



The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

April 2013



Five Family Faith Practices

Starting April 7, the first Sunday of Easter, we will be changing our Faith Formation format to focus on developing faith at home. Practicing the faith is not something we can do just once a week, so we are going to focus on learning how to practice our faith on a daily basis. For families of all ages (not just those with young children!) this can be a challenge. There are so many things competing for our attention, from soccer practice to school work, bridge club to bowling, we are all immensely busy. In response to this, the Christian Education committee is experimenting with a new format for Faith Formation, where everybody practices their faith together!

From **April 7 to May 5**, Faith Formation will be held in the Undercroft (right under the sanctuary) for **everybody** in the congregation. We will be introducing, and practicing, one of the Five Family Faith Practices each Sunday. At this point you are asking "What are the Five Family Faith Practices?" Well, they are simple.

When gathered together as a family, at one point during the day everybody will practice:

- 1) Sharing highs and lows of the day.
- 2) Reading a verse from the Bible.
- 3) Talking about how the verse relates to highs and lows.
- 4) Praying for one another's highs and lows, for your family, and for the world.
- 5) Blessing each other with the sign of the cross.

These practices take five minutes and can be used anytime the family is together. You can start breakfast together, finish dinner, or use them right before bedtime, whenever it works best for you. These five simple practices are something to be done as a family, whether it is a family of two or six, so that we get in the practice of sharing how we are feeling, learning about the Bible and how God works in our lives, with a final reminder of how much we are loved by God (and each other)!

This will be a fun time to spend learning about each other and the Bible as a family, employing faith practices that can be used at home every day to strengthen our relationship with God. These practices are NOT a panacea, bringing magical, instant results that will "bring your family together" and "help them appreciate God" the first time that you try them. Like any discipline, using them requires practice and determination. Once they become a habit, they should help families to communicate with each other about how they are feeling (the highs and lows), learn more about the Bible, figure out how your faith impacts your life, pray easier, and remind each other how much you love each other. There is no prescribed format for any of this; whatever works for your family as long as you consistently hit the basics is what matters. Involve your entire family in the planning process!

While the sophistication level might change from family to family (deep theological discussions with older adults vs. "God loves you" for preschoolers), using these five basic practices daily, as a family, will help guide faith development. Are you going to have all the answers to the questions that pop up as you go? Of course not, but part of the learning process is to figure out the questions that you have and go find the answers. In fact, as we practice this, as a congregation,

we can share the questions that come up, and work together to find the answers!

So, if you have questions about the Five Family Faith Practices, join us and find out!

Doug Cummings Ministry Associate



St. Stephen March Council Minutes

The Council met on March 12, 2013.

- Minutes of the February meeting were approved.
- The inspection of our property at 608 Jamestown Road is still pending. The insurance coverage has been reviewed, and will need to be adjusted after the property is inspected.
- At the request of the Finance committee, Council voted to direct the Finance committee, at the end of 2013, to use the final balance in the Renovation Fund to pay down the principal on the mortgage.
- Pam Groman has offered to be our liaison with Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Norge, for their 2013 Oktoberfest.
- St. Stephen has been asked to provide membership data for a survey-based study into the current "characteristics and beliefs" of the members of the ELCA. The survey group will contact approximately 10 (and no more than 30) individuals randomly from our membership data, and discard the rest. Council voted to release the membership data for this study.
- An ad hoc Property Maintenance Task Force has formed to identify issues and plan details of how to address them. This group currently meets between services in the Gathering Space. Council appreciates their initiative and willingness to help.
- Staff and committee reports were reviewed.

David F. Clark, Secretary

Theologian in Residence TIR]



The Theologian in Residence committee is pleased that **Dr. Hans Tiefel**, Professor Emeritus from the Department of Religion at William and Mary, and a long-time member of St. Stephen, will be our Theologian in Residence for this year. The event will be the last weekend in April and will start with a covered dish supper at **6:00PM on Friday, April 26**. The evening sessions will follow, starting at **7:00PM** and are titled "How to Read the Bible and How to Think Ethics" and "Political Uses of Religion/Religious Uses of Politics." The weekend activities will continue on **Saturday morning, April 27** with coffee and pastries at **9:00AM** and will continue with two additional sessions starting at **9:30AM**, "The Church as Community of Discernment and Public Policy Witness" and "Gods Politics." We will conclude around 12:15PM.

