

ST. STEPHEN'S WITNESS

ST. STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

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ALIVE IN CHRIST 1881 - 2012

MARCH 2012



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*Lenten Series
and Soup Suppers
beginning
Thursday March 1st
at 6:00 PM
"A Christian Perspective
on Aging"*

*There is a sign-up sheet to prepare soup
and to attend.
Please note: at least four (4) soup cooks are
needed per evening.*



Jeffrey's Journal

Isn't this a busy time? Not only has Lent arrived, with all we normally do during this season, but it is a time of transition from our current location, and a time of big decisions about the future. Everything is in flux, and as excited as we are about the future, most of us are anxious about all there is to do.

God has provided so abundantly for us that He has given us more options to consider than we can easily sort out. Why is He doing this? It is partly because He loves us, and wants us to know of His abundance. And I think there is another reason: He wants us to spend time with Him, discerning what His will is for us. Where will we be? How will our ministries and activities change? Knowing Christ, what new ways will we make Him known to others? How big a commitment does God want us to make, personally and corporately, as we prepare to make the leap to a new church home?

There is much to decide, and much to communicate. In the midst of all this, emotions are high. My constant prayer is that we will be wise and will readily discern God's will, and that we will remain unified in our vision, our love for one another, and our commitment to what God is doing with us. The vestry is very much aware of the need to communicate with the congregation as to what is going on, and what is decided. Please trust them to act in the best interests of the entire congregation.

In Jeremiah 29:11, God said to the Hebrew people in exile, "I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." He says the same to us. I recently asked one of our

prayer ministers to pray about some difficult aspects of all this that were troubling me. She later reported that she spent a great deal of time in prayer before the Lord, and He gave her this word:

1. You did the right thing.
2. I will take care of you.
3. The best is yet to come.

I found this greatly encouraging, coming in the midst of the fray. And I am greatly encouraged and challenged by the next two verses in Jeremiah 29, which we hear less often than God's promise to prosper us and give us a hope and a future: "Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:12-13) Maybe that is why the Lord has put us in this circumstance during Lent—we are accustomed to spending more time with Him in prayer and discernment during Lent than at any other time of year.

So this short issue of the newsletter is not filled with revealing news to answer all your questions about the future. But the next one will probably have a lot more to report. Hang in there, stay together, be patient, trust your leaders, and pray: seek the Lord with all your heart, and He will bless us. The best is yet to come.

Yours in Christ,
Jeffrey O. Cerar, Rector





Dear Friends,

Thank you for the countless ways in which you helped the family say goodbye to Bob. Tad and the Fishermen had one of their meetings on our front porch and Bob loved every second they were there.

The Youth Group sent to Florida so many cards, which they had made, they almost covered two walls of the hospital room. Judy and Stan spent more time in Orlando than they spent in Lakeland.

Jeff, thank you for the beautiful celebration of Bob's life.

To Dixie and our wonderful choir, thank you for the perfect choice of hymns, I am sure Bob sang with us.

Ladies, the reception at Historic Christ Church was lovely.

Thank you, one and all.

Sincerely,

Susie, Ned, Bruce, Rusty, Bertie, and George

Dear Extended Family of St. Stephen's:

Your cards and prayers for me during my hospital visit and recovery were very assuring. I thank God for your love and support.

Laddie Townshend

NEWCOMERS' CLASSES

Newcomers' Classes
and Confirmation/Reception Preparation

Sundays at 9:00 AM

Beginning February 20

in the Adult Classroom

Everyone is invited

Feb. 19: Who is Jesus, and
Why do We Worship Him?

Feb. 26: What is Anglicanism?

March 4: The Book of Common Prayer,
a Priceless Resource

March 11: Sacraments

March 18: What is St. Stephen's All About?



**A LOOK
at the
BUDGET**

2011 FINANCIAL REPORTS

As mentioned at the December 11th Congregational meeting, you can request a copy of the church's year-end financial reports when the final numbers are completed. They are available now; just contact me, and I'll be happy to get them to you. Also, if there are questions about the reports, I'll be available.

Betty Dillingham
Treasurer

SENIOR WARDEN REPORT



We are going through that time in the moving process when events and their schedules change by the hour. If the changes did not cause so much anxiety and extra work,

they would be funny. Next week we will probably laugh about this week's surprises.

