the St. Stephen's Peace Pole will be a beacon to all, one that can inspire, encourage, comfort, speak and connect all who see it in ways we can only imagine.

**Come to the dedication of
The St. Stephen's Peace Pole**

**With Twelve languages reflecting
The diversity of Lynn**

Sunday, November 13 at 11:15am

**As we celebrate Christian Service and
Honor those who serve in the military**

*Through the Bill Rodrigue Fund,
Created by Bill's friends at the time of his death,
A Peace Pole Challenge Grant of \$500 has been given.
Please mail Peace Pole contributions to St. Stephen's
Noting the Peace Pole designation in the memo.*

STEWARDS OF RESOURCES

VESTRY SUMMARY. September 18: Stewardship Ministry Team reported on theme “Let Your Light Shine!” and solicited feedback on Vestry pledge letter; Vestry set 2017 pledge goals of \$131,000 and at least seven new pledgers. August financials are strong except for lagging pledge payments (statements will go out in early October); Cash flow has been a challenge in August and September due to restoration project going over budget, KIC expenses awaiting reimbursements, quarterly payments coming at the end of September, and pledges lagging. Chris Trahan reported on recently completed Chancel Restoration II Project and explained the reasons for cost overruns. The treasurer reported on conversations with Eastern Bank to increase our loan; the Vestry will receive a written summary of the Chancel II budget in October. The Fair (November 19) leadership team is in the midst of solicitations and asked Vestry to help. Recruited Vestry helpers for Homecoming, which is September 25 with Althea Smith. Vestry to attend Diocesan Resource Day or MCAN Leadership Retreat on October 1.

SECOND PHASE OF EXTERIOR RESTORATION COMPLETE! On August 17, St. Stephen’s closed out its second phase of exterior restoration with Massachusetts Historic Commission. During this phase, the three copper sides of the cupola over the communion rail were removed. The quatrefoil designs were replicated with new copper and installed this past spring. The asphalt roof and failed copper flashings covering the sacristy roof and cloister hallway (connecting the parish house to the chancel end of the church) were removed. New copper flashings and a new slate roof were installed restoring the roof to its original 1880 appearance. The upper quarter of the main chimney for the church’s furnace, located along the church’s south transept wall by the Annunciation Window was repointed. The chimney was pulling away from the wall and the bricks in the upper portion had very little mortar left to hold them in place. While repointing the chimney, we discovered that the capstones along the whole south transept gable and the pinnacle above the Annunciation Window (which we later discovered was a never-used chimney) were shifting off the wall and leaning into the garth. It was decided to add their repointing into this phase of the restoration work due to its emergency status. By doing so, we were able to save on the cost of the scaffolding by not having to pay for the contractor to remobilize. However, adding the capstones and pinnacle did make this project go over budget by approximately \$140,000. The Finance Committee is working on ways to best cover this overage, ideally without having to take principle from the endowment. St. Stephen’s is grateful for the generosity of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts which contributed \$100,000; Earl and Yvonne Wing, who through their bequest, contributed \$100,000; the Massachusetts Historic Commission preservation funds, which contributed \$72,000 and to our faithful parishioners have made contributions to the Building Restoration Fund.

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY TEAM LAUNCHES “LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!” It’s October and speakers come to the lectern every Sunday to tell us why they pledge to St. Stephen’s. Soon, the Vestry’s letter asking each of us to pledge will arrive in the mail. Our response to the Vestry’s call to pledge generously determines the quality and shape of the ministry of St. Stephen’s in 2017. Please respond promptly to this holy invitation.

THE FAIR IS COMING! NOVEMBER 19 IS THE DAY! The Fair Leadership Team of Marilyn Cloran, Sally Gosselin, Lucinda McClain, Neil O'Donnell, Josephine Russo, Samantha Scolamiero, and Ruthanne Switzer seeks new members to help them involve, inspire, and coordinate. Please come to the **Fair Meeting at noon on Sunday, October 2 (and noon on Sunday, October 30)**. We need everyone to contribute to the Fair in some way☺ **In October, we need help soliciting donations, recruiting crafters, and selling raffle tickets.** Crafter registration forms, and solicitation letters and forms for donations and ads in the program book are available by email (ststephens@ststephenslynn.org) and in the Galahad Area. During October, cards will be available with suggestions of new places to solicit or for follow up with previous donors. And, please ask business owners you know as well as friends and family because the personal touch always is most effective. In addition, donate New Gifts, classic & costume jewelry, and items that could be used for raffles, auctions, and baskets. Balancing the St. Stephen's budget depends on successful fundraisers. Please help our Fair succeed in fun and fund raising.

