

St. Stephen's Herald

✦ *St. Stephen's Episcopal Church serves Christ as an inclusive, progressive community where peace, social justice and faith converge in our worship and urban ministries.* ✦

June 2017

Sunday Worship 10 AM – Communion with Music

Sunday June 11th

Graduation Celebration and Last Day of Sunday School

It's hard to believe but Te'Vanni Davidson and Kyle Tingling are graduating from high school and heading off to college in the fall! Please join us as we celebrate with them and acknowledge their accomplishments. We'll also be celebrating the ending of another Sunday School Year.

Seeds of Faith Garden

Georgia has been working a bit, but more needs to be done to get the beds ready for planting! Join her starting Monday May 15th –

- ☼ Mondays 6:30-7:30 pm
- ☼ Thursdays 4 – 6 pm
- ☼ Sundays after church

Bring your favorite work gloves and hand tools!



First Sunday

The pastor's discretionary fund is used to help those from the neighborhood who come to the church in need, most often a type of assistance not available from the usual agencies or programs. On the first Sunday each month, any loose cash in the offering plate goes into that fund. Please be generous if you are able.

Altar Flowers

There are no regular memorials/celebrations during May and most of June.

If you would like to commemorate a friend or family member, please get in touch with Elaine in the church office. The standard amount is \$40, and should please be paid in advance.

Sunday Supper this Summer

Your gifts of bar soap and juice boxes would be greatly appreciated! Recycle your plastic shopping bags with us!

June 12

Episcopal Senior Life 21st Annual Golf Tournament

Join ESLC for their 21st Annual Golf Tournament on Monday, June 12, 2017 at Shadow Lake and Eagle Vale Penfield/Fairport.



Special Guest Emcee:

Brett Davison, New10NCB evening news anchor

Online registration at www.EpiscopalSeniorLife.org. For more information, contact Jennifer Rougeaux at jrougeux@EpiscopalSeniorLife.org or 546.8439 x3160

Proceeds will support rehabilitation services enhancements at ESLC sites for those being served through Episcopal Senior Life Communities.

Who's Up... in June

The Ministry Schedule is on the website, or refer to the copy that was in the mail.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED PARISH ACTIVITIES

Holy Eucharist: Sundays @ SS	10:00 AM
Mindful Meditation: Tuesdays @ SS	7:00 PM
Weekday Eucharist: Tues. & Thurs. @ TS	12:05 PM
The Sewing Work Shop: Saturdays @ SS	10 AM-2 PM
St. Stephen's Sunday Supper @ SS	1:00-2 PM
3 rd , 4 th , & 5 th Sunday	

Prayers for Our Parish Neighborhood and Community

Please keep these people in your daily prayers:

Jim Fallesen, Ann Cavallo, Shelia Morse, Jim Ahearn and family Jason Mills, Joan Gardner, Lynne & Brian McNulty, Kathy Robinson, Doris Schrader, Dennis Price, Maelee Bowman, The Sullivan family, Tom Bohrer, Kathy Clarke, Karen Witkowicz, Debbie Bonomo, Rachael Bisson, Karen Prave, Elizabeth Robinson, Michelle Flowers; Amber Worthington, Beverly Kluge,. Virginia Rockwell, Joe and Jessie & family, Mary Cleary, Jesse Alston, and Kristen Kinsella Virginia Rockwell, Joe and Jessie & family, Mary Cleary, Jesse Alston, and Kristen Kinsella.

Those serving in our armed forces: Joseph Scheidt, Jason Brown, & Jeff Fallesen.

Those Celebrating Birthdays: Abigale Nickoloff (6/6), Brian Kinsella (6/7), Aram Partrick (6/8) Josh Farnum (6/10), Margaret Sullivan (6/10); **and those celebrating Anniversaries.**

Readings for Sunday, June 4

Pentecost

1: Acts of the Apostles 2:1-21 Psalm 104:25-35, 37b
2: 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 G: John 20:19-23

Readings for Sunday, June 11

Trinity Sunday

1: Genesis 1:1-2:4a Psalm 8
2: 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 G: Matthew 28:16-20

Readings for Sunday, June 18

2 Pentecost [Proper 6]

1: Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7) Psalm 166:1, 10-17
2: Romans 5:1-8 G: Matthew 9:35-10:8(9-23)

Readings for Sunday, June 25

3 Pentecost [Proper 7]

1: Genesis 21:8-21 Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17
2: Romans 6:1b-11 G: Matthew 10:24-39

From the Pastor –

At our recent vestry meeting, I challenged the leadership of St Stephens to start asking the deceptively difficult question: Why? Why do we have, want and need a church across the corner of Woodbine and Chili in the 19th Ward? Why do we do and value the practices and traditions we hold dear, and what makes us compelled to share them with others? Why do we have an inclusive, participatory, progressive community committed to peace, faith and social justice? Why?

