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AUGUST 2021

The Evangel

THE VELOCITY OF LIFE

You will see a lot from me in this issue of the Evangel. You may have heard that there is a lot going on in the world – again. I have had this recurring nightmare lately that I am working as a sports reporter for a never-ending tennis match for which, every ten seconds, I have to submit a report to my editor as to who is winning. After every one of my reports, this editor promptly chews me for the fact that the winning side seems to change every time the ball goes across the net to the other side of the court. Somehow it's my fault that the nature of tennis means the game changes constantly every few seconds ("Just tell me who wins and get it right!" he yells frequently). As such, a lot of my articles are about rapidly changing things over which, despite my best efforts, I have no control.



Despite the dizzying velocity of life bouncing back and forth, St. Stephen's continues to plow ahead. While we cannot predict what will happen in the weeks to come, St. Stephen's is committed to remaining in-person as much as possible while working to offer a variety of virtual and at-home resources for our parish family. STEWARDSHIP becomes

uniquely important as we attempt to return to familiar patterns and maintain connections with all of our people.

Two key changes are taking place. Both are staff additions that will enhance our ministry ability significantly. First, we have hired a new Director of Christian Education, Sherry Burchfield. She is already on board. Among her many gifts, her primary task is to coordinate with me to make sure that our CHURCH – and not just the children's ministries - are inclusive for all our young people. She is already hard at work with this. Second, with the Bishop's encouragement, we have called Ashton Sims to be our new curate (assisting priest). The opportunities of having a second full-time priest on our staff are endless as far as enhancing current ministry and opening up doors for new ones.

Later in the year, you will hear much from our Stewardship team as to the specific needs we will request to support this new ministry. I hope these additions make it very clear that, even with COVID back in our midst, we continue to move forward. It may not be a linear motion; it will take twists and turns. But the goal of good stewardship is to make sure that not only all of our people participate but all of us know how loved we are by God and how important each of us is to this parish.

I invite you to read ahead and see what the Spirit is doing with God's people here at St. Stephen's.

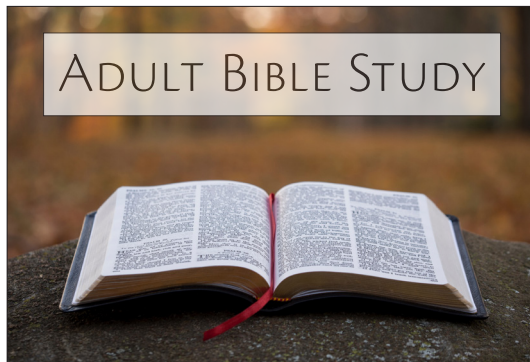
Christ's Peace, Bailey

FOCUS ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday Adult Bible Study will present a series, *The Parables of Jesus*, on Tuesday mornings at 10 A.M. in the library, beginning **August 3, 2021**. Everyone is invited to attend and participate in lively discussions. The group dismisses at 11 A.M., in time to attend the 11:30 A.M. Holy Eucharist and Healing Service.

~ *Jim Rousey*



SMALL GROUP THEOLOGY

Have you ever thought about all of the connotations of the spiritual words we use every day? Do you think about how you would explain the meanings of those words to a friend who was not churched? Do you think about how different faith traditions use the same words very differently? If these questions interest you, come join us for a deeper exploration of the meanings of these words and your experience with them.

We are offering a short, 6-week Small Group Theology class beginning August 15, 2021. There is no book, but please bring notebooks or pads of paper and something to write with because we will begin each exploration by writing about what these words mean to you personally. As people are willing, we will share as much or little of these writings as we are comfortable doing with each other. I look forward to seeing you there.