OFFICE MANAGER LINDA MIDLAND MOVING ON. In early September, Linda Midland wrote: "After a great deal of thought and reflection I am resigning my position as *Office Manager* at St. Stephen's Church. Although I am proud of the contributions I have made over the past 3+ years I am not financially able to continue in a part time role. I have accepted a full time position with *The Beverly Children's Learning Center* and will be leaving St. Stephen's end of day September 21, 2016. I have learned a great deal over the past three years and have appreciated the support my family and I have received. Some of the people in this journey, including you and the rest of the vestry, have truly broadened my Christian horizons." St. Stephen's has been richly blessed by Linda's presence as the face and voice of St. Stephen's as people call and come to our church. We wish her Godspeed in her journey. The Wardens and Rector have posted the position and currently are gathering resumes and interviewing candidates. Although our Diocesan Intern Emily Shelton and a team of volunteers will help out in the office during the transition, please be patient with our processes and procedures of communication. Change is never easy!

NURTURING THE CONGREGATION

OCTOBER FORMATION & FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES. KNIT CLUB: All levels of knitters and crocheters are encouraged to join the spirited fellowship of the Knit Club on Tuesday evenings at 6:30—Contact, Debbie Potter. **BIBLE STUDY** on Wednesdays at 6:30 is perfect for beginners since we just started Genesis: "*In the beginning...*" **TEA & TALK ABOUT FAITH** on Thursday afternoons at 1:00 as we read and discuss short, spiritual reflections by Kathleen Norris. **SEWING CLUB:** Experienced and novice sewers are invited to bring mending or new projects to the Sewing Club on Sunday, October 2 after church—Contact, Charlotte Breckenridge.

DEEP DIVES IN LEARNING OCTOBER 1. On Saturday, October 1 please attend either the Diocesan Resource Day or the MCAN Training Retreat. **Diocesan Resource Day** offers dozens of workshops, which allow for sampling a variety of topics or going deep in one arena. **The MCAN Training Retreat** offers leaders from ECCO and other faith-inspired

groups across Massachusetts to gather to explore how we build power to transform the world starting with our communities. Sign up is required; transportation is available.

LIVING WORD WORSHIP: LET YOUR SHINE ON OCTOBER 2. The Living Word Worship Team and Stewardship Ministry Team have created a worship service around this year's stewardship theme: Let your light shine. The scripture readings, sermon conversation and prayers will invite us to discern how God needs us to let our light shine. For the first time we welcome Rachel Baldwin, one of our young adults from Gordon College, who will provide musical leadership at our Living Word Worship service. On the 2nd, Rachel invites people of all singing abilities to gather at 9:15am to rehearse the day's hymns.

HEALING PRAYER & PASTORAL CARE TEAMS MEET OCTOBER 6. The Pastoral Care and Healing Prayer Teams will gather at 10:30am on Thursday, October 6 to check-in, organize visits for October, and begin our reading of Atul Gawande's Being Mortal.

MEDITATE WITH THE MONKS. Join the Brothers for worship and supper on Tuesday, October 4. Cars will leave St. Stephen's at 4:15 and return about 8:00. On Saturday, October 15 we will attend "Healing Prayer", a workshop led by Brother Jonathan Maury. Cars will leave St. Stephen's at 7:45am. Please sign up for both events by Sunday, October 4 so that we can register with the Brothers and arrange transportation.

BELOVED COMMUNITY TEAM ENGAGES VOTERS & EACH OTHER OCTOBER 13 & 30. Thursday, October 13 our St. Stephen's- St. Andrew's Beloved Community Team will gather at 5:00 to join ECCO's GOTV voter engagement and education work during the last week in which people can register to vote on November 8. After a brief training offered by ECCO leaders, we will canvass neighborhoods until dark. At 7:00, we will reconvene at St. Stephen's for a simple supper and conversation about the work behind us and ahead of us. October 30 is PICO's National Voters' Sabbath. In the afternoon, members of the St. James, Cambridge Anti-Oppression Team will join us at St. Stephen's for neighborhood canvassing and conversations about the role of race in electoral politics. Feel encouraged to join the action and conversation for all or part of the evening.

JOIN THE CHOIR FOR GOSPEL SUNDAY ON OCTOBER 16. Saturday, October 15 at 10:00 and Sunday, October 16 at 8:45, come rehearse with our St. Stephen's Gospel Choir. If you want to offer a solo, please talk with Bruce Beecroft. If you want to sing, no robes are required, just come and join the fun. On the 16th, we hope our Gospel singing will add depth and dimension to the teens' presentation on their Underground Railroad Learning Trip.

