



Newsletter October 2017

“Serve One Another”

As a child I used to like to clasp my hands with my fingers tucked in and say, “Here’s the church; here’s the steeple (index fingers up), open the doors (thumbs open wide and hands flip up), and see all the people (fingers wiggle wildly).” Usually, my finger church was full but my people weren’t saying, “Peace be with you,” or “You are beloved,” or even “How are you today?” My church people always struggled for place and position—“Out of my way,” “Where are you going?” or “What are you doing?” The only other option seemed to be, “Open the doors and see no people (fingers folded out, palms empty).”

Remembering my childhood game, I began to wonder why I made my churches places of strife and struggle, not generosity and joy. Was it that, as a small person, I experienced church as a place where I was at risk of being crushed in the crowd? Or was it that my mother often listened to sermons with a critical ear, and voted all women slates for the Vestry when no women were nominated? Or was it the changing world of the 1960s?

Those currently reading Paul’s Letter to the Corinthians in the Daily Office might suggest that I was just acting out the weekly epistle readings I heard in church. After all, the Corinthians clearly brought their worldly ways into church. They compete; they form cliques; they disrespect each other; they spread rumors; they go against the teachings of the church; they undermine one another and their leaders; they forget to care for those in need; and they fail to support the work of the church.

In the first century and still today here at St. Stephen’s, our challenge is to be a place of generosity and joy. While the finger churches of my childhood offered only battling people or no people at all, God wants and needs our church to create space for compassion, collaboration, and community.

The Stewardship Ministry Team (SMT) chose as its Pledge Campaign theme this year, “Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.” (1 Peter 4:10) Rather than being like my finger church or the Corinthians, we need to live into this teaching from the First Letter of Peter. Together, we possess the time, talent, and treasure we need to do the work God has given us to do. Rather than holding back out of a sense of fear and scarcity, now is the moment to give with abundant joy. Now is the moment to honor the gifts we see in one another, to offer ourselves in service to God and the church, to support staff and elected leaders, and to pledge generously to finance the work of St. Stephen’s in 2018.

Throughout these October days, as leaves change color and fall from the trees and we live into transition at St. Stephen’s, may we remember the Collect we prayed for the 16th Sunday after Pentecost: “Grant us, Lord, not to be anxious about earthly things, but to love things heavenly; and even now, while we are placed among things that are passing away, to hold fast to those that shall endure; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” And remember, as Paul reminded the Corinthians, “Now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.”

JOIN US FOR HOMECOMING ON OCTOBER 1

Join us as we Celebrate our Participation in the Jesus Movement

THE FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN

Guest Preacher at 8:00 & 10:00: The Rev. Canon Bill Parnell

Baptisms at 10:00am

In worship and in conversation over lunch, we will be invited to reflect on

What makes St. Stephen's St. Stephen's?

What are the programs, priorities, practices, places, people that make us St. Stephen's?

Homecoming Lunch at Noon

Lunch is free but advance reservation is requested

STEWARDS OF RESOURCES

STAFF CHANGES AS WE DO THE WORK GOD HAS GIVEN US TO DO. While change is never easy, the staff and lay leaders of St. Stephen's are working hard to manage work flow, maintain programs, and respond to the pastoral needs of the community. Of course, seven funerals in mid-September did strain our human resources as we said farewell to Rev. Sarah, kicked off KIC After School, prepared for the Fair, and began the church program year. Please be gentle and generous with your leaders as we do all that we can to serve God, the congregation, and our community. To remind everyone, in September we created a new Director of Operations position held by Rachel Pfof; Rachel works 20 hours a week for Kids in Community (administering, organizing & fundraising) and 10 hours a week for the parish (establishing & maintaining administrative systems & structures). For the last month, Rachel has been juggling her new position as well as the Parish Administrator position. We hope to fill the new Parish Administrator position by mid-October. The Parish Administrator will answer phones and the door as well as doing regular office work Monday through Wednesday mornings 9-noon, Thursdays 9-1:00, and Fridays 9-2:00. Sheyla Veras is our new KIC Coordinator for After School and Summer Camp. Jason Cruz will return to halftime Youth Ministry work in October and Diocesan Intern Jamie Shore will work with him as they gather with high schoolers and middle schoolers on Friday evenings. On Sunday mornings, Jamie will work with Church School Superintendents Paul Whitcomb and Lucinda McClain guiding the Church School, and Nelson Woodfork Coordinating the acolytes. Of course, High School and Middle School Youth Groups, Church School, and KIC After School all could use more committed, adult volunteers.

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY TEAM LAUNCHES "SERVE ONE ANOTHER." 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 2018. Please respond promptly and prayerfully to this holy invitation.