Dr. Tiefel will also preach at both services on Sunday morning (April 28). His sermon is titled "Answering for Our Lives."

As an overview of the material to be presented at this year's Theologian in Residence event, Hans commented: "Our Western cultural secularization sees religion as a merely personal matter of choice that has no critical place in our public and political lives. The generic word 'God' may still be spoken in public forms, but citing specific biblical traditions or texts seems out of place in critical civic reflections. Christian ethical political thinking and doing should remain private. Here the public dimensions of life, such as law and politics, tend to become autonomous and create their own *necessary* assumptions, language, values, and rules. The theme of these Theologian-in-Residence talks is that this reading of religion and citizenship is wrong. Rather, the Christian faith, just as Judaism and Islam, remains irrepressibly communal, public and political. Moreover, this faith has responsibilities to see and challenge political and economic injustice, 'a prophetic burden' prone to be unwelcome both outside and within the Church."

This Theologian-in-Residence weekend event should be interesting, challenging and thought-provoking.

We hope that you will join us then.

Cliff Henderson, chairman



The Experiences of Grief...

Grief is a reaction to a major loss. Here we will focus on the loss of a loved one.

Grief is a normal, expected, and healthy response to loss. There is no right or wrong way to grieve, though many experts identify stages. The experience of grief is individual - everyone feels it in their own way, and in their own time.

Grief is a process and there is no “fast forward button” – the healing process takes time. While there is no prescribed path for grief, there are sign posts and suggestions as to what we might experience, and how we can cope. The grieving starts with recognizing a loss and continues until a person eventually accepts that loss.

Dr. Edward T. Creagan (Mayo Clinic Oncologist) provides these insights and suggestions:

- **Actively grieve and mourn.** Grief is an inner sense of loss, sadness and emptiness. Mourning is how you express those feelings. Grief and mourning are natural and necessary for healing.
- **Acknowledge your pain.** Accepting the pain is part of dealing with grief, and aids healing.
- **Look to loved ones and others for support.** Spending some time alone is fine, but isolation isn't a healthy way to deal with grief. A friend, a confidant, or a spiritual leader can help you.
- **Don't make major decisions while grieving.** Grief clouds the ability to make sound decisions. If possible, postpone big decisions, and if not, seek help.
- **Take care of yourself.** Grief consumes a significant amount of energy. Try to get adequate sleep, eat a healthy diet, and include physical activity daily. Consider a medical checkup.
- **Remember that time helps.** Your feelings of loss and emptiness might never completely go away, but the pain of loss will become less intense over time.

In his book *Good Grief*, Granger Westberg identified 10 stages of grief. Everyone does go through all these stages, but not always in this order:

- **State of Shock:** It's a feeling of being numb and in a fog. This may last a few hours to a few days. It can be helpful to have some support, but also to carry on usual activities. There may be times in future weeks and months when the unreality of the loss may resurface.
- **Emotions:** An emotional release may come without warning, and it is important to be able to express our sadness and grief.
- **Lonely and Depressed:** “There comes a feeling of utter depression and isolation....as if God doesn't care.” This is normal, and the dark days of depression will eventually lift. Our faith and our Christian community can sustain us during this difficult time.
- **Physical:** Grief can take a toll on our physical well being. Grief may trigger unresolved issues from our past, and a re-examination of our beliefs and values. Such conflicts can make us ill.
- **Panicky:** We may become focused on our loss. The inability to concentrate is also a part of grief. It is important during this time to not isolate. “To work through grief is very hard work!”
- **Sense of Guilt:** This can surface as what we might call “if only.” A sense of guilt is also a part of normal grief. A religious person in handling this understands not only the need for confession, but the saving grace of forgiveness.
- **Struggle to Affirm Reality:** “When we go through any significant grief experience we come out of it as different people.” Life will never be the same again, but there is much in life to be affirmed. An inner sense of strength and poise can grow out of confidence that a relationship with God can never be taken from you.

