



The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

May 2013



Brothers and Sisters –

Many of you have received the letter printed below from our Ministry Associate, Doug Cummings. During this next month, I know you will want to offer your own words of appreciation to Doug for his work on our church staff. It is a very good thing that Doug, Stacey, Abby and Bradley will continue to be active in our congregation!

As we look forward to the future, I have been talking with our Congregation Council and with our Virginia Synod Bishop, Jim Mauney, about the need I see for adding another pastor to our staff. We will keep you informed.

Pastor Andy Ballentine

April 9, 2013

Dear Members of Saint Stephen,

In recent months it has become more difficult for me to fulfill my role as Ministry Associate. Both my wife's increased job responsibilities and having a second child have overwhelmed our family, and I have been unable to perform my work to the level I feel it deserves. The simple functions required to keep our family operating on a day-to-day basis have been more than we have been able to cope with while both of us worked. So, it has become necessary for us to make some changes, which includes me staying home with our children and not working outside of the home for the next few years. So it is with sadness that I am writing this letter of resignation. I will be resigning as Ministry Associate of the congregation effective May 31 in order to become a full-time Dad.

We will still be members of the congregation and we will still participate in several ministries that we are at-

tached to. One of the most exciting days during the chaos that has surrounded us this winter was enrolling Abigail in the Preschool at the church for the fall! Our connection to this congregation, and to the many people that have helped us through some particularly difficult times in the last year, will remain. I am looking forward to serving in the congregation in a more informal role that will allow for a more healthy family balance.

Thank you all for your support as Stacey and I have struggled to keep up with two very hectic schedules, schedules that we ultimately could not keep up with. After a great deal of deliberation and prayer we came to this decision in order to provide for a healthy family life, something that has been almost entirely absent in the last several months. I look forward to continuing my journey of faith with this wonderful congregation of believers!

Douglas Cummings



Pipe Peeps

Summer Music Ministry is almost here! I have already heard from folks who wish to contribute and I am in the process of making up the schedule. If you would like to participate, please let me know sooner rather than later. I find this particular ministry so rewarding as we are blessed with such a variety of offerings, and no matter what the style of music, we all benefit. We will be starting in mid-June, and I hope to have a few new folks who will be a part of the program.

Reflecting upon some of the changes we have tried during this past year, I must comment on the "Centering Prelude." I have been so happy with the

results as I think we have reached a good balance point. We all are enjoying the socializing before the worship service, and then the focus is directed for a brief period of reflection to allow the movement of the Spirit. It has been a challenge for me to restrict myself to the few minutes of musical meditation, but it has certainly merited the effort. We also have introduced several new hymns this year, and have used several new anthems with both choirs.

I thank all who contribute to our music ministry and I ask for your continued prayerful support.

Your Brother in Christ,
Michael Monaco

Part 2

The Experience of Grief... Anniversary Reactions



In last month's *Quill* we discussed the responses to loss, and offered some coping strategies. Grief doesn't magically end at a certain point. Feelings of grief might return on the anniversary of your loved one's death, birthday or other special days throughout the year. To continue on the path toward healing, it helps to know what to expect — and how to cope with reminders of your loss.

Reminders can be anywhere

- Certain reminders of your loved one might be inevitable, especially on holidays, birthdays, anniversaries and other special days that follow your loved one's death.
- Reminders aren't just tied to the calendar, though. They can be tied to sights, sounds and smells, and they can ambush you. You might suddenly be flooded with emotions when you drive by the restaurant your partner loved or when you hear your child's favorite song. Even memorial celebrations for others can trigger the pain of your own loss.

What to expect when grief returns

- Anniversary reactions can last for days at a time or — in more extreme cases — much longer. You might experience: sadness; loneliness; anger; anxiety; trouble sleeping; fatigue; and/or pain.
- Anniversary reactions can also evoke powerful memories of the feelings and events surrounding

your loved one's death. For example, you might remember events in great detail.

