

# The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

February 2011



## *Why Do We Engage In This Odd, "Useless" Behavior?*

Peter Marty writes: "To plenty of skeptics and distant observers, Christian worship is useless behavior. Who would participate except dreamy-eyed believers, full of patience for invisible things and strangely willing to endure hard pews for an hour at a stretch? Never mind that many other acts of a meaningful life could come under similar scrutiny for being useless. Why kiss someone you love? What's the point of staring through wired safety glass at a newborn in a hospital in a hospital nursery? What is the value of giving a gift to someone who has no intention of repaying you, much less expressing thanks? ..."

"The great choral conductor, Robert Shaw once commented that 'the absolute minimum conditions for worship are a sense of mystery and an admission of pain.' People incapable of handling either one will shy away. They will not thirst to know the sweep of salvation. Praise will never emerge as their mother tongue. The personal hang-ups, anxieties and broken shards of sin that can't be airbrushed from their lives will have to be shoved under the couch. Unless we're willing to lose ourselves in the unfathomable mystery of God and the unsearchable pain that goes with being human, worship may always prove too much to bear. We will never get to enjoy the gospel of Jesus Christ coursing through our veins.

"Lutheran Christians turn to worship as the central melody for their lives because they want a place where God is taken seriously and where they can be taken seriously. For them, worship is their weekly opportunity to practice not being God.

"Faithful worshipers are those who get tired of living paltry lives in an awe-deficient world. They know that the activities we undertake in life in repeat fashion always possess the greatest potential to shape us in a long-term way.

"So faithful people return time and again to communally confess sin, eat gratefully from the communion table, and sing the spirited liturgies and songs of the church. These recurring commitments add up to great significance. They become our human response to a 'for us' God who keeps acting so graciously in our favor.

"If we stay away from worship too long, we start to make God into our own image. The privatization of our spiritual journey only transforms God to be virtually anything we want. Once back in the habit and flow of worship, however, and surrounded by a mix of people who don't mirror every facet of our life, something delightful happens. We discover God to be quietly remaking us into God's own image. We encounter a rhythm stronger than our heartbeat. We find ourselves full of more joy that we can contain."

Peter Marty wrote these words, in his monthly column, in the January, 2011 issue of *The Lutheran*. This is the best description I've ever read, of why we spend time in the very odd, "useless" faith practice of worship. (What a strange group of people we are, gathering as the church – since this odd, "useless" activity is our central practice!)

**Pastor Andy Ballentine**

## *From the Ministry Associate*



While it may be cold outside, thoughts of summer are already starting to percolate in my mind. Of course, I am thinking about CAMP! This is the time for camp registration for the summer and amongst the chaos of sports camps, theater camps, day camps, camping trips and the like, I would like to throw out my favorite type of camp, church camp!

Some of my fondest memories of my youth took place at church camp, specifically, at Camp Lutheridge and

Camp Lutherock in North Carolina. I spent a week every summer between my 7th and 12th grade year at either of those two camps learning canoeing, backpacking, white water rafting, ropes courses, camping and a few things about God. It was amazing to be able to get away from the stress of the social life that revolved around High School and be myself with people that I had never met before, deep in the woods of North Carolina and be mentored by the coolest people on earth, camp counselors!

After six years of camp as a camper, I returned twice as a counselor at Camp Lutherock near Boone, NC. Much of my time was spent as a Confirmation Camp Counselor doing week-long camps for confirmation kids "retreating" to the wild mountains of North Carolina to focus on God and learning about the role that God plays in our lives. For many, this was the first time they spent more than a day or two away from their families and it was an awesome experience for them, and I had a pretty good time leading them around. As an adult (well, sort of!) it was pretty formative for me, I learned a lot about myself and how to work with other people in a fun, energetic and Christian environment. My first year, after freshman year of college, I was still pretty immature. I really came into my own after my senior year, before I went into the Army. Those three years made a big difference and I enjoyed my time as a camp counselor much more while connecting with God in the beauty of the mountains. All in all, camp was a wonderful thing for me in my path to adulthood and has helped me remain connected to the church, and God, no matter where life has taken me.