—more—

- **Anger and Resentment:** As one moves from depression, it is common to experience strong emotions. The anger may be turned toward others, the doctors, or the circumstance. It may even be turned toward the deceased. Resentment too is a normal part of the process.
- **Resist Returning to Normal:** Although one may be well along in grief, something inside resists getting back to normal. It may hurt and we want to stay with the familiar. Friends can help.
- **Gradually Hope Comes Through:** Deep grief may last weeks or many months. No two people are the same nor are their grief situations identical. Life can again be meaningful.
- **Struggle to Affirm Reality:** “When we go through any significant grief experience we come out of it as different people.” Life will never be the same again, but there is much in life to be affirmed. An inner sense of strength and poise can grow out of confidence that a relationship with God can never be taken from you.

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/grief/MY02337/NSECTIONGROUP=2>

Grief doesn't end magically, and next month we will discuss dealing with reminders of loss.

Marcie Clark, Parish Nurse



My Journey With (and without) Stephen Ministry

My father is often angry, as his dementia comes and goes and he can't always speak clearly or remember words when he is "tuned in." Visits can be difficult since my mother died. I have begun bringing him music. Our house was always filled with it, and he would sing me to sleep after a story. (I tried it with my son and when he learned to talk he put his hand over my mouth and said "Read, Mommy.") Recently, I began playing some Mills Brothers and Ink Spot tunes we used to sing and I watched him gradually relax and try to sing along. I started "Moonlight Serenade" and he said "Oh Mama, would you listen to that," and reached out for my mother. I could see the sadness in his eyes and he said "This was our song." I offered to turn it off but he said, "No, good times," and he smiled as closed his eyes and listened. A cup of cold water—it is such a little thing. A touch, a helping hand, a favorite memory. As Stephen Ministers – and as the family of Jesus—it is what he asks of us. *“...let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth” 1 John 3:18*

Cindy Gibbs



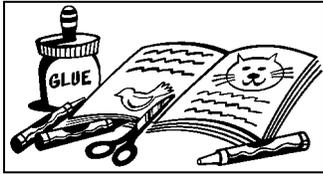
Book Study of the Velvet Elvis!

Starting on **Wednesday, May 15 at 7:00PM**, and continuing for about eight weeks, **Chuck Hilbinger** will begin the study and review of Rob Bell's book *Velvet*

Elvis. Rob Bell is an innovative and stimulating voice bringing great imagination to what the Christian faith means. The title, *Velvet Elvis*, leads to the idea that God has not finished painting the picture of worship, belief, and faith as we know it today and that all of it is, and should be, changing as time goes on.

To participate, contact **Sandy Peterkin** in the office or **Chuck Hilbinger (259-0343)** or mark the blue sheet in the Sunday morning worship bulletin.





Scrapbook Thoughts

The scrapbooks for St. Stephen are badly in need of articles and pictures for any year but in particular 2011, 2012 and 2013. If you collect or see Williamsburg community activities involving anyone connected to St. Stephen, cut them out and save them please. Pictures with names and dates are needed to complete our history for future members. Youth, Faith Formation, trips, volunteer work, school activities, sports, drama concerts are all important. There is a file in the church office for scrapbook materials. If you have questions, please call **Dianne Harris, (229-7504.)** Completed books are available to view in the church library.

Happenings at the Preschool



Winter is past and the sun now shines later into the evening than it did a month ago! All the Preschool staff hopes everyone had a wonderful Easter and special times at special services.

The preschoolers will be learning about the miracle of life, as they soon watch our butterflies go through the stages of life from an egg to a beautiful butterfly as they will be released outdoors.

The school looks beautiful with all the spring art work the children have created. Stop in and look at the really nice projects.

Last month, we had our second annual "Books and Breakfast" for the whole school. The children brought in a book they had finished reading and picked out a new one to bring home. The parents spent time reading to their children and enjoyed yummy breakfast snacks.