Tips to cope with reawakened grief

Even years after a loss, you might continue to feel sadness when you're confronted with reminders of your loved one's death. As you continue healing, take steps to cope with reminders of your loss. For example:

- Be prepared. Anniversary reactions are normal. Knowing that you're likely to experience such reactions can help you understand them and even turn them into opportunities for healing.
- Plan a distraction. Schedule a gathering or a visit with friends or loved ones during times when you're likely to feel alone or be reminded of your loved one's death.
- Reminisce about your relationship. Focus on the good things about your relationship with your loved one and the time you had together, rather than on the loss.
- Write a letter to your loved one or a note about some of your good memories. You can add to this note anytime.
- Start a new tradition. For instance, make a donation to a charitable organization in your loved one's name on birthdays or holidays, or plant a tree in honor of your loved one.
- Connect with others. Draw friends and loved ones close to you, including people who were special to your loved one. Find someone who'll encourage you to talk about your loss. Stay connected to your usual support systems, such as spiritual leaders and social groups. Consider joining a bereavement support group.
- Allow yourself to feel a range of emotions. It's OK to be sad and feel a sense of loss, but also allow yourself to experience joy and happiness. As you celebrate special times, you might find yourself both laughing and crying.

When grief becomes overly intense

Anniversary reactions can leave you reeling. Still, the intensity of grief tends to lessen with time. If your grief gets worse or interferes with your ability to function in daily life, consult a grief counselor or other mental health provider. Unresolved or complicated grief can lead to depression and other health problems. With professional help, however, you can re-establish a sense of control and direction in your life — and return to the path toward healing.

*** <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/grief/MH00036>

Marcie Clark, Parish Nurse



St. Stephen April Council Minutes

The Council met on April 9, 2013.

Minutes of the March Council meeting were approved.

- Nothing further to report now on the Jamestown Road property.
- Ministry Associate **Doug Cummings** submitted his resignation effective May 31, 2013. He and his family will remain active members of our congregation. Council thanked Doug for all his hard work, and recognizes it was a tough decision for him to make.
- Council hopes to meet with the Bishop next month to discuss our needs and how to proceed with securing assistance for the Pastor and congregation.
- **June 23, 2013, at 10:00 AM** was selected as the time for our June Congregational Meeting. A nominating committee will be formed to recruit candidates.
- We are also looking for a congregation member who is willing to chair the ad hoc Facilities group that has been meeting to help identify maintenance needs.
- A letter from the Bishop was read in which he thanked St. Stephen for our increased giving for mission support, and congratulated us on the strong leadership of our Pastor and staff.
- Reports were addressed, and positive comments were made regarding the joint Easter week services with St. Martin's Episcopal Church.

David F. Clark, Secretary



Who are our neighbors?

For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows

no partiality nor takes a bribe. He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. Deuteronomy 10:17-19

Look around you. Everyone you see, everyone you talk to or don't talk to— everyone is your neighbor. Friends and strangers alike: each is your neighbor.

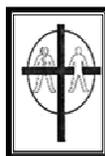
Through the United Lutheran Appeal, your Partners in Ministry extend your reach as a good neighbor. On your behalf, they care for the weak and lonely, the elderly, the child, the prisoner. They educate those who hunger for knowledge.

May 5 is United Lutheran Appeal Sunday at St Stephen. United Lutheran Appeal envelopes will be mailed to every household. They will also be in the church pews. Please place the envelope with your gift in the offering plate and the financial secretary will forward your contribution to the Virginia Synod.

Remember your partners...caring for your neighbors, just as you do.

- Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center
- Chaplain Service Prison Ministry of Virginia
- Hungry Mother Lutheran Retreat Center
- Lutheran Family Services of Virginia
- Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
- National Lutheran Communities and Services
- Roanoke College
- Virginia Lutheran Homes

Thank you for your support of the United Lutheran Appeal!
www.vasynod.org/ula



My Journey With (and without) Stephen Ministry

We all know people who are going through tough times. Maybe it is a death, bad news about their health, issues with family members, job loss—so many things in life. The person you are sitting next to in the pew may be in misery—but they won't let on. We Lutherans are stoic; we are "fine." (Except for the converts like me.) We say "reach out and get help." But many people just can't. Sometimes it is shyness, or maybe reluctance to think the situation is "that bad." My brother died a year ago. The Easter season made it seem like yesterday. It showed up in little things like

frogs; old rock and roll songs on the radio; a birthday card never sent. I could not face the services the week before Easter as I did not think I could get through them. I could not think of Jesus' death and suffering because it made me think of my brother. Luckily for me there were sisters and brothers (including my husband) in the church who took the time to notice and to listen. But I had nothing to express at the time. I was pulled inside myself and could not reach out. If you know someone who could benefit from (and might be open to) a Stephen Minister, even for a little while, let Pastor Ballentine know on their behalf. He will do his best to put two companionable people together. All information is confidential and only Pastor, the caregiver, and the care receiver know about the relationship. *"Reach out for God and find him, though he is not far from each one of us."* Acts 17:27

Cindy Gibbs

Flowers please!