Camp Caroline Furnace, in the Shenandoah Valley, supports our synod and has a pretty wide range of activities available year round. If you need a retreat, they have facilities available that are both rustic and modern. As you are thinking about what your family (even grandchildren!) will be doing this summer, I would commend you to think about Caroline Furnace. My parents would load the four children into the van, drop us off at camp, then spend a week vacationing on their own in the mountains. For them, it was great to have a week to themselves, while we were getting dirty and exhausting ourselves at camp. Of course the van reeked of laundry on the way home, but it was a small price to pay for a week of rejuvenation for all!

As Ministry Associate I would like to take the Affirmation of Baptism youth to the Synod Confirmation Camp at Caroline Furnace this summer, the week of **June 19-25**. My first exposure to camp was through Confirmation Camp, and I feel this is a hugely valuable experience, a week away from "normal life" to explore your relationship with God. For those of you

not in Affirmation of Baptism, I would urge you to consider camp for your children, grandchildren, or even taking a retreat in the "wilderness" yourselves. While you don't have to subsist on locust and honey (John the Baptist!), or go without food for 40 days, sometimes a little wilderness is what we need to find the really important things in life. Since Caroline Furnace has no cell phone reception, what better place to get away from it all! As you watch the thermometer hover around the freezing mark this month, warm up with the thought of summer camp!

**Doug Cummings** Ministry Associate



### *From the Director of Music*

This year, the season of Epiphany is the longest possible with eight Sundays. We will have ample opportunity to reflect on the themes of the season with readings from Matthew and John, and our music will reflect these themes. I always am in awe of the rhythm of the church year, and it really is Spirit driven as the various readings, hymns, anthems, preludes, postludes all are interconnected so as to help us focus our thoughts where they need to be so we can be more open to God's word. I am grateful to Pastor Andy as he supplies me with the sermon themes well in advance so as to make my job of crafting the music a task that is peaceful, and quite rewarding. It is interesting however, that some of our best liturgical moments have been the times when the Holy Spirit moves after the bulletin is in print, and we will alter things as needed. I always think the Lord gives us these moments to remind us that we always have to be open to His will, and embrace the winds of the Spirit.

Our choirs are busy with rehearsals, and I am in the final stages of planning our Lenten and Easter Liturgies. You might consider participating in one of our music ministries on the "Seasonal" membership plan, which allows you to come and join us for a celebration or two, and then return to you seat in the congregation. We have had good success with this program, and Easter would be an excellent opportunity to get involved. Please pray that our ministries continue to grow, and listen to hear if the Spirit is calling you to share God's word in song.

As always, I ask for your prayerful support...

In Peace,  
**Michael Monaco**

## Women at War—Pot Luck Dinner and Presentation by Kirsten Holmstedt



**Kirsten Holmstedt** is the Writer in Residence at the College of William and Mary this academic year and is a regular worshiper at St. Stephen. At **6:00 PM February**

**18**, we'll gather in the Fellowship Hall for a pot luck dinner. Then, Kirsten will give a presentation on her writing about the experiences of female soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, and their experiences after returning home. She will be assisted by the first-person story of one of her subjects, Gunnery Sergeant Rosie Noel (Ret.), who was wounded in Iraq, and was the first female Marine gunny to receive a Purple Heart.

Below are descriptions of Kirsten's books:

"In her first book, *Band of Sisters: American Women at War in Iraq*, Holmstedt explored the different roles of women serving in combat for the first time. Through her research, she concluded that women were up to the task of serving in combat. They could return fire when they were fired upon, rescue wounded soldiers, drive trucks on the most dangerous roads, provide security on convoys, search Iraqi women and children, and much more. When they were shot down or wounded, many asked not to go home but instead to return to their troops."

"Eventually, most of the women would come home when their deployment was over. The same curiosity and commitment that drove Holmstedt to write about one of the greatest experiments to come out of this war—women in combat—would also inspire her to find out what battles these female warriors faced on the home front. Having followed the progress of women on the battlefield, she now felt compelled to find out how they were doing when they came home. She had to finish what she started, what they started. In *Band of Sisters*, you heard their voices from the battlefield; in *The Girls Come Marching Home* you hear their voices from the home front. We know that women have made a major contribution to the war effort, yet when they come home, many don't speak up. Instead, they keep quiet and do their jobs until someone else turns the spotlight on them. *The Girls Come Marching Home* is that spotlight."

Copies of the books will be available on February 18. There is one copy of each in our church library.

