



The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

November 2015



Holy Moments

In Jesus, God entered our human flesh.
Because of Jesus, God dwells in our flesh.

These are fundamental claims of our faith. They are audacious confessions. Many do not believe these claims. That is true, in particular, of many who identify themselves as “spiritual but not religious.”

But here is what we confess: that God is personal, and that God yearns to draw all people into relationship.

God dwells in our flesh because of Jesus – which means *we encounter God* in our relationships with other people. We participate in the life of Christ when we are in relationship with others.

We are all broken people. That calls for empathy. When we encounter others in their brokenness, when we enter deeply into each other’s lives, we are encountering the living Christ in the other person. In these encounters, God is creating holy moments.

What if we saw that to be the point of all our gatherings as church? In a ministry committee meeting, accomplishing necessary tasks are important, but not as important as the holy moments God yearns to create. When we prepare and provide food for homeless residents in motels, when we provide shelter for homeless people as part of the Community of Faith Mission, that is important. But it is not as important as the relationships that God desires to create between us and those “in need” – allowing those “in need” to give us much more than we give them.

Following Jesus the Christ means receiving him into our brokenness and becoming present to others in their brokenness. We receive healing from Jesus. We

offer that healing to others. In this is salvation! In this is transformation!

-- Pastor Andy Ballentine

News from our Parish Nurse



Luke 10:38-42

So, Jesus and his friends drop in on Martha and Mary. Martha heads to the kitchen to make preparations; but, Mary sits down to listen to Jesus. Well, Martha isn’t happy about this, not at all and she wants Mary to help her. So she approaches Jesus to ask him to send Mary to help.

But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her”

Have you ever been really busy? So busy you miss the point; so involved in the tasks that you miss the main event? Today’s pervasive culture often encourages us to be over the top crazy busy. There is a recent car commercial on TV that portrays a man leaving work on time, and it’s seen as scandalous!

Sometimes the more tasks we *think* we can do, the more we get behind. As a result, it becomes difficult to escape. The more we struggle, the deeper we sink. In the “I’m crazy busy” world, we can become overwhelmed and exhausted. Working in survival mode doesn’t leave us time to truly reflect on the big picture. We can totally miss it!

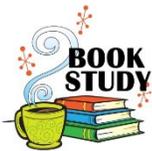
But being busy can also make us feel important, sought-after and indispensable. This present "busyness" is often something we've chosen, if only by our acquiescence to it, the outside cultural pressure and feeling of being vital, and by how *normal* it now feels.

Busyness serves to create walls that prevent intimacy and starves any connection between us and others. It pulls us deeper into anxiety and guilt and is insatiably fueled by its evil twin, "Not Good Enough."

We struggle for connection, community, and quiet, yet the urge to stay busy can become an addiction of sorts. Is it a safer place when our heads are spiraling out of control thinking about the past and the future, rarely being mindfully present in the now? Do we get so busy making a living that we forget to make a life?

Are we so busy that we are willing to sacrifice the quality of our lives? Sometimes we have to live in the moment and decide what's important. What matters and what to let go. These are tough decisions about values, priorities and realities.*

*Portions of this article were from Richards, Kim RN, NC-BC The Disease of 'Busyness' *Nurs Econ.* 2015; 33(2):117-119



A New Book Study

The Liturgical Year: The Spiraling Adventure of the Spiritual Life, by Joan Chittister

Since this past Advent, I've been paying attention to the themes of the liturgical year – through the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and into the weeks and months of the long season of Pentecost. I have become aware of God's presence in a new way when "processing" day-to-day experiences through the themes of these seasons.

For our next book study, I invite you to join me in this practice of the faith. We'll use Joan Chittister's book, *The Liturgical Year: The Spiraling Adventure of the Spiritual Life*. The study will begin as Advent begins and continue into the first couple of months of 2016. The first Monday night session will be **November 30, at 7:00**

PM, and the first Thursday afternoon session on December 3, at 2:00 PM.

The deadline for ordering a copy of the book is Sunday, November 15. Each copy will cost approximately \$12. Let me know if you want us to order a book for you!

Pastor Andy Ballentine



St. Stephen October Council Minutes

The Council met on **October 20, 2015.**

- The September Council minutes were approved.
- Council discussed possible activities for St. Stephen's upcoming 60th Anniversary, December 9, 2016. It was decided to ask via weekly bulletins for volunteers for an Anniversary Planning committee.
- If you have ideas or are willing to help with planning or helping organize these activities please mark the colored sheet in the weekly bulletin when notice appears.
- The Finance committee is making progress on a proposed budget for 2016. It will be presented at the January Congregational meeting.
- The Wednesday evening worship services will continue at least until Advent.

All are welcome to attend!

David F. Clark, Secretary

Thoughts from the Endowment Committee



Why you should consider.....

Over the past two or three years, many of you, our congregation, have stepped forward and joined the effort to protect St. Stephen's future. As you know, the Endowment Committee has set a goal of \$1.2 million to be pledged to our church's future by St Stephen's 60th anniversary next year (2016).

We are all aware that we belong to a tremendously generous, caring church. We support our church in numerous ways and with a more solid endowment we will guarantee not only our future but our outreach, our sharing of God's word to the community and the world.

As numerous members have come forward to join the endowment effort, the various reasons that have moved them never cease to amaze me. One couple said, "Helping our congregation to share 'the word' is a great opportunity. We want others out there to know the peace we feel."

Another couple came forward because giving (or pledging) gives them the feeling of helping to change the world one step at a time.

We are a part of a very generous congregation with a chance to reach out to the future and yet not change our lifestyle or our estate plans. Think about it - - the feeling is one you will like.