We will again follow our tradition of bringing red flowers to church on Pentecost. Any red flower of your choice can be brought and placed on that Sunday around the altar. Flowers that are brought will be planted in the church gardens.

Chris Punchard

Blanket Sunday comes in May



We will hold "Blanket Sunday" on **Mother's Day, May 12**, this year. Look for the special envelope in the Bulletin on Sunday, **May 5** for your donations for this worthy cause. Please make checks payable to St. Stephen Lutheran Church with "Blanket Sunday" in the memo line. Our gifts will be forwarded to Church

World Services who distributes the blankets to more than 80 countries throughout the world.

Thank you for caring.

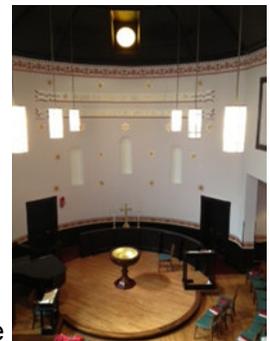
Marian Thies

2013 Women's Retreat



We had a wonderful two-day retreat at Richmond Hill on April 20 and 21. 35 women joined together to pray, worship, and have fellowship at this beautiful, unique location overlooking downtown Richmond.

We lived by Richmond Hill's rhythm of 7:00AM, noon, and 6:00PM prayers followed by meals, as well as having Compline Saturday evening and Sunday morning worship in the serene Chapel. We explored the garden, walked the prayer labyrinth, sat in the sunshine, were made aware of God's time in the Sundial, and were reminded of Richmond Hill's mission to pray for Metropolitan Richmond by enjoying the gorgeous view of Downtown from the Cupola and our meeting room.



Reverend Janell Nickols led us through four leadership styles based on women of the Bible—midwife, choreographer, weaver, and intercessor. We also organized art supplies

for a cabinet that will be used at Avalon, in honor of **Reverend Willetta Heising's** 90th birthday. We joyfully sang our favorite hymns during worship and the Hymn Sing.



During break-out sessions, we explored St. John's Church (famous for Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty...")

speech), prayed in color, were challenged with meditative stretching, learned how to make prayer shawls, and started the next St. Stephen cookbook (*All Are Welcome*—more recipes will be requested soon). After the retreat, some women further explored Maymont Estate or Hollywood Cemetery. It was a beautiful, sunny weekend to get to know other women, our own leadership style(s), and have time for new learning, prayer, and reflection.



Stacey Cummings for the Women's Retreat

ments and helped prepare the desert for their Moms. It is truly one of our favorite days!

The end of year brings water play days, a visit from "Jake" the Parrot, and our annual picnics and the graduation ceremony held at Chickahominy Riverfront Park.

Thanks to the many generous donations to the St. Stephen Scholarship Fund, we are able to help three families with the tuition next year! We also raised more than \$100 for the scholarship fund from the School Crossing Fundraiser. Thanks to **Bob and Sherry Phipps!** Look for us to partner with School Crossing again next year!



Bob Phipps and Lauren McQuain

Summer Camp runs the month of June.

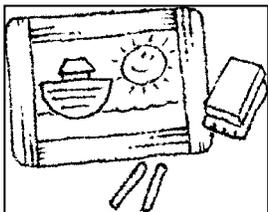
The staff wishes you all a wonderful summer, and look forward to another exciting year in September!

Dine with friends



Join us for a meal out!

Please join St. Stephen friends at **1:00 PM on Sunday, May 19** at the Holy Mackerel Seafood Grill, 4854 Longhill Road (in the shopping center at the corner of Longhill and Olde Towne Roads). Not a seafood lover? - lots of other things on the menu. Please make your reservation on the blue sheet or by calling **Stew and Pat Fretz (603-6830) by Monday, May 13.**



May Preschool News

The preschool year has just flown by! The children in the 4-year-old and PreK classes treated their mothers to a wonderful luncheon at Rocco's Smokehouse Grill. They prepared invitations, placemats, flower arrange-

The Church mouse hears . . .



The Preschool is in need of plastic jars with lids, like peanut butter or mayonnaise jars for an art project they are making. . . The mouse wants to hear what your children and young adults are up to! Our young people are very busy, and we want to come out and support them! Let Sandy in the church office know of your activities and events so that we can show the love of St. Stephen. . . Best wishes to our William and Mary graduating seniors—you enriched our lives with your being with us at St. Stephen!