**Pastor Andy Ballentine**

## Parish Life Events



First let me offer a huge THANK YOU to all of you who have helped to make the first four months of Parish Life activities a big success. It is delightful to see so many of you volunteer to take a turn hosting one of these events.

Here are the upcoming events for the next four months, and I'm hoping many new hands will join in making our Parish Family closer:

- **Friday February 18 at 6:00 PM** - a pot luck followed by a presentation by William and Mary Writer in Residence **Kirsten Holmstedt**, on the experience of women who have been in combat.
- **Friday March 4 at 6:00 PM** Theologian in Residence kick off pot luck.
- **Wednesday March 9 at 6:00 PM** Ash Wednesday potluck
- **Wednesday March 16, 23, 30 and April 6, and 13** Soup suppers at 6:00 PM
- **April 24** Easter Morning Breakfast

What we need are three to four people who will host the event. That involves making sure **Sandy Peterkin** in the church office, knows what you want in the bulletin at least two weeks in advance of the event, if there is something special or extra planned. She has a list of the events, and I will send her the names of volunteers. The hosts will provide the drinks for the events as well as set-up and clean-up. I assure you that everyone pitches in and clean-up goes really fast. It is up to the hosts to decide if you are using paper products or dishes.

We would love to have more volunteers to help with Sunday coffee too.

We will place a special sign up in the Narthex for the soup suppers - otherwise please contact **Chris Punchard** at [mrschris16@aol.com](mailto:mrschris16@aol.com) or **757-565-0349** if you want to volunteer.

Finally, if you have something special you would like to do with the church family, contact Chris and we can make it happen. It can be just for fun or very informative. The planning committee will be meeting again in April to plan for the summer and fall.

**Chris Punchard for Parish Life**





## *Greetings from Pastor Minja And thoughts from Pastor Andy*

Dear Brothers and Sisters –  
I wish you Christmas joy, on this sixth day of Christmas.

Below are the Christmas greetings of Pastor Aminiel Minja, pastor of the Mongai Parish in Tanzania. Our gifts make possible the parish kindergarten and vocational training school, which educate hundreds of children and youth.

His message is very moving to me. Notice how many were confirmed on Christmas Eve, and that weddings and baptisms took place that evening too! And notice how he celebrates the purchase of a single computer. (This is a huge deal. It used to take him hours to travel to a Lutheran hostel where there is a computer room, check and send e-mails, and then hours to get back home - an all-day process.)

And -- I sure do wish I was as fluent in Swahili as he is in English!!!  
Blessings to you,

### **Pastor Andy Ballentine**

*\*From:\** Mongai Mongai <mailto:mongaiparish@yahoo.co.uk>  
*\*To:\** Pastor Andy Ballentine <mailto:pastorab@saintstephenlutheran.net>  
*\*Sent:\** Wednesday, December 29, 2010 2:01 AM  
*\*Subject:\** Re: Greetings

*Dear Pastor Andy Ballentine and the people of St. Stephen Lutheran Church, I greet you in the name of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ.*

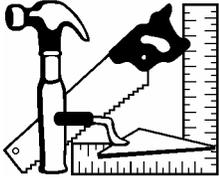
*Its our very sincere hope that you are quite fine, together with your family.  
how did you celebrate the Christmas eve? here we had a lot of church services, such confirmation class of 100 young christians, the confirmation jubilee of 25 years about 80 participants, weddings and baptisms. so i was very busy but the New born serviouir enabled every thing to be done for His Glory.*

*dear our lovely friend , It was difficult to communicate formily because of lack of comminication facilities but from this December, our Parish managed to buy a new computer and a modem for internet so I am happy to let you know that it is now easier to communicate every day and every week, Glory to God for this very meaningful assistance.*

*dear our friends how is the climate now? I saw through Tv that , there is a fall of ice, in Europe, i dont know about America. (USA)*

*Dear our friends as we are comming to the end of the year 2010. The parishioners are extending their heartfalt thanks for your support for the kindergathen pupils and the Mount Kilimajaro vocational training school. We hope that God will enable you to continue to show mercy and hospitality towards the children and the youth of Mongai for the year 2011.*

*We wish you a peaceful propereous and God's safety for the year 2011  
IN CHRIST JESUS  
Rev. Aminiel APS Minja  
PASTOR INCHARGE*



## Renovation News

The latest information about renovation project scope, how much it will cost, construction schedule, and selection of a General Contractor was presented and discussed at the January 23 Congregational meeting.