The 4 and 5 year-olds are preparing for our annual Mother's Day luncheon at Rocco's Smokehouse Grill On May 10. The children are making

invitations, placemats, centerpieces and lots more for their great moms!

Representatives from York River State Park will visit the extended day class to teach them about Earth Day, and show them how they can do their part to help the Earth.

We are trying a new program this year - a summer camp during the month of June! There are a few spots available to any 3-5 year old that wants to join the fun!

For the Preschool – Rudy Stegmann

The Church Mouse Hears . . .



The mouse was happy to see **Lori Harms** creating the new bulletin board for our Health Ministry! Check it out! . . . Remember, the celebration of Earth Day will be on April 21 and World Malaria Sunday will be given special Lutheran attention on April 28 . . . Ask **Randy or Chris Punchard** about a special event at the Armstrong County, PA Sports Hall of Fame and you will get a great smile . . . Isn't the Easter banner amazing! Thank you to the women who work so hard on these wonderful additions to our worship space . . . saw **Gwen Agor** and Preschool Director **Lauren McQuain** perform in Walsingham Academy's *The Sound of Music* great job! ... Congratulations to **Daniel Owens** as his Pinewood Derby car won first place! Ask Dad, Lewis, how his car placed in the competition!

Address Changes



Dick Batman has moved to a retirement community near his son and daughter-in-law. Here's his contact information:

Richard Batman
Rockland Place Apt. 309
1519 Rockland Rd.
Wilmington, DE 19803
[\(302\) 830 4311](tel:3028304311)

Arnie and Pat Janot
janotap@cox.net

Rudy Stegmann
Home – 757 345 6623 (please note that this is different from the March 2013 number printed in the *Quill*)



Pipe Peeps for April

With the strains of the Hallelujah Chorus still echoing in our Sanctuary, I wish you all the joys of the Risen Christ as we celebrate Easter. This commemoration is our reason to be, so to speak, and even though every Sunday is a celebration of the Resurrection, (even Lenten ones), we are reminded of that fact in a special way on Easter. I am so grateful to all those who have given of their time and talents to make our liturgies so meaningful. Even though we give of ourselves to the Lord alone, it is so rewarding that His people get to share the benefits of that giving. Our Paschal journey is now complete, and I am grateful for some respite in my busy schedule.

Even though summer is still a few months away, may I remind you that our very successful summer music ministry will soon be upon us! For the last several years, we have been richly blessed with all sorts of contributions, and it is my hope and prayer that this summer will also bear much fruit. I am always delighted to welcome new participants, whether they are seasoned musicians, or little ones taking their first steps in music. Every sound given in His name is a joyous one, and we can touch people in ways that will help them on their journey of faith. Please pray for the program, and ask the Lord if you are being called to participate. I am always ready to assist you and offer suggestions if you need some assistance.

Speaking of assistance, our young people need some help. Our program for youth music is in desperate need of someone, or two, to give some direction to our children. You do not need to have great musical ability, but just a desire to work with children and help them lift their voices to God every now and then. I'm afraid that my days of youth music ministry are quite past, but I would be available to assist whoever might step up to the plate. There are helpful resources available, and I know the children would be grateful to have an opportunity to make a joyful noise. PLEASE, pray

about it, and perhaps this could be a wonderful opportunity for you to give as well.

Your Brother in Christ, Michael Monaco



2013 Women's Retreat

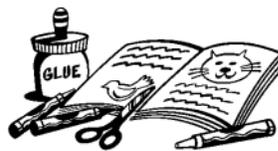
It's nearly here! There is much excitement and anticipation for the **April 20 and 21** retreat at Richmond Hill!

Just a reminder of what to look forward to at the retreat:

- Our spiritual leader, Pastor **Janel Nickols**, focusing on four leadership styles
- Our service project of an art supply cabinet for Avalon—A Center for Women and Children in celebration of the 90th birthday of **Pastor Willetta Heising**, a founder of Avalon and member of St. Stephen. Donations still needed.
- Small group breakout sessions (knitting, stretching, praying, creating, exploring)
- Worship
- Renewing and making new friendships
- Food
- Fun and Laughter

Room assignments, carpooling, and breakout session information will be coming to each participant soon. And, look for a summary of the retreat and pictures in an upcoming *Quill*!