I'd like to invite you to join this practice. And as alluded, it's much tougher than it sounds.

A little background: I found this question incredibly transformative when I was away a few months back, training new mission developers for the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). The week centered on a TED Talk by author Simon Sinek called, "The Power of Why" (google it to watch for yourself!). In it, Sinek claims that people "don't buy what you are offering, but rather why you are doing it."

The mistake many of us is make is simply describing the what and the how of what we offer - end results, like "we have great worship on Sunday," or, "we offer Sunday Suppers two times a month," or even, "we are a welcoming and inclusive family here." These are all amazing whats, and they are how we live out our mission, our why. But on their own, they are not unique or compelling - many other organizations do these too (thank God!). What is it about St Stephens that makes it worth investing in?

Sinek uses the example of Apple Computers. He first describes the "backwards way" most companies sell their computers, giving the following sample sales pitch:

"We make great computers. They're user friendly, beautifully designed, and easy to use.

Want to buy one?"

There is a what and a how, but no compelling why. Apple, however, like all influential leaders and successful companies, starts with why:

"With everything we do, we aim to challenge the status quo. We aim to think differently.

Our products are user friendly, beautifully designed, and easy to use. We just happen to make great computers.

Want to buy one?"

Apple's not just trying to make good computers. They want to change the way things are. People buy into that movement. It's why they rule the industry.

OK, so the whole "start with why" thing isn't always true, nor is it the only way to do business or talk about church. But, I do think it's a really helpful spiritual practice for us as a community. Because it forces us to look behind familiar and even well-worn traditions - "this is how we've always done it!" - and rediscover new ways of telling old stories. It's not about getting rid of the old stuff. It's a way to celebrate what has worked by telling a more compelling story.

An example we've come up with recently: choir robes. Why do we have a choir, and should they wear robes, and sit up in the special seating? The usual explanation I was given as a kid in church: the choir is one of our program offerings that helps teach people music and enriches our worshipping life together. Which are great reasons! I would not still be in church if it wasn't for the adults in choir who embraced me and gave me a place to belong.

But it's not the why. I started thinking about this as I was subbing for Rob last Sunday. My pastor's alb has baggy sleeves, making it difficult to play the right notes. We were really pressed for time before worship to both practice and for me to get ready to preside and preach. Surely, the "why" must be that choirs are needed to take the load off the pastor, and to give more lay participation, and the robes are there to make music making easier. Right?

But there's still a deeper why. That deeper why, which includes all of the great hows and whats mentioned, is this: God created the world good. God gave us bodies and souls, and God made us so that our greatest delight is to have intimate relationship with God. When we sing together in community, we don't just make nice sounds and feel good - we participate in the co-creative life of the Triune God, and so join God in proclaiming that this world is very good.

Because we believe music is a gift from God that enables us to tap into the very reason of our existence, of course we want robes that make music

making as easy as possible, we want some musicians who are willing to be servants to lead the community and make it easier to sing, and of course, we want our worship to be a reflection of the beatific vision in which all of creation will be resurrected and renewed in worship of God, and to give ourselves and the world a foretaste of the feast to come.

So, we have a choir. And robes. And also, we moved the choir closer to the community, but kept them as a distinct order within the congregation, in order that they might be more effective leaders, and that we might all share in their ministry, which helps us all connect to God and to each other more.

In simple terms: if someone asks why those people stand up front in funny robes, we might say, "we believe music is a divine gift that connects us the source of being in God and each other - and we really value that, so they're there to help us really enjoy God. And, its also sounds beautiful, creates friendships, and makes my heart happy. That's why we've always valued having a choir."

I like how that "why" explanation, far from disbanding the choir, actually renews our sense of wonder, mystery, and mission around this amazing gift of our Episcopal tradition. I like that it not only invites me to think and say more - I also think it would be really compelling to some contemplating whether to make St Stephens their new spiritual home.

That's just my take. I think we can make this a kind of prayer practice, a discipline of discernment. Why do we celebrate liturgical seasons? Why do colors in the sanctuary matter? Why DO we think its important to be a family church where neighborhood children and hungry brothers and sisters and you and me are welcomed without question?

Why do we have a church on the corner of Woodbine and Chili?

I invite you to join the Vestry in experiencing your life at St Stephens through this lens this month. Ask why - not so we can subtract, undermine, or undo. But so we can enjoy, celebrate and share even more passionately the gifts God has given us in this community where people matter to God, and so we make them matter to us.

- *Matthew*