### Our Mission

The renovation project continues to be guided by our mission to “invite all to grow in celebration of God’s grace” by providing a more welcoming space for gathering and for worship and more specifically:

- Evangelism – to welcome visitors, new members, and display our ministries.
- Strengthening our Community of Faith as we gather for fellowship and worship
- Stewardship – the maintenance and care of our facilities.

### Recent Developments

- After interviewing construction proposals and estimates from four contractors, David A. Nice Builders, Inc. has been selected as General Contractor
- The Council has authorized a letter of intent with David A. Nice, as an interim step toward a firm construction contract to be executed after Congregational approval.
- Estimated construction cost is \$575,000. Architects fees, engineering and inspection services add about \$75,000, bringing the total project cost to \$650,000.
- The Renovation Committee is working with the contractor in search of potential savings, and the Finance Committee is pursuing financing for the project.
- Newly discovered maintenance issues, especially on the roof and steeple, may require additional work. Further results on this are expected in early February.
- **Paul Kristiansen** has accepted assignment as our Project Manager for contact with the architect and builder during the construction phase.

### What’s Next

When all the details are ironed out a Special Meeting will be called to seek congregational approval for a construction contract. After that, exterior construction work could begin before Easter. Any work inside or affecting access to the Sanctuary would begin only after Easter, with completion sometime this summer.

Task groups for the renovation project include: project management and communications; lighting and décor; narthex décor and cabinetry; media and technology; finance; and funding.

### How Will We Pay for This?

- Congregational financial support is strong, with
- 73 pledges received for a total of \$294,094
- \$78,411 contributed in 2010
- A \$300,000 line of credit is in place
- A construction loan for an additional \$325,000 is needed to complete the project.

### Want to Review the Plans?

The latest plans and specification are always available in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor Conference Room. And if you have questions, please talk with committee members **Bob Harman, Glenn Joppa, Paul Kristiansen, Jane deSolms, or Sandy Peterkin.**



### *Theologian in Residence Program March 4-6*

Randall Balmer, an Episcopal priest and distinguished professor of American Religion at Barnard College, Columbia University, will speak on the theme of “Evangelicalism, Politics and the Presidency” during our annual Theologian in Residence program, **March 4-6**. The author or co-author of seven books on American religion, Professor Balmer has garnered praise for his work in both academic and public settings. His second book, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: A Journey into the Evangelical Subculture in America* was made into an award-winning documentary for PBS. Prof. Balmer was nominated for an Emmy for writing and hosting that series. Professor Balmer also wrote and hosted two other PBS documentaries: *Crusade: The Life of Billy Graham*, and *In the Beginning: The Creationist Controversy*

.Professor Balmer's many books have examined different aspects of the history of American Protestantism. Recently he edited an *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism*. A spiritual memoir, *Growing Pains: Learning to Love My Father's Faith* (2001) was named "book of the year" (spirituality) by *Christianity Today*. In 2008 Professor Balmer completed a history of religion and the presidency entitled *God in the White House: How Faith Shaped the Presidency from John F. Kennedy to George W. Bush*. In addition to his scholarly writing, Professor Balmer has frequently appeared as an expert commentator for both local and national media, including CNN, the Fox News Channel, National Public Radio, CNBC, and The Newshour on PBS.

Professor Balmer will draw from his extensive knowledge of American Evangelicalism to present four talks. Following a potluck dinner on Friday evening, March 4, he will discuss "The Varieties of American Evangelicalism" and "Evangelical Attitudes toward American Culture." Saturday morning, March 5, he will look at "The Rise of the Religious Right" and "Evangelicals and Presidential Politics since 1975." Please plan to attend Professor Balmer's sessions on the important subject of faith and politics, and invite your friends and neighbors. This series is free and open to the public.

**Gail Bossenga**

## *St. Stephen Feeds the Homeless*



On New Years Eve night, a very energized group of St. Stephen members, cooked, baked, packed, and delivered 40 meals for the homeless at the Family Inn on Richmond Road. The meal prepared by our members included a hamburger stew, with a salad, roll and cupcakes. Bottled water and a party bag was also part of each packed meal. About 35 members participated on this night and an additional seven will be participating on future nights.