Prayers

Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for **Diane Bean, Brian Bergh, Shana Brisson, Bradley Cummings, Chuck Hilbinger, Stan Hobday, Dorothy Reeves, Dan Stimson**

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

Pray the hope and joy of Easter for **Shirley Basley** and family as they mourn Ray's death; for **Jane Gingerich** and family as they mourn her father; for **Phyllis Spencer** and family as they mourn her brother-in-law; and for **Jonathan Hallman** and his family as they mourn his grandmother.

Pray God's blessings upon

- **Glenn Carlson** as he prepares to donate bone marrow
- the **Williamsburg Area Association for the Mentally Ill** meeting on Tuesday evenings
- the Wednesday night **AA meeting**
- the **AI Anon meeting** on Friday afternoons
- the **Young People of AA** on Friday nights the Saturday afternoon **AA meeting**

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Nathalee Accomando, Donna Alt, Millie Andrews-Young, Joseph Asprey, Anna-Lisa Baldwin, Raymond Barnes, Walter Bartin, Michael Beer, Mickey Bennett, Frances Berry, Cathy Bierd, Lois Bomba, Bob Canny, Joanne Carlson, Karen Heide Carney, Ware Carpenter, Bob Casey, Donna Cherel, Phil Clark, Jean Cogle, Bobbie Jo Collins, Howard Correll, Rosemarie Cristofolo, Bob Daum, Jeris DeKievit, Beulah Douglas, Inge Feilbier, Nick Finley, Mary Funkhouser, Pamela Glasgow, Nancy Gottschalk, Nicole Grogan, Eleanor Harms, Jennifer Herndl, Janis Hepburn, Carol Horton, Doris Hughes, Betty March, Jan Menig, Roxanne Morris, the Nasra family, Doris Nester, Arthur Pate, Henry and Beth Pate, Ryleigh, Colton, John and William Pate, George Rauchfuss, Lisa Rivolta, Don Romig, family and friends of Mark Salsman, Roland Scheiding, Bernadine Schlicht, Jeffrey Shafer, Diana Shepherd, Ron Smith, Nancy Spaniol, Evelyn Spear, Jon Spinnanger, Gail Swann, Connie Testerman, Howard Teubner, Vivian Villaseñor, Louise Walker



May Birthdays

1	Elizabeth Bosworth	Landry Bosworth
	Jessica Harms	Jane Mazur
2	Betty McKee	Melissa Rieg
4	Dorothy Hinders	
5	Jackson Sidebottom	
6	Karen West	
8	Kristina Finch	
10	Chris Black	
11	Jon Lund	
13	Joshua Cosby	
14	Alex Ogborn	
15	Laura Bergh	Jane Holcombe
17	Ward Bourn	Gill DeMari
20	John Olson	Kylen Saunders
	Barbara Weekes	
21	Heather Alpino	
22	Theo Bergh	
23	Michael Monaco	
24	Regina Root	
29	Ron Laign	
31	Cindy Bouschek	Jackie Locke

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

Rev. April 3, 2013



Ray Basley

Ernie and Fran Schwab
Keith and Nancy Egloff – Building Fund
Bill and Jane Holcombe

Anna Lou Hobday

Bill and Jane Holcombe

Sam Trapani

Ann Trapani



Letters to our Congregation

Bishop James F. Mauney wrote Pastor Ballentine and the St. Stephen congregation thanking us for our \$920 increase commitment of our giving, saying also that we are a "vibrant, lively congregation and it is always a joy to come through your doors and hear the worship, see

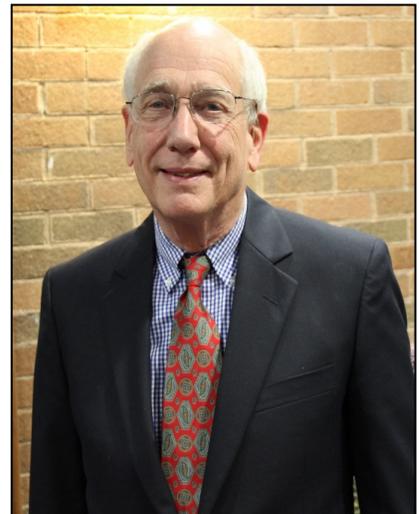
the ministries, be welcomed by your friendly faces!” Hospice House thanked us for our \$600 donation. Avalon, a Center for Women and Children, thanked us for our recent contribution of \$700.



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