~ *Jamey Kennedy*

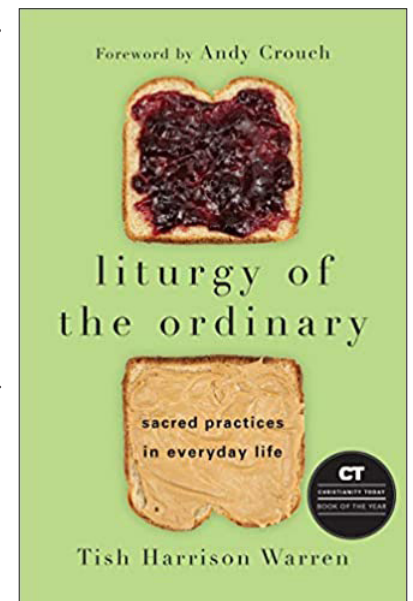
SUNDAY BOOK STUDY

Our Christian Education starts **August 15, 2021**. Please join us from 11:30 A.M. to 12:15 P.M. on Sunday mornings for a guided study through a wonderful book called *Liturgy of the Ordinary* by Tish Harrison Warren. Warren is an Anglican priest but also a wife and mom who shares her experience of finding deep connections with God through the mundane rituals of the day. From brushing her kids' teeth to the maddening frustration of losing her keys, each of these experiences invites her (and us through her wonderful storytelling) to a deeper understanding of our baptism, the Eucharist, and our rich life of daily prayer.

This study is perfect for all people, and it will be especially helpful for the many of us who live at a frenetic pace due to our jobs, families, and all of our other daily responsibilities.

You will find your faith affirmed, deepened, and expanded to include not just the "religious" experiences of church and community but the regular rituals of our daily routine that invite us to a greater awareness of and dependence upon God.

The book is readily available online both in print and digital forms. Please order a copy and begin reading ahead! If you need any assistance in getting a copy, please contact the Parish Office. We have a few copies on hand that you may purchase for \$9.



FOCUS ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

It is the Mission of Christian Education at St. Stephen's church to encourage spiritual growth in our children through the **history and tradition** of the Episcopal church, sharing God's love through ministry, participation in the church liturgy, study of scripture, and caring participation in the church community. In the 2021-2022 school year we offer 3 programs.

NURSERY: NEWBORN TO 36 MONTHS

Our nursery is open for infants to children up to 36 months! Childcare is available in the nursery from 9:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.. We have a bright, safe place for our littlest members to play and be cared for while parents can participate in worship and Christian Education programs after the service. Feel free to visit the Nursery, located on the ground floor, down the hall from the elevator.

CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

For children who are in pre-K, kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades, we offer a fabulous curriculum called Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Linda Twohig is looking forward to seeing you and your children at our first class **Sunday, August 15, 2021.**

EPISCOPAL CHILDREN'S CURRICULUM

We are super excited to be offering the Episcopal Children's Curriculum (ECC) to our 3rd, 4th and 5th graders class for fall 2021 and into 2022. This curriculum was developed at Virginia Theological Seminary and is described as **biblically based and liturgically oriented.**

The ECC curriculum addresses each of the 3 responses required for Episcopal children by the Children's Charter for the Episcopal Church:

1. Nurture of the Child
2. Ministry to the child
3. Ministry of the child.



The ECC offers a 3-year cycle of rich and dynamic teachings including Old Testament themes, New Testament themes, Church themes and the Sacraments. This year, we will focus on Worship.

EPISCOPAL YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

The Episcopal Youth Fellowship (EYF) fall session begins on **Sunday, August 15, 2021.** Following the 10:00 a.m. service, EYF participants will be asked to pick-up their lunches in the Parish Hall and gather in the Youth Room for Sunday School. We are combining the Middle and Senior High School Sunday School program, which will be facilitated by Fr. Bailey (roughly 25 to 30 minutes). EYF will follow Sunday School (roughly beginning at noon) and will end at 2:00 p.m. The fall agenda will be emailed to parents and participants in the near future. We will also email weekly meeting and activity reminders. We are excited about this year's program and hope that your children will be participating. Encourage them to bring their friends. Routine activities will include activities at the church, movies, and hiking (weather permitting). Some local service projects are being planned as well as KEY (Knoxville Episcopal Youth) group meetings.



~Craig Brent, Caleb & Molly Justice

UPDATED COVID PROTOCOLS

We are excitedly moving into the launch of our in-person programs, but the recent arrival of the Delta variant of COVID-19 into our area and our parish has disrupted those plans – without cancelling them. Here are a few updates you need to know for what to expect going forward:

- Once again, **MASKS ARE MANDATED** for inside the building both on Sundays and for any activity at the church during the week. Like you, I have enjoyed NOT wearing them everywhere over the last few months. But the positivity rate in Anderson County and the direct impact on St. Stephen's already has made mask-wearing a necessity once again for awhile. I remind you that the reason we wear masks is both to protect ourselves but even more so to protect the vulnerable among us. As the Delta variant seems to be hitting children much harder, we have a responsibility to be mindful of those among us who either are not vaccinated or are vaccinated but still susceptible due to health concerns.
- For the duration of our mask mandate, **OUR PARISH-WIDE LUNCHESES ARE POSTPONED**. For both the 7:45 and 10:00 services, WE WILL STILL HAVE COFFEE served following each service. Please feel free to sit and enjoy a cup of coffee in the parish hall, knowing that "mask-sliding" can be done a little more easily between sips of coffee than it can over a meal.
- FOR MEALS FOR OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES, parents will soon be hearing about ways in which we can do meals for them within their classrooms. One of the necessities of having Sunday School around 11:30 is that our kids will need to eat! We will allow kids and their teachers to eat lunch or snacks in their classroom space. More information to come.
- Once again, **IF YOU HAVE A COUGH, FEVER, EXCESSIVELY RUNNY NOSE, OR ANY SYMPTOMS THAT MAY BE SUSPICIOUS, DO NOT COME TO CHURCH. IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH ANYONE WHOM YOU KNOW HAD COVID WHEN YOU SAW THEM, DO NOT COME TO CHURCH UNTIL YOU HAVE RECEIVED A NEGATIVE REGULAR COVID TEST** (Rapid Tests are not particularly reliable indicators). Please do your part to keep everyone safe.
- A few people have approached me about continuing the outdoor service. For now, I want to leave the schedule as we have planned – inside at both 7:45 and 10. However, if you are interested in having an outside, spoken service, let me know! If there is enough interest, I will consider adding that as an additional (temporary) 3rd service. This would NOT take the place of the proposed Sunday night service for which we are about to begin initial planning conversations. It would be a simple, no-music, Rite II Eucharist outside for a short duration.
- One last thing – I have granted special dispensation to the WOW (Walk-Over Wednesdays) to allow for lunches to be served to the high school students beginning August 11. Two factors: 1) there is a great need to reestablish this ministry, as it is not only a service to the juniors and seniors, but we have discovered that there are several students who rely on this ministry for a hot meal every week; and 2) our cooking teams feel safe as long as they are masked. On good weather days, we will encourage the students to sit outside. On days where they need to be inside, we will require masks in the building until they sit down to eat.

I cannot give you a timeline except to say that, when I see our local positivity rate going down and cases no longer prevalent at St. Stephen's, I will remove the mandate. In the meantime, your cooperation in this is the key to allowing us to remain in person. The last thing I want to do is to go back fully virtual, but we must return to a stricter level of caution for a period to prevent that from happening. Please don't hesitate to contact me directly at 251-604-1705 or revnorman1011@gmail.com if you have any questions about these policies.

~ Bailey

THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

Credit goes to Bob Dylan for this title. Unfortunately, none of his lyrics speak directly to us and our “changin’ times” or I would be quoting them.

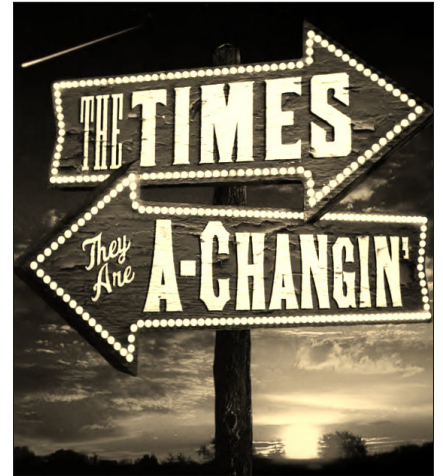
But, yes, St. Stephen’s times are a-changin’... again. As you are all well aware, service times have bounced around in order to keep us safe from COVID. We’ve enjoyed the outdoor services which kept us protected during the height of the pandemic, but now it is time to move inside.

On **August 15, 2021**, our Sunday service schedule will change in order to provide Christian Formation opportunities for all ages. On Sunday Holy Eucharist will be offered at 7:45 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. followed by a variety of educational opportunities.

This new schedule is different from any I’ve experienced during my 30+ years at St. Stephen’s, but I have seen it work successfully at my previous parish. I imagine it’ll seem odd at first, but this past year-and-a-half has shown us we are adaptable and open to change.

So, pick your service time of choice and then join your church family for Christian Education. I look forward to seeing you there!