The responsiveness of our congregation to this mission was absolutely amazing. While I have thanked the participating members, I also want to thank our overall congregation for your support to this program called "From His Hands." This program was spearheaded by the Salvation Army by having area churches feed the homeless of the Williamsburg area. Between 12 and 14 churches are involved in the program. St. Stephen has committed to do our part by taking on the fifth Friday of the month. Those dates are **April 29, July 29, September 30, and December 30**. If you would like to participate with other enthusiastic members of St. Stephen, please contact **Randy Punched**, (757-565-0349 or [randy4golf@aol.com](mailto:randy4golf@aol.com).) We will be having further announcements as we get closer to these dates.

With many thanks to a truly caring congregation,

**Randy Punched**  
Coordinator



**BOOK STUDY**

### *The Faith Club*

I met the other day with Rabbi David Katz of Temple Beth El. He is looking to start a Faith Club based on the book *The Faith Club* by Ranya Idliby, Suzanne Oliver and Priscilla Warner. These three women, one Muslim, one Jewish and one Christian; got together to discuss and study about their different faiths. I recently purchased the book and am beginning to read it, and the idea of starting a Faith Club with folks from Temple Beth El is very interesting. If you are interested in this kind of exchange, please let me know and think about getting the book. It is a very easy read and told from the perspectives of the three women as the struggle to understand and accept each others religions.

**Doug Cummings**



**St. Stephen Workers Prepare Meals for Homeless**

**Join the fun!**





## *Meditation on the Light*

*(The first verses of John's gospel were appointed for Christmas Day and for the Second Sunday of Christmas. In addition the image of light is the primary image for this season of Epiphany. Shirley Minnick wrote a moving meditation on the passage in John for an Advent devotional book. It is just as appropriate for our devotions during this season of Epiphany! **Pastor Ballentine**)*

John 1: 1, 3b-5, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it ... And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

### *The Coming of Light*

The darkness threatens to overcome us

the abyss of despair suffered by the lonely and homeless  
the bitter anguish of helplessness as a mother cradles a hungry child  
the cold silence that engulfs the unemployed father  
the gray void of grief left by the death of a loved one  
the black pit into which the victims of prejudice and violence fall  
the icy finger of fear a soldier knows

But "the Word became flesh and lived among us"

and suffered the loneliness and despair of one forsaken and betrayed  
wept bitter tears of grief for his dead friend  
heard the cold lies of his accusers and felt the sharp stings of violent lashes  
pleaded to be spared the black abyss of death

Yes, he died ... but "in him was life, and the life was the light of all people" and

we, His people,  
see the light of the advent of our Lord  
feel the comfort of His presence in our daily lives  
have been sent an Advocate, "the Spirit of truth," to be with us forever  
have received the gift of grace and salvation  
know the joy of faith  
and are assured of life eternal because

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

**shirley I. minnick** advent 2010

## Fair Trade Products 2010 Summary



Thank you for your loyal support of Lutheran World Relief through Equal Exchange and Divine Chocolate. Your purchases are helping LWR work toward a world in which each person, every community and all generations live in justice, dignity and peace.

During 2010, 43 identified customers and 13 anonymous donors purchased \$2,906.01 of Equal Exchange products.

This January, Lutheran World relief will start using their new logo which they feel will help LWR to stand out in an ever increasing competitive market, to appeal to a larger audience and to better tell LWR'S story. Watch for the new logo on the coffee carts.

We are proud to be able to help bring these fine products to St. Stephen while helping others improve their standard of living.

**John and Nancy Rivolta**  
Coordinators



### Thrivent Choice

Thrivent for Lutherans established a new outreach program last year, Thrivent Choice. The program allows qualifying members to select where some of Thrivent outreach dollars can be directed. To see more about this program, go to the Thrivent website at [www.Thrivent.com](http://www.Thrivent.com) and log onto your account (if you've not done so already, you may need to establish an online account). Under Thrivent Community, go to Thrivent Choice. There you will find (in small font), details of the program. If you find you have dollars available for distribution, note that St. Stephen is an eligible choice. The deadline is **March 31, 2011** to distribute 2010 Choice dollars. Distributions are made quarterly. Also, one may elect to direct Choice dollars automatically on a recurring basis. Should you, as a member of Thrivent choose to benefit St. Stephen in this manner, please alert **Susan Britcher**, Financial Secretary, as to how you would like your dollars to be directed within St. Stephen (e.g., General fund, Renovation Project, Building fund). Thrivent deposits the money into our Sun-Trust bank account automatically and notifies the

the church office after the deposit has occurred.