Donations of Art Supplies for Avalon, Please!



This year's Women's Retreat service project is in honor of **Reverend Willetta Heising**, a member of our congregation and a founder of Avalon--A Center for Women and Children. We will be supplying a cabinet full of art supplies for Avalon. These crayons, paints, paper, etc. are used at Avalon not just for creative expression, but also for therapy for the women and children. Art supplies and monetary contributions are needed for this service project by April 14. Please see the poster in the Gathering Space to commit to a donation of art supplies. Or, donate through the offering plate (designating your donation to the retreat project) or to Heidi Flatin or Susan Neidlinger, project coordinators. Thank you for supporting Avalon, its women

and children, and assisting the women of St Stephen in this endeavor!

Stacey Cummings for the Women's Retreat Committee

Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for **Gerri Bass, Shana Brisson, Glenn Carlson, Debbie DeLong, Stan Hobday, Mary Jamerson, Katie Punchard, Nancy Rivolta, and Linda Vonderheide.**



Pray God's peace, Easter comfort and joy for **Stan Hobday** as he mourns his wife, **Anna Lou**; for **Dorothy Wright** as she mourns her son, **Benjamin**; for **Sally Crocker** as she mourns her husband, **Ray**; for the family and friends of **John Warner**; and for **Pastor Andy** as he mourns his Uncle Bob Ballentine; for **Shirley Basley**, as she mourns her husband **Ray**; and for **Jane Gingerich**, as she mourns her father, Tom Hamilton.

Pray for these who are physically unable to get to worship: **Elsa Englert, Ruth Ennis, Bernice Fahnce, Elsie Hall, Willetta Heising, Helen Lenox, Jo Schumacher, Barbara Weekes, Dot Wright, Lois Wysong**

Pray God's blessings on

- **Matt Bosworth, serving in Afghanistan**
- **upon those who are homeless in Williamsburg, as the season for the Community of Faith Mission is over**

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: **Nathalee Accomando, Alice Adams, Donna Alt, Millie Andrews-Young, Michael Arrelano, Joseph Asprey, Lisa Ballinger, Michael Beer, Mickey Bennett, Frances Berry, Cathy Bierd, the Boger family, Lois Bomba, Rebecca Boyer, Cara Cameron, Bob Canny, Joanne Carlson, Karen Heide Carney, Ware Carpenter, Bob Casey, Donna Cherel, Jean Cogle, Bobbie Jo Collins, Rosemarie Cristofolo, Bob Daum, Jeris DeKievit, Beulah Douglas, Debbie Effemy, Mary Egger, Marg Ewing, Inge Feilbier, Nick and Ann Finley, Mary Funkhouser, Lori Galloway, Bill Garcia, Sharon Garth, Erin Geary, Norma Geary, Pamela Glasgow, Vic Godette and family, Nancy Gottschalk, Nicole Grogan, Mary Hallman,**

Eleanor Harms, James Hart, Jennifer Herndl, Gail Henson, Janis Hepburn, Carol Horton, Doris Hughes, Tim Kuck, Kristin McGraw, Richard McGrew, Jan Menig, Diana Miller, Roxanne Morris, the Nasra family, Doris Nester, John Newberg, Cindy Overman, Arthur Pate, Henry and Beth Pate, Ryleigh, Colton, John and William Pate, George Rauchfuss, Lisa Rivolta, Don Romig, Trisha Dell Roy, Mark Salzman, Roland Scheiding, Bernadine Schlicht, Jeffrey Shafer, Diana Shepherd, Brandon Smith, Ron Smith, Nancy Spaniol, Evelyn Spear, Jon Spinnanger, Gail Swann, Connie Testerman, Howard Teubner, Villaseñor, Louise Walker, and Larry Wright.



Ray Crocker

Jan R. Morris

Crown Colony Club of Williamsburg



Dining Out

Join us for a meal out! Join the group of St. Stephen friends on **Saturday, April 20 at 12:30 for lunch** at the Corner Pocket in New Town. Sign up on the blue sheet or call Rudy Stegmann at 345-6623.