~ *Judith Delaney, Senior Warden*



Worship & Christian Education Schedule: August 15, 2021

- 7:45 A.M.** Holy Eucharist Rite II spoken service in the Nave
- 9:00 A.M.** Coffee and Refreshments in the Parish Hall
Choir Rehearsal in the Nave
- 10:00 A.M.** Choral Eucharist Rite II in the Nave (Nursery Provided)
- 11:30 A.M.** Christian Education for All Ages (including Nursery)

“BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?” HE ASKED. “WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?”

Every now and then, a phone call will completely stop you in your tracks. On a random call recently, a woman asked me about the Episcopal church, and how is it different from the Baptist Church. (*Eek! Talk about a deer-in-the-headlights moment!*) I started out by explaining that our services were “liturgical”, then described what our services are like...and then I stopped. Our worship services are only a fraction of what we do, so I shared our most basic beliefs: that every person is welcome, no matter where they are on their spiritual journey. We believe that every person is a beloved child of God, and we are here to walk with them on their journey to get to know and love Jesus. This seemingly out-of-the-blue phone call helped *me* distill what it means to be a Christian and an Episcopalian. So, I’m passing this question on to you! As Jesus asks his disciples in Matthew 15, “But what about you? Who do you say I am?”, I invite you to answer a similar question: Who do you say we are?



~ *Elizabeth Pack*

NEW FACES AT ST. STEPHEN'S



Hello St. Stephen's! Allow me to present myself. My name is Ashton Sims, and in the next few weeks I will be joining you all as St. Stephen's next curate. I grew up in Decatur, Alabama and attended the University of Alabama where I graduated with a bachelor's degree in history and religious studies. It was at Canterbury Chapel that I joined the Episcopal Church in 2013, and it was through that place that I heard the first inklings of a call to the priesthood. Most importantly, however, Canterbury is where I met Anna, and it was at that church where we were wed in October of 2017.

After college I attended the School of Theology at Sewanee where I discovered a love of the works of St. Thomas Aquinas and J.R.R. Tolkien, as well as a deep appreciation of the riches of the Daily Office. While at Sewanee I received a Griffin Fellowship which afforded me the opportunity and privilege to study at St. George's College in Jerusalem. From there I moved to Knoxville where I completed a chaplain residency at UT Medical Center, and I have continued to work there in various capacities.

As far as personal interests are concerned, I have been a lifelong gamer, an avid podcast listener, and from an early age I developed a love of fantasy and science-fiction literature. I am also deeply interested in liturgy, biblical studies, and the Christian mystical tradition. Anna and I share a mutual love of camping, craft beer, giving our cat Thecla treats, and taking our dog Pip anywhere we can get away with it. Above all, we are absolutely ecstatic to begin this stage of our life and ministry with you all, and we look forward to officially becoming a part of the St. Stephen's family.

ASHTON SIMS' ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25 @ 6 PM, ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL, KNOXVILLE

It would be a great show of support for Ashton and Anna if St. Stephen's parishioners could be present for his ordination. You are welcome to drive yourself, but parking is limited. If you would like to carpool, please contact Fr. Bailey and let him know that you are interested in attending the ordination.

MEET SHERRY BURCHFIELD, DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



My story begins in 1953 Biloxi, Mississippi where I was born, relinquished by my natural mother, and adopted by my adoptive parents. I was raised as an "air force brat" with lots of moves and an early stay in Evreux, France. I spoke French before I spoke English.

I graduated from the University of Tennessee 1973 with a Bachelor of Science degree and thoughts of attending medical school. After working at UT hospital, I realized that medicine was not my calling.

I was then offered an opportunity to tutor adolescents who were in-patients at a psychiatric hospital. It was there that I discovered the joy of seeing the face on a student who finally "got it." I returned to UT and was certified by the state in secondary Math and Science. My teaching career began. I went on to earn my Master of Education degree and an Education Specialist degree from Tennessee Technological University.

continued on page 7...

FR. BAILEY WELCOMES NEW STAFF

I can't tell you how excited I am to welcome Ashton and Anna with us beginning in September! Their first official Sunday with us will be September 5. The Bishop dropped this possibility out of the blue to me in early July. I am incredibly thankful for the Vestry's support and unbridled enthusiasm in making the commitment to bring Ashton on board.