**Susan Britcher**



### Christian Education Committee

Last month, our Elementary School youth began a discussion of Moses. This month, we will continue to talk about Moses and the Red Sea and start on the New Testament study with the parable, House on the Rock. Next month, we continue to talk about parables and Holy Week and Easter. As part of our morning studies, the youth have been learning the Ten Commandments and will continue to study the Apostles' Creed. The youth are also collecting food or money to purchase food for FISH.

Faith Formation occurs between services (9:45 to 10:45 AM) in the undercroft for Elementary students (and younger) and in the Pastor's office for Middle School and High School students.

Adult Faith Formation offerings in February include the continuation of "Alternative Prayer Methods: Praying in Color and Praying with Beads", led by **Sandy Peterkin** through **February 6**. The start of the study session on recent work by Theologian in Residence, Randall Balmer will be led by **Hans Tiefel** and takes place in the College Room, **February 13, 20, 27**.

**Jill Lucy**



### Faith Formation Donations to Grove

Over the course of the fall, the Children's Faith Formation collected money and winter clothing for the Grove Christian Outreach Center. I recently delivered it all there, and got to watch God's awesome ability to put people where they are needed. I pulled into the parking lot of the two double wide trailers, parked and walked in to chaos. There must have been 15 people crammed into an area the size of Pastor's office. The phone was ringing, and people were patiently waiting to be helped by the very busy staff. There were shelves of donated materials in the waiting room, the "office" had donated goods on top of the filing cabinets and any space not occupied with

stuff had somebody helping or waiting to be helped. While I waited to talk to somebody about taking the materials that I brought, I overheard a woman asking if she could get a hat, some gloves and a scarf. The woman who was helping her said they had no more of those items, but would see if there was something overlooked. I was identified as having some things to donate, and was directed out back to one of their storage sheds. The woman who was helping people came out, and when she saw I was donated winter clothing was overjoyed. When we found a scarf, hat and gloves that were the right size for the woman in need, she nearly cried with joy and proclaimed that the Lord works wonders when it is needed. That woman in need walked out of Grove with the winter clothing she needed because God called on our families to donate what was needed at exactly the right time. The little miracles are the ones that often make the most difference. Know that however little is donated, it can make a big difference in somebody's life.

**Doug Cummings**, Ministry Associate

### Donations to Grove



## Financial Peace University

### Financial NOTES

your means?

Are you worried about credit card and other debt? Are you struggling to live within

St. Stephen member **Jay Dunbar** would like to lead a course called, "Financial Peace University." Jay would like to begin the course on **February 15, 2010, 3:30 – 5:30 on Sunday afternoons in the Fellowship Hall.** It's a 13-session course; two hours per session.

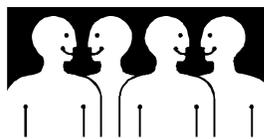
You'll learn practical steps to take, to eliminate debt, one credit card at a time! You'll learn the freedom that comes from living within (and even below) your means! You'll learn the joy of having enough money to save some, and even to give away some, every month!

Some of you remember meeting with Cary Mangus, former Stewardship coordinator for the Virginia Synod, who led leadership retreats at St. Stephen. This is a program that Cary recommended highly.

The cost for the course is \$100 per household.

If you'd like to take advantage of Financial Peace University, please contact Jay at [jdd2724@gmail.com](mailto:jdd2724@gmail.com) or 757-293-8820.

## Virginia Lutheran Men in Missions (VaLMM)



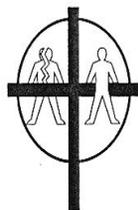
Reserve the dates **April 29-May 1** for the annual Gathering of VaLMM.

### Men's Fellowship

Dr. John Hoffmeyer, a Virginia Synod native who teaches at Philadelphia Seminary and was also St. Stephen's Theologian in Residence in 2009, will be the keynote speaker for the annual gathering of Virginia Synod Lutheran Men in Mission at Roslyn Retreat Center in Richmond April 29-May 1.