During this challenging time, I am finding how very important the Bible is to us. I hear Bible classmates and church members quoting verses that seem to have been written just for us in our present circumstances. I encourage you to read the Bible when events, rumors and even facts test and upset you. I also encourage you to talk with vestry members to determine the truth of a rumor or story before repeating it.

Yesterday we studied Mark 8:1-21 during the Hull Neck Bible Study. After feeding the 4,000 hungry folks who had not eaten for 3 days, Jesus and the disciples went to another place and met the Pharisees and some of Herod Antipas's court people. The second meeting was the direct opposite of the wonderful feeding experience because the Pharisees were testing Jesus' faith by requesting a sign from Heaven. Jesus ended that meeting with, "Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly, I tell you, no sign will be given to it." They left immediately and started across the sea in their boat.

The disciples had forgotten to bring bread except for one small loaf and soon engaged in the "blame game" forgetting everything Jesus had taught them about love and caring for each other. Jesus interceded rather strongly to get their attention and to focus them on their mission—things far beyond the importance of a loaf of bread. As a group, we decided that if these events all occurred in one day, Jesus certainly had a long and trying one. But there is solace in remembering that Jesus often experienced testing, frustration and misunderstanding. He does understand when we are tested and He will always be near when we need Him.

In Christ,
George



Meet Ed Ulfing who recently joined St. Stephen's. Ed was born in Norfolk, Va., and shortly after his birth his family moved to San Diego, Ca. His family moved around a lot because his father was in the U.S. Navy.

Ed has worked as an auto mechanic, a laborer and then as a brick layer. While on the job back in 1990, the scaffolding he was on slipped and he fell into an elevator shaft. He remembers asking God to help him as he was falling down the shaft. Ed broke his back and was in the hospital for six weeks, but he was alive! He thought for sure he was going to die.

Now that Ed is retired he enjoys poking through scrap metal and other stuff looking for things to recycle. He says it keeps him busy and it's also another source of income.

Ed says he has been an Episcopalian for many years, but felt he could not accept the new theology of the Episcopal Church. He resigned from his former church and started looking for a new one. He told me he was seeking a church that would speak the Word of the Lord. He had visited St. Stephen's back in 2005. Last year he came to the Strawberry Festival and he remembered how nice everyone was and came back the next Sunday. He found the church he had been looking for!

Welcome to St. Stephen's, Ed.

Suzy Norman

Statements of Thankfulness From The Women of St. Stephen's

It is impossible to thank God for one thing, for He has lavished us with gifts, but the best of these is our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom we have life and being.

I am thankful for God's grace.

I'm thankful for loving parents who were exemplary models of mature Christians in our household.

I am thankful for my community of faith, brothers and sisters to pray with, and the many opportunities to do so. *Constance McDearmon*

I am thankful for my loving husband and my loving Christian family at St. Stephen's. I praise You Lord, for Your power and glory and for this congregation of loving Christians who have helped to make my life complete. *Charlaine Andrulot*

I thank God (and Charlotte Hundley) for bringing Bob and me to St. Stephen's.

I am thankful that Jesus is the Lord of all the earth and that He is the Author of my salvation.

I am thankful that God has been calling my name since I was a child and didn't stop until as an adult, I acknowledged Him as Lord and Savior.
Suzy Norman

*Come, let us praise the living God, joyfully sing to our Savior.
Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to His Name.*

To the Women of St. Stephen's Anglican Church

The Women's Leadership Team met in early February to discern God's will for the future of the Thrift Shop. We asked ourselves such questions as: "Does the Thrift Shop match our mission and purpose as the women of St. Stephen's?" "Is this something God wants us to be doing at this time?" "What more could we be doing to be a Christian witness?" After a Bible study and prayer, we felt a spiritual lightness which seemed to be pointing to continuing plans to relocate and operate the Thrift Shop. Since relocation will separate us physically from the church, there was a desire to introduce an obvious Christian presence into the shop.

On Feb 16, 2012 at the regular monthly meeting of the women, Mary Swann led a study on Nehemiah and I reported on the findings of the Leadership Team's meeting. Dixie Goertemiller shared her observations of the wider scope of ministry already occurring in The Thrift Shop and gave many examples of outreach and inreach. Our discussion concluded with a clear vision that it is the Lord's will for us to continue to operate the Thrift Shop. Consequently, a proposal has been submitted to the Vestry on continuing operation of the Thrift Shop at a different site, and we await a decision before we can move ahead.