OCTOBER 22 BISHOP BUD WILL CONFIRM JASMINE RUFFEN & KEVIN NEIL. St. Stephen's will head to the Cathedral on Saturday, October 22 at 10:30 for the Confirmation of Jasmine Ruffen and Kevin Neil. Everyone is welcome to attend this Diocesan celebration but, whether you can be with us at the Cathedral or not, please hold Jasmine and Kevin in your prayers and join our parish celebration on Sunday, October 23 at 10:00am.

BAPTISMS ON ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY—NOVEMBER 6. If you or someone you know is interested in baptism as we celebrate All Saints' Day, please complete a baptism registration form as soon as possible. Our Baptism Preparation Class will meet on Tuesday,

November 1 at 6:30pm. Please talk with the clergy or Irene Axelrod for more information. The next opportunity for baptism will be on Sunday, January 8, 2017 at 10:00am.

ST. STEPHEN'S YOUNG PEOPLE NEED YOU! At St. Stephen's we strive to create flexible opportunities for adults to share their gifts and time with the young people in our Church School, Acolyte Ministry and Youth Groups. We all know life is busy but we also know that children and teens need to interact with caring adults for their ongoing social and emotional development. You can serve our children and youth by co-teaching a Church School once a month, preparing a meal for OASIS, providing rides to BCH retreats and much more. Please speak with Rev. Sarah or Jason Cruz for more info.

HOSPITALITY TO CHILDREN, YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

CHURCH SCHOOL YEAR IS IN FULL SWING WITH EXCITING NEW ENERGY! In September students and teachers met together to create the Church School Covenant which will be presented at Living Word Worship on Sunday, October 2. This covenant describes how the students and teachers plan to work together as they explore Christian themes through cooking, Bible study, art, music etc... As with any covenant, these are serious promises and will require support from the entire congregation. On October 30 the SMT will visit with the Church School to teach a special lesson on Stewardship.

KIC MUSIC IS IN FULL SWING 4 DAYS A WEEK! The KIC Music after school program is already in full swing! The program began at full enrollment on Monday, September 12, with over 40 kids joining us every Monday – Thursday afternoon. We are also happy to have six children from St. Stephen's participating this school year. Each afternoon at KIC Music includes outdoor games, percussion ensemble, group piano lessons, and time to work on homework. To get a closer look (and listen) at what KIC kids are learning, check out their upcoming performances in November and December.

COMMUNITY DINNER FOR FAMILIES TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18. With fall comes the start-up of family community dinners. Though most attendees are KIC families, parish families are just as welcome. All ages can come to these very kid friendly events. The next family dinner on Tuesday, October 18, from 6:00-7:00 pm. Come right on down to the basement kitchen door so we know you're here.

WELCOME NEW & RETURNING ACOLYTES! The Acolyte Ministry is open to all youth in grades 6-12. Acolytes typically serve once a month and must be at church by 9:45am. There will be a mandatory training on Sunday, October 2, 12-2. Please see Rev. Sarah or Chris Trahan with any questions.

BE YOU MEETS TUESDAYS 3:30-5:30. The BE YOU LGBTQ Youth Group has begun its second year of weekly programming led by Jason Cruz and Rev. Sarah. The committed crew of teens who organized the LYNN YOUTH PRIDE EVENT are ready to begin planning for the LYNN YOUTH PRIDE EVENT for 2017. While you may not see the youth on Sunday mornings, St. Stephen's is their church so please keep them in your prayers as they struggle

with family and friends who don't accept their sexuality. If you're looking for proof that God is at work in the world, stop by and visit with our teens.

OASIS PREPARES UNDERGROUND RAILROAD PRESENTATION & GETS OUT THE VOTE.

On Sunday, October 16 the participants of the Underground Railroad Trip will present their experiences through music, spoken word, video presentation, and art pieces. The youth and chaperones look forward to sharing the ways in which our hearts were transformed by what we learned. Then on Saturday, October 22 OASIS teens and adults will join Bishop Alan and Bishop Doug (Diocese of Western Massachusetts) for a Pre-Election Walk and Talk from Northborough to Southborough.

YOUNG ADULTS GATHER FOR VOTER ENGAGEMENT & DINNER ON OCTOBER 11.

Tuesday, October 11 at 5:00, ECCO leaders will meet with young adults to discuss why voter education, engagement, and turn out matter for the upcoming elections. Around 5:30, we will head into the community to register and educate voters. By 7:00, we will move on to dinner during which we will catch up on life, and talk about motivating young adult voters. All 18 to 29 year olds are welcome at YA dinners, which happen on 2nd Tuesdays. For information, talk to Jason Cruz or Emily Shelton.