Pastor Chip Gunsten, assistant to the bishop, will be the chaplain. Bible study and small group discussions are planned. The cost of the gathering will be \$210 for double occupancy; \$255 for singles and \$115 for commuters. For reservations or information, contact Dolph Moller at [fritzheinrich@aol.com](mailto:fritzheinrich@aol.com) or 804-378-6164, or John Schallhorn at [jsbutler@msn.com](mailto:jsbutler@msn.com) or 804-862-4949.

Art Dorsey

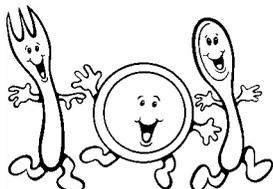


## A Journey With (and Without) Stephen Ministry

I don't know if I can ever forgive myself for (you fill in the blank). How can I share that with anyone? I know that God forgives me, but it still haunts me. Talking through these tough issues with

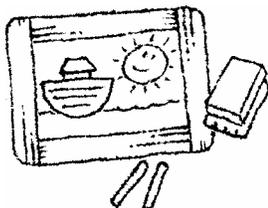
a person who accepts you as you are will take you down the road to healing and self forgiveness. A Stephen Minister will help you to put into words those feelings of guilt and come to terms with them, reminding you that God still loves you and forgives you no matter what is in your past. *Oh Lord, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against you. (Ps. 41:4)*

**Cindy Gibbs**



### ***The Dining Out Group***

Looking forward to a dinner out with friends?? Join the Dining Out Group on **Sunday, February 20 at 1:00PM** at **Victoria's Restaurant** for a delicious meal and pleasant conversation. Our hosts, **Fran and Ernie Schwab**, can give more information and take reservations at **258-5848**. Check the blue sheet and the bulletin for details and please have your reservations in by February 15.



### ***Preschool News***

February finds the children very busy making Valentines for family and friends. They will deliver their Valentines to each other's "hand-made mailboxes" during their Valentines' Day celebrations.

Enrollment for the coming school year is awesome! We have many returning and new families and we have added some new classes to our program. If you know anyone who is interested in a great Pre-school, let them know about St. Stephen! Registration forms are available from Sandy in the Church office!

Note that school will closed on **Monday, February 21** for President's Day.

Children in the Extended Day program will visit the Muscarelle Museum this month – always a fun and interesting field trip! Dr. Morrison will visit our Pre-school this month to teach the children about good dental hygiene practices. February will be a busy month indeed!



**For the Preschool, Rudy Stegmann**

### ***The Church Mouse Hears . . . .***

What an exciting time in the lives of **Carl Strikwerda** and **Gail Bossenga**. Carl is the Dean of the Arts and Sciences faculty at the College of William and Mary. Gail is a professor in the History Department. Carl has been named President of Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania, and will begin his work there this summer. We pray God's blessings as they pursue this new calling in their ministries in the world . . . . . **Dan Stimson's** ministry for the past 25 years has been to coach track and field at the College of William and Mary. Here's an indication of how many lives he's touched during those years: a group of track and field alumni are raising money to establish a scholarship at the College in Dan's name to give thanks for this anniversary of his coaching! . . . . . Along with other Williamsburg citizens, **Jean Kuhn** and **Harlan Schone** were mentioned by editor, Bill O'Donovan, in his "Christmas gifts from community" article in the Christmas issue of the *Virginia Gazette* . . . . The article on the front page of the January 9 *Virginia Gazette* about the carbon monoxide leak at **Doug and Stacey Cummings'** house and the importance of the Community Emergency Response Team training (CERT) Doug recently completed gave us much to think about and be grateful for. The training program will be available both in James City County and in the City of Williamsburg during the next few weeks . . . .