For the many of you not familiar with Episcopal lingo, a curate is a person who has curacy. I could stop there as a bad joke. But going on ... A curacy is essentially a training assignment for a person right out of seminary. It's like a physician's residency. He will really be doing ministry. Once he is ordained, he will be a real priest. But the curacy is a time for a new priest to experiment, learn things in the "field" that they don't teach in seminary, and have more directed supervision of a mentoring priest. A curacy also is fixed in duration – in this case, 2 years. It is a tremendous blessing that the diocese provides nearly half of the curate's compensation during those two years, and we couldn't do it without this financial subsidy. And it is a great honor and show of respect for a parish to be assigned a curate, as you obviously don't want a curate to go get training in a place that is not doing good ministry!

While we are still drawing up the parameters of his duties, Ashton's gifts and interests lay especially in Christian formation and development of liturgy. These are two areas where his skills will prove invaluable as we reshape our adult formation and potentially add a new service down the road. Anna, who is a forester by trade, also has a deep love and passion for the church. I know she is looking forward to exploring ways in which she can be involved as a member here.

Please see the note about the invitation to his ordination!

I am also thrilled to be welcoming Sherry Burchfield as our new Director of Christian Education! Sherry brings a wealth of educational experience and enthusiasm to her new position. Her office is located at the top of the stairs from the "red doors" entrance! Please stop by and welcome her!

~ *Bailey*

...*Sherry Burchfield, continued*

During those years I was blessed with three children respectively in 1978, 1980 and 1990. I am extremely proud of all three. They have in turn blessed me with 5 grandchildren. The best vocation I have ever had is as "NaNa."

I have considered myself an advocator and educator of children throughout my adult life. And now God has blessed me with the opportunity to advocate for and teach the children and St. Stephen's Episcopal church. I am always available for thoughts, comments, and discussion regarding Christian Education. I look forward to the upcoming year as an opportunity for growth and change.

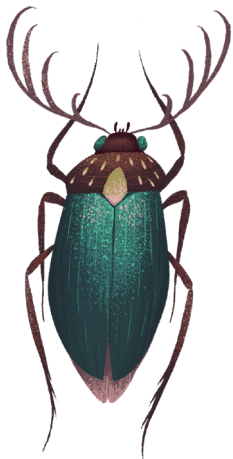
~ *Sherry Burchfield, Director of Christian Education*

August Celebrations



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 8/2 Arthur Frost
- 8/3 Julie Weatherford
- 8/5 Matthew Cox
Philip Pack
- 8/6 Glenna Derby
Camille Mauk-Olson
Jacob LaRose
- 8/7 Hella Peterson
- 8/9 Pat Wykoff
- 8/11 Diane Sams
Anna Berven
- 8/12 Catherine Graves
- 8/13 Alan Liby
- 8/17 James Henry Norman
- 8/20 Chuck Estes
Mary Lou Murphy
Chuck Kirk
- 8/21 Blynn Prince
- 8/22 Barbara Bovee
- 8/25 Steve Herbes
- 8/26 Tatum Cavender
Ellis Cavender
- 8/26 Olivia Cox
- 8/29 Brennick Aaron
- 8/31 Britton Petersen



AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 8/23 Eric & Miranda Miller
- 8/27 John & Mary Lou Murphy
- 8/29 Elwood & Rosalyn Gift
- 8/31 Richard & Barbara Neill

A WOMAN FOR ALL SEASONS

On July 11, 2021, we bid a bittersweet farewell to a very dear, longtime member of St. Stephen's, Judy Kidd. For those who weren't able to attend her farewell reception, please enjoy this delightful poem, written by Judy DiGregorio, for the occasion.

What can't one say about Judy?

She always did her duty.

She cooked, she played, she loved, she prayed

Her support did not fade, nor her beauty.

Her interests were many, her talents were plenty.

She always pitched in, never moody.

She enjoyed discussions, ignored repercussions,

A lass for all seasons was she.

Creative and funny, her bazaars earned much money

Supporting our missions and church,

Quite well attended, we were sad when they ended,

But no one was left in a lurch.

A woman of substance, a woman of God,

She's supported this church through the years strong and proud.

Though our hearts grow heavy as her exodus looms

Do not despair, we will see her on Zooms!

by Judy DiGregorio

WHERE GOD IS SEEN, LOVE IS FELT, LIVES ARE CHANGED!



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