VESTRY SUMMARY. September 17: James Liberge & teen mentors reported on KIC Summer Camp. Treasurer's Office has had a busy summer keeping up with payroll & expenses of KIC and Summer Learning, changing accounting procedures and software, and preparing to meet new audit requirements. Stewardship Ministry Team reported on theme "Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received." Vestry set 2017 pledge goals of \$120,000. Tim Potter provided building update: Chancel windows returned this week and look glorious; Graham Suite awaiting insurance authorization for completing flood damage repair, and bids are being received for new church sign and improved drainage around Anderson Building. Talked transition: Wardens meeting with Bishop & senior staff, Canon to the Ordinary Bill Parnell coming as Homecoming preacher and speaker, and Transitions Ministry Officer the Rev. Jean-Baptiste Ntagengwa preaching October 15 and meeting with the Vestry.

CHANCEL WINDOWS RETURN. In mid-September, our newly restored chancel windows returned and they look glorious. On September 24 Carolyn Scott, whose father Robert Simpson donated \$100,000 to restore the windows, and her family joined us for worship. At a time when we might gather members of Mr. Simpson's "Johnson Family," we plan to rededicate the windows. Please know that legacy gifts and bequests such as the Simpson gift are always welcome to fund special projects or to support the parish budget. Contact the Wardens or the Treasurer's Office if you want to explore making a gift.

BUILDING UPDATE. While we get restless, the Building Committee, Church Insurance, and our contractors are working to complete repairs made necessary by burst pipes in the Anderson Wing in March. We hope that the November Newsletter will celebrate the completion of repairs to the Graham Suite. The Building Committee is also soliciting bids to improve drainage at the far end of the Anderson Building, and to renovate our sign in the churchyard. A Diocesan Congregational development Grant is funding the new church sign.

THE FAIR IS COMING! NOVEMBER 18 IS THE DAY! The Fair Leadership Team of Marilyn Cloran, Sally Gosselin, Lucinda McClain, Neil O'Donnell, Josephine Russo, Ruthanne Switzer, and Sandy Wittrup seeks new members to help them involve, inspire, and coordinate. Please come to the Fair Meeting at noon on Sunday, October 8 (and noon on Sunday, October 29). We need everyone to contribute to the Fair in some way☺ In October, we need help soliciting donations, organizing the new Children's Fair, and selling raffle tickets. 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, please donate New Gifts, classic & costume jewelry, and items that could be used for raffles, auctions, and baskets. Sandy Wittrup is coordinating the Children's Fair—if you have a game, craft project, donation, or turn-out idea, please speak with Sandy. Balancing the St. Stephen's budget depends on successful fundraisers. Please help our Fair succeed in fun and fund raising.

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 continues to journey to the promise land with the Isarelites as we read Exodus. TEA & TALK ABOUT FAITH on Thursday afternoons at 1:00 as we read and discuss short, spiritual reflections.

COME MEET THE MONKS. Join the Brothers for worship and supper on Tuesday, October 3. Cars will leave St. Stephen's at 4:15 and return about 8:00.

HEALING PRAYER & PASTORAL CARE TEAMS MEET OCTOBER 5. The Pastoral Care and Healing Prayer Teams will gather at 10:30am on Thursday, October 5 to check-in, organize visits for October, and discuss chapter 4 of In Living Color (60-78).

JOIN THE CHOIR FOR GOSPEL SUNDAY ON OCTOBER 15. Saturday, October 14 at 10:00 and Sunday, October 15 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. Of course, the Choir is always eager to welcome new members and soloists!

TOWERS COMMUNION OCTOBER 17 AT 2:00. All are welcome to check out our elder housing building St. Stephen's Tower at 25 Pleasant Street as we gather for Communion on Tuesday, October 17 at 2:00pm.

COMMUNITY FAMILY DINNER OCTOBER 18, 6:00-7:00. The KIC Community invites all members of St. Stephen's to enjoy the food, fellowship, and talent of our after school program every 3rd Wednesday. You'll always be fed with food and sometimes drumming, drama, or poetry. Please sign up in the Galahad Area.

WOMEN'S GROUP OCTOBER 22 AT 12:30. Whether you went on retreat or you've never come to a Women's Group Gathering, join us October 22 at 12:30 for potluck lunch and conversation as we discuss spirit lifters, dream crushers, and life together.

BELOVED COMMUNITY TEAM MEETS ON OCTOBER 26 at 6:00. As we gather as Beloved Community, come at 6:00 with some food to share that speaks to who you are, where you come from, or what you need in this moment in time. Our formal conversation/ program will begin at 7:00 as we continue to explore race, racism, and white privilege.

BAPTISMS ON ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY—NOVEMBER 5. If you or someone you know is interested in baptism as we celebrate All Saints' Day and Rev. Jane wraps up her time at St. Stephen's, please complete a baptism registration form as soon as possible. Our Baptism Preparation Class will meet on Monday, October 30 at 6:30pm. Please talk with the clergy or Irene Axelrod for more information.