### ***New Addresses***

**John and Helen Allen**  
John: johnellisallen@cox.net  
Helen: hkallen231@cox.net

**Norm and Mary Ann Beard**  
marymary64@live.com

**Michelle Ivey**  
m.movielover@gmail.com

**Debbie Lawhon**  
debrajane@verizon.net





## February Birthdays

- 1 Hailey Shearer
- 2 Don Hardenbergh Gretchen Osborn
- 3 Thord Einarsen Debbie Lawhon
- 5 Gwendolyn Agor
- 6 Kurt Bailey Robert Mazur
- Larry Shoberg Christopher Stempien
- 14 Harlan Schone
- 15 Rebecca Drake
- 17 Jane Bailey Pat Janot
- Marilyn Johnson
- 18 Glenn Joppa
- 20 Samantha Shearer
- 22 Keara Mahony
- 23 Nicholas Brisson Angie Groom
- 25 Nancy Egloff Max Hinders
- 26 Kathryn Sipes
- 27 Chelsea Dunbar
- 28 Michael Nester

Is your name missing? Is your date wrong? Please let us know immediately!  
Rev. January 21, 2011

## Our Prayers



Pray for each other in our daily journeys in faith.

Pray to know God's will for healing **Lea Chenault, Bob Mazur, Carole Meyer, Judie Schrag, Dan Stimson.**

Pray the comfort and hope of the resurrection for the family and friends mourning the death of **Marvin Happel**; for **Leah Hardenbergh** and her family on the death of her aunt; to those mourning the death of **Ernie Pilant**; for **Don Nelson** and his family on the death of his brother; and for **Christine Drake** and her family on the death of her sister-in-law.

Pray for those who are physically unable to get to worship: **Pat Chandler, Elsa Englert, Bernice Fahncke, Elsie Hall, Willetta Heising, Anna Lou Hobday, Jean Kircheis, Helen Lenox, Chuck and Jo Schumacher, John Warner, Dot Wright, and Earl and Lois Wysong.**

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Michael Arellano, Janet Atherton, Frances Boitnott-Schluter, Lois Bomba, Ed Borg, Melvi Bowen, Jimmy Burkle, Kelly Callahan, Ron Campana, Joanne Carl-

son, Donna Cherel, Walter and Janice DeGree, Paul Derin, Brad Donnell, Demetrius Dukes, Mae Failoni, Janice Floyd, Lonna Gibson, Angela Wellington Gooden, Gail Henson, Mary Jo Hill, Clara Horan, Gretchen Imlay, Junius Jenkins, Denise Jones, Dolores Kampf, Ned Kramer, Caitlin Meehan, Rick Meyer, Amy Michael, Roy Nester, Janet Overdorf, Jacob Remis, Sampson, Atticus, and Evelyn Parsons, Janet Pendergast, Bob Reeves, Lisa Rivolta, Don Romig, Roland Scheiding, Gary Sloan, Jon Spinnanger, Connie Testerman, Marcus Tyler, Doug Viafora, Melissa Villarreal, Thomas Wellington, Mary Williams, Peggy Wood, and Charles Zerbe.



## Memorial Gifts

### Ernie Pilant

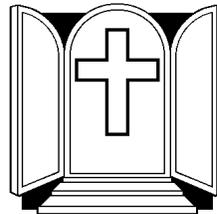
Bill and Jane Holcombe  
Harlan and Anne Schone (Renovation Fund)

### Marvin Happel

(Renovation Fund)  
Susan Britcher  
Mr. and Mrs. Russell Jacob  
Mr. and Mrs. William Pratt  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ramell  
Nancy Thompson  
Pamela Glasgow  
Mark and Laura Happel  
Harlan and Anne Schone  
Mr. and Mrs. Randall Foskey  
Jim and Linda Wolfe  
Ernie and Fran Schwab  
Glenn and Judy Joppa

### Bill MacQuestion

Gladys and Scott Macdonough



## **A word of Thanks**



## *Thank you Notes to our Congregation*

The Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail and Chaplain Harold Dimmitt thanked us for our participation in the Christmas Kit Project where each of the 432 inmates received Christmas packets. LINK of Hampton Roads thanked us for our donation of \$600 to help support the PORT homeless shelter program. FISH thanked

us for our St. Stephen contribution to FISH of \$1,000. FISH also thanked us for the continued support and gave some important statistical figures: Food and personal hygiene items were provided to 7,313 people; clothing provided to 2,766 people (1,640 adults and 1,121 children); small house wares were provided to 320 households; new households numbered 525.

### *Our new members from January 9, 2011*

#### **Dave and Marcie Clark**

6920 Glory Lane  
Williamsburg, VA 23188  
603-6346  
mmclark-2@sbcglobal.net



#### **Bob and Jane Mazur**

124 Green's Way  
Williamsburg, VA 23185  
645-4886  
janemazur17@hotmail.com