Letters to our Congregation

From Jo Austin's daughter, Debi

I would like to thank everyone that contributed to the wonderful array of food after my mom's (Jo Austin) Memorial Service on February 16th. I never expected to see so much food and everything was wonderful! This has been a difficult time for me, but knowing that I have friends at St. Stephen helps me to realize how truly blessed I am. Please accept my sincere thanks for everyone's support. Debi Austin

(And an additional query from Debi Austin)

Do you know who made the ginger cookies for my mom's memorial service? My step-sister has asked that I attempt to find the recipe!!

Blessings,
Debi

The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy [VICPP] thanked us for supporting them through our contribution of \$200. This is the 30th anniversary of the center.



April Birthdays

2	Clare Stimson	
3	Robert Alpino	Marian Thies
4	John Harms	
5	Chris Einarsen	Grayson Henderson
	Paul Reier	
9	Geri Bass	
10	Ingrid Brown	
11	Jack Behlendorf	Carole Finch
	Arthur Nelsen	
12	Jenni Punchard	
13	Mandi Ogaard	
14	George Bass	Meghan Osborn
15	Justin Bredbenner	
16	Christine Hallman	
17	Al Bean	Julie Berry
	Rachel Lucy	Ken Spencer
18	Jo Hanny	
20	Bill Miller, Jr.	
21	Bob Groom	
24	Noah Delehanty	Bobbie Harms
	Brenda Olson	Linda Sidebottom
25	John Rivolta	Mary Swanson
26	Rudy Stegmann	
29	Jake Hughes	Helen Nelsen
	Susanna Owens	
30	Paula Agor	Shirley Minnick

Is your name missing? Is your date wrong? Please let us know immediately!

Rev. March 22, 2013

April 11, 2013 A Public Address by Archbishop Elias Chacour

What are the Things that Make for Peace?

**Building Peace in the Midst of the Palestinian/
Israeli Conflict**

**Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church
on the campus at Randolph-Macon College
201 Henry Street, Ashland, VA**

Come to a public address by **Archbishop Elias Chacour**, Peace Activist and Leader of the Melkite Catholic Church of Akko, Haifa, Nazareth, and All Galilee

7:00 PM Presentation, Free and open to the public
Please consider giving a gift at this event to support the Peace-Building work of Archbishop Chacour

An Arab Palestinian Christian who is a citizen of Israel, Archbishop Chacour grew up walking the hillsides where Jesus lived, where Jesus taught "Blessed are the Peacemakers."

Archbishop Chacour has worked tirelessly for reconciliation and peace in the Middle East, especially by building high-quality schools—preschool through college—in the Galilean village of Ibillin, where the students and faculty include Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Druze.

More than 50% of the students are girls.

He is a three-time nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize, and winner of the World Methodist Peace Award, the Niwano Peace Prize, and was Rotary's Man of the Year in Israel in 2000.

He has written 2 books available in English, *Blood Brothers* and *We Belong to the Land: the Story of a Palestinian Israeli who Lives for Peace and Reconciliation*.

(Both books will be available for signing at the event, as well as a new children's book about Father Chacour titled *Blessed Are the Peacemakers*, and two DVDs.)

For more information contact Rev. David Hindman at [804-798-7224](tel:804-798-7224) or office@duncanmemorialumc.org or see the Mar Elias Educational Institutions website at www.pilgrimsofibilin.org.

St. Stephen Activities of Special Note



St. Stephen received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Williamsburg Area Council of Garden Clubs 28th Annual Arbor Day awards ceremony March 8. Shown with **Carol Harman** and **Rita Kristiansen** is Sharon Goodrich, co-chair of the 2013 Arbor Day committee. Our grounds have never looked so beautiful! If you would like to join the team taking care of our gardens and grass this year, please contact the coordinators, **Chris and Randy Punchard**.



A fun luncheon at the Food For Thought with the Dining Group



LSA Ice Cream Social with "Adopted Parents"



Fun and great food for all ages at the Lenten Soup Suppers