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, Youth Groups, and After School program. 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. Also, we really appreciate snacks for KIC After School (enough for 50 and we can give you lots of good ideas) and full meals for youth gatherings. If you want to explore possibilities, please speak with Rev. Jane, Rachel Pfost, or Jamie Shore.

HOSPITALITY TO CHILDREN, YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

CHURCH SCHOOL IS IN FULL SWING WITH EXCITING NEW ENERGY! The 2017-2018 Church School year is now underway! The first two Sundays the students, teachers, and Church School Superintendents met together to create the Church School Covenant, which they presented on September 24. As with any covenant, our young people made serious commitments to their classmates, teachers, and the community; they will need their families and the entire congregation to help them live into their promises. On October 29 the Stewardship Ministry Team will visit with the Church School to teach a special lesson on Stewardship.

KIC AFTER SCHOOL IS IN FULL SWING 4 DAYS A WEEK! KIC After School began a new year with long-time KIC staffer Sheyla Veras back as our new KIC Director. On September 11, Sheyla, Rachel, and our 5 Program Assistants as well as drumming instructor Brandon Mayes, Poetry Teachers Micheal Brown & Bonnie Bishop, and other specialists welcomed a lively community of 40-plus elementary schoolers to the program. Visitors and volunteers are always welcome. Come to the October Community Dinner or check in with Rachel to see how you can make a difference.

JASON IS ON HIS WAY BACK & TEENS ARE READY TO ROLL! Oasis gathers high school teens on 2nd and 4th Fridays from 6:30 to 9:00. Gathering with Jason, Jamie, Mr. Neil, Ms. Helen, and others teens are motivated to address issues of social justice, build community, and have fun hanging out together. Middle School youth gather on 3rd Fridays from 6:30 to 9:00 with Jason, Jamie, and known and yet to be voluntold adult helpers! Our Middle Schoolers are baking, volunteering, creating art, and otherwise building community so that they earn their right to go to the Middle School Retreat at BCH Camp November 17-19. And, of course, all teens are gearing up to help with the Fair and the CPPK Toy Drive. Whether you want to spend regular time with teens, feed teens, drive teens, teach a craft, lead a cooking adventure, or organize a community service project—our youth ministry needs you. Please let Jamie Shore know how you would like to be involved!

WELCOME NEW AND RETURNING ACOLYTES! The Acolyte Ministry is open to all youth who are in grades 6-12. Acolytes typically serve once a month and must be at church at 9:45am to put on robes and light candles. There will be a mandatory training on Sunday, October 8 from 12-2. Please see Jamie Shore or Nelson Woodfork with any questions.

DEEPENING COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

WORK WITH ECCO TO BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE. Join ECCO every Tuesday 5-8pm and every Sunday 3-7pm to gather signatures to put the \$15 Minimum Wage & Paid Family Leave on the ballot in 2018. You also can collect signatures on your own or talk with Jamie Shore to schedule a time to go out with her. The new Market Basket is a great place to collect signatures! On Tuesday, October 5 at 7:00 come to ECCO's monthly Strategy and Training Community Meeting. October 5 we will gather at Zion Baptist on Adams Street Extension behind Lynn English. On Thursday, October 19 at 6:30 Lynn residents are invited to a meeting with Police Chief Mike Mageary at Sacred Heart on Boston St. Be part of the St. Stephen's ECCO Team as we work for criminal justice reform, immigrant rights, and economic justice.

DEANERY ASSEMBLY OCTOBER 10 AT 6:00 AT ST. ANDREW'S, MARBLEHEAD. Program: The Rev. Anne Marie Hunter, Executive Director and Founder of Safe Havens, on what communities of faith are doing/can do to respond to domestic violence. Important Business: Elections of Clergy Co-Convener, Recording Secretary and Youth Diocesan Convention Representative. Nominations are being sought. Everyone is welcome but Diocesan Convention and Deanery Delegates are expected to attend.

PRE-CONVENTION GATHERING IN WAKEFIELD THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19 AT 7:00. Our Diocesan Convention will be Saturday, November 4 at the Cathedral. Come to Wakefield on the 19th to meet the candidates for various Diocesan positions, learn about the Mission Strategy-Inspired 2018 budget, and discuss the implementation of our new Diocesan Mission Strategy.

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. Tuesday, October 3 from 4:00 to 7:00, we serve at My Brother's Table with our fellow Episcopalians from St. Andrew's and St. Michael's in Marblehead. And start collecting non-perishable foods now for our Church School Pantry Food Drive, which will be gathered in classrooms throughout November and presented on Gratitude Sunday, November 19.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH KIDS IN COMMUNITY