DEEPENING COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

WORK WITH ECCO TO BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE. Thursday, October 6 at 7:00 at St. Stephen's, come to ECCO's Essex County Sheriff Candidates' Forum. As part of the Jobs not Jails Coalition, ECCO hopes to focus the Sheriff conversation on alternatives to incarceration, access to substance use treatment, access to job and training, support of the Justice Reinvestment Act, family access, and regional placement for women. The Democratic and Republican candidates as well as independent candidates have been invited to the Forum. **Thursdays, October 13, 20, and 27 from 5:00 to 7:00, ECCO will lead voter education and engagement neighborhood walks.** If we want elected officials to listen to Lynn, they need to know that we will register and VOTE! **Sunday, October 30 is PICO's** (ECCO's National affiliation) **National Voter Sabbath.** We will invite worshippers to take the PICO Pledge to vote on November 8. In the afternoon, we will organize teams to engage and educate voters in our neighborhood. Lynn needs to vote!

PRE-CONVENTION GATHERING IN TOPSFIELD WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19 AT 7:00.

Our Diocesan Convention will be November 4-5 in Foxboro. The focus of Convention will be voting our new Mission Strategy. Come to Topsfield on the 19th to meet the candidates for various positions learn about the 2017 budget, and discuss the Mission Strategy proposal. Sign up for rides!

HELP THE HUNGRY IN LYNN. Fridays from 3:00 to 4:00, St. Stephen's gives away bags of groceries. Food donations, heavy lifting, and Friday Friends are all needed and appreciated. Sunday, October 25, we serve at My Brother's Table. If you can't join us at the Table, please bring in desserts we can share with the guests. Saturday, October 2 from 8:00-11:00, please join the monthly community food pantry in the St. Mary's parking lot at which the Boston Food Project distributes hundreds of pounds of food.

	October 2016					
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<u>SUNDAY SERVICES</u> 8 & 10am Worship in English 10am Worship in Kiswahili	 KIC Music Mon – Thurs 2:00 – 6:00pm					1 8:15am Community Food Pantry, Lynn 9-2pm DioMass Resource Day 9-5pm MCAN Training
2 Living Word Worship: Stewardship Noon Fair Meeting Noon Sewing Club 12-2pm Acolyte Training	3 7pm Stewardship Ministry Team 7-9pm: ECCO 8pm AA	4 3:30-5:30pm Be You 6:30pm Knitters' Group 7pm NA	5 6:30pm Bible Study	6 10:30am Pastoral Care and Healing Prayer Team Mtg. Noon Eucharist & Healing Prayers 1pm Tea & Talk 7pm Essex County Sherriff Candidates' Forum	7	8 10am Choir Rehearsal
9 Noon-1:30pm Women's Group	10 8pm AA	11 3:30-5:30pm Be You 6:30pm Knitters' Group 5-9pm Young Adult Voter Engagement and Dinner 7pm NA	12 6:30pm Bible Study	13 Noon Eucharist & Healing Prayers 1pm Tea and Talk 5-7pm GOTV 7pm St. Stephen's-St. Andrew's Beloved Community Team	14 3-4pm Food Pantry 6:30-9:30pm OASIS	15 8:30-12:30pm SSJE Healing Workshop 10am Choir Rehearsal
16 8 & 10am Underground Railroad Presentation 10am Gospel Sunday 12:15pm Vestry Meeting	17 8pm AA	18 3:30-5:30pm Be You 6-7pm Community Family Dinner 6:30pm Knitters' Group 7pm NA	19 6:30pm Bible Study 7-9pm Pre-Convention Forum, Topsfield	20 Noon Eucharist & Healing Prayers 1pm Tea & Talk 5-7pm GOTV	21 3-4pm Food Pantry	22 10am Choir Rehearsal 10:30am Confirmation at St. Paul's Cathedral Noon-6pm Youth Pre-Election Walk & Talk with MA Bishops
23 10am Confirmation Celebration 1-4pm My Brother's Table	24 8pm AA	25 3:30-5:30pm Be You 6:30pm Knitters' Group 7:30pm Stewardship Ministry Team 7pm NA	26 6:30pm Bible Study	27 Noon Eucharist & Healing Prayers 1pm Tea & Talk 5-7pm GOTV	28 3-4pm Food Pantry 6:30-9:30pm OASIS	29 10am Choir Rehearsal
30 Voter Sabbath Noon Fair Meeting	31 8pm AA 					