Gary Krull for the Endowment committee



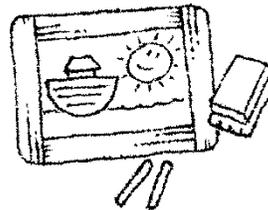
Endowment Committee Members

Are you ready? It's coming, January 3, 2016

So dust off your sneakers and join the fun as we
"Walk to Jerusalem"

Our congregation will unite in a collective effort to walk, swim, bike, dance our way to Jerusalem by Easter.

Details coming in December *Quill*



November Preschool News

October was a fun month! We had visits from the Williamsburg Fire Department and staff from York River State Park.

We had our annual Halloween parade around the church and down Jamestown Road. Our children delighted everyone with their costumes and Halloween songs!

This month we are focusing on giving thanks for all of God's gifts to us. We will be creating a "Thankful Tree" in the Preschool, where the children tell us what they are thankful for. The children will also be creating Native American outfits, pilgrim placemats and lots of fall art.

Please take a look in the Gathering Space for our ever changing "Art Gallery"! Please feel free to join **Pastor Griffin and the Preschoolers during our Chapel time, Tuesday November 17 or Wednesday November 18 at 11:30 AM** for prayer and beautiful singing by our Preschoolers!

This month our 4 and 5 year-old-classes will visit Jamestown Settlement. Our extended day classes will have a visit from Dr. Gerre Johnson, retired Paleontologist from William and Mary. He is always entertaining with his local fossil finds! Detective Walker from the Williamsburg Police Department will also visit us. He will teach the children about safety, and what

the Police do to protect us. He is collecting new and/or gently used small stuffed animals to give to children in trauma. Please consider donating one! You can drop them off at the Preschool. Thank you in advance for this worthy cause for our area children in need.

The Preschool will be closed from November 25-27 for Thanksgiving. We hope you all have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Lauren McQuain, Director of the Preschool



The Church Mouse Hears . . .

Great article featuring **Jim Ogborn in the fall Avalon Donor Newsletter!** One of the things he said, "My favorite part of volunteering with Avalon is that through my efforts I can actually make a positive difference in somebody's life!" Cheers for Jim and cheers for Avalon.



All enjoyed the LSA Ice Cream Social in October.



November Birthdays

- | | | |
|----|-------------|--------------|
| 4 | Art Dorsey | Erika Geier |
| | Soni York | |
| 8 | Paul Black | |
| 9 | Joyce Beene | |
| 10 | Helen Allen | Martin Bleck |

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|-------------------|
| | Bradley Cummings | |
| 11 | Steven Harms | |
| 14 | Elsie Hall | |
| 15 | Alaina Jones | Kaili Jones |
| | Karen VanRosendale | |
| 16 | Linda Reuben | Carol Wiers |
| 17 | Debi Austin | Stacey Cummings |
| 19 | Julie Pierce | |
| 21 | Jo Schumacher | |
| 23 | Marcie Clark | Travis Meermans |
| | Lucas York | |
| 24 | Stephanie Leek | Karen Nester |
| 25 | Marilyn Asprey | Benjamin Berry |
| | Sara Moretz | Susan Voigt |
| 26 | Diana Krieger | |
| 27 | Don Nelson | |
| 29 | Ursula Recktenwald | |
| 30 | Bob Hanny | Matthew Sandridge |



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Paul and Mary Williams
Gretchen and Madelyn
PO Box 7045
Williamsburg, VA 23188



You have blessed me richly! Thank you for your many expressions of congratulations on the 10th anniversary of my ordination! That God has placed me in the church in which I was ordained helps confirm my call. You are active disciples of Christ, generous in spirit. To serve among you is a joy! Thank you for your blessings to me, and for your ministry in this community, and in the world. In Christ's love, **Pastor Griffin**



Letters to our congregation

- From his Hands thanked us for our serving the hungry and homeless
- Avalon thanked us for our donation of toiletries, greeting cards and personal items in September. They also wrote us to thank us for our donation of school supplies for the children.
- FISH thanked us for our contribution. FISH is celebrating 40 years of service and are asking for recollections, stories, photos, that tell the stories of the early years.
- Olde Towne Medical and Dental Center thanked us for our gift of \$1,500 for their program.

Faith Formation Classes Meet!



In October, there was a large turnout for a new adult class called "Christians Say the Darndest Things" led by Judy Cobb.



Faith Formation has started for both young people and adults. The First Communion classes have been going each week as well.



Thanksgiving Worship

Thanksgiving Worship for members of St. Stephen Lutheran Church and St. Martin Episcopal Church will happen in our worship space **Wednesday, November 25 at 7:00 PM**. Worshipers will have the opportunity to stand at their places in this informal worship and share thanksgivings and share the Lord's Supper.

FISH, INC. 

Serving for FISH in November!

Every November, St. Stephen members volunteer on Tuesdays sizing and folding clothing at FISH. A sign-up chart will be in the Gathering Space for the four Tuesdays, November 3, 10, 17, and 24. Sign for one of the two shifts each Tuesday -- 9:15 to 11:45 AM or 1:00 to 3:00 PM. Join the fun but no more than four persons per shift. FISH is celebrating 40 years of serving people of Williamsburg!

Congregational Officers:

President	Stan York	345-0073
Vice President	Emily Rossiter	345-6206
Secretary	Dave Clark	603-6346
Treasurer	Paul Kristiansen	220-2709
Financial Secretary	Linda Vonderheide	645-4059

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Dir. Music/Organist	Martin Barstow	MusicDir@
Parish Nurse	Marcie Clark	ParishNurse@
Dir. Of Preschool	Lauren McQuain	258-3759
	email	preschool@

Monday - Friday: 9:00 am - 12:00 noon

Church Council:

Amy Bergh	566-4557
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Terry Hinders	221-0904
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