We are excited about this new venture and hope that by the time you read this, we will have details to share.

Love in Christ,

Donna Soule

2012

St. Stephen's Anglican Church

as of February 12, 2012

January

20 Table Talk 6:30 pm
22 Pledge Sunday
27-28 Vestry Retreat

February

16 Women's Ministry meets
21 Prayer, Praise & Pancakes 6:00 pm
22 Ash Wednesday 7:00 pm

March

1 Lenten Series 6:00 pm
5-8 CANA Annual Council, Plano, TX
8 Lenten Series 6:00 pm
15 Lenten Series 6:00 pm
22 Lenten Series 6:00 pm
29 Lenten Series 6:00 pm

April

5 Maundy Thursday Worship 7:00 pm
6 Good Friday Worship 7:00 pm
8 Easter Day
28 Women's Mother/Daughter Tea

May

3 National Day of Prayer 12:00 Noon
4-6 Bishop's Visit
17 Women's Ministry
27 Pentecost Sunday

June

3 Youth Sunday
3 Church Picnic 3:00 pm
7-9 Provincial Synod, Ridgecrest, NC

July

August

September

1 Harvest Festival
9 Sunday School Begins
14 Table Talk 6:30 pm

October

5-7 Parish Weekend
12-13 DOMA Synod

November

2 Table Talk 6:30 pm
11 Veterans Day Celebration
22 Thanksgiving Worship 10:00 am

December

9 Annual Meeting
24 Christmas Eve Worship 7:00 pm



Don't forget to visit
Our cute little
Thrift Shop
Tues.-Fri. - 10 am - 4 pm
Sat. 10 am - 2:00 pm

IN THE LORD'S SERVICE

Ushers

March 4	Joy and David Gwaltney
March 11	Susan Thomas & Colston Newton
March 18	Joyce and Lewis Smith
March 25	George Beckett & Ward LeHardy
April 1	Margaret Radcliffe & Howard York

Deacon

March 4	The Rev. Mary Swann
March 11	The Rev. Daniel Mochamps
March 18	The Rev. Mary Swann
March 25	The Rev. Mary Swann
April 1	The Rev. Daniel Mochamps

Acolytes

March 4	Emma Saunders
March 11	Chris Cralle
March 18	Marley Kimmitt
March 25	Jennifer Radcliffe
April 1	Caitlyn Cralle

Lesson Readers

March 4	Judy leHardy (L) Ward LeHardy (P)
March 11	Todd Lewis (L) Langley Lewis (P)
March 18	Frank McCarthy (L) Katrina Mochamps (P)
March 25	Julie Pritchard (L) Elaine Price (P)
April 1	Margaret Radcliffe (L) Brooke Read (P)

Eucharistic Ministers

March 11	Tony Blackstone
March 25	Bill Bloom

Altar Guild

March	April Kranda and Lucy Logan
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Greeters

March	Ruth and Charlie Franck
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Coffee Hour

March 4	Elaine and Tom Price
March 11	Lynn & Howard York, Priscilla & Harrison Williams, Julie Pritchard
March 18	Virginia & Laddie Townshend, Bill Tracey
March 25	Sandi and Ben Ward



March 5	Marie Carstensen
March 6	Tom Price
March 9	Ruth Franck
March 18	Suzy Norman
March 19	Carol Bracker (Thrift Shop)
March 21	Walt TeStrake, Joy Gwaltney
March 26	Janet Eichacker
March 28	Jeffrey Cerar, Betsy Joslyn
March 30	Morris Dillingham



March 1	Donna and Craig Soule
March 9	Miriam and Bill Sussman
March 12	Lynne and Jeffrey Cerar
March 31	Melinda Floom & Fred Wimberly

O God, grant that the wills of this man and this woman may be so knit together in your will, and their spirits in your Spirit, that they grow in love and peace with you and one another all the days of their lives. Amen.



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A 2013 February cruise to the Caribbean is in the planning stage. Four St. Stephen's couples have already signed up.

If you think you would like to go, talk to Laddie Townshend for more details.



St. Stephen's Cruisers - February 6—February 18, 2012