



The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

November 2019



BLESSINGS

What is the first thing you did when you woke up this morning? Think about it... Did you say that you opened your eyes, or maybe something you do before that? We tend to forget small details, or maybe even not notice them. Isn't opening your eyes in the morning something for which to give thanks? This is my observation and my own experience—we take many simple things for granted, things that are a gift from God. We breathe without thinking about it, until breathing becomes difficult. Our ability to choose what we eat, or what clothes we wear is a blessing on top of having something to wear and food to eat. As challenging as it is to recognizing our blessings, it is important to do.

St. Paul, in his letter to the Colossians, writes, *Be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God* [15b-16]. Gratitude is a spiritual discipline. Spiritual disciplines draw us closer and open us up to God. They also help us to be who God created us to be, which is the basis of happiness. A grateful disposition is foundational to our well-being.

A grateful nature fends off our attitude of entitlement. It fends off attitudes of entitlement, and holds envy and resentment at bay. Medical

science has proven that thankfulness results in better sleep, improves self-esteem, and contributes to physical health. My advice to people is to keep a gratitude journal. At the end of each day, write down three things for which you are thankful.

This leads us back to the beginning. How do we recognize our blessings? I am reminded of a story (written by Jullian Kay Melchior and published in the Wall Street Journal). A young girl, age 7, was obsessed with the thought that there was treasure buried on the school playground. She told her classmates that they would be fools not to look for it. She and her classmates dug every day. As time went on, fewer classmates engaged in the search until finally the young girl was on her own. One day, she heard a "clink" when she turned the earth. There was treasure! Jewels and coins! She would later find that her parents had planted the glass jewels and fake gold coins. Now a young woman, she says that she knew that if she looked for treasure, she would find it.

What is it that you look for? Do you expect to find God's blessings? Do you expect to see Jesus? Dig through your life every day, and give thanks. *Seek and you will find*, Jesus tells us. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Cheryl Ann Griffin

STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. STEPHEN



CARING FOR CAREGIVERS AT HOME

In our congregation, a number of individuals serve as caregivers at home for other family members for extended illnesses, permanent disabilities, mental incapacity or other debilitating problems. Some of these responsibilities are temporary but some are for extended periods or even life-long. The work involved may be limited. On the other hand, the responsibilities can be demanding, even daunting. Not only may the ill family member be homebound, but the care-taker may become essentially home-bound as well. The caregiver may harbor feelings of isolation, fatigue, frustration, anger, guilt, resentment, and/or defeat. Separation from the church community can compound these feelings, just at a time when that support may be most important.

If you are a home caretaker of a family member with a disability or illness and are dealing with some of these issues, you could be helped by a Stephen Minister. Stephen Ministers are members of our congregation who have made a strong personal commitment and gone through extensive training in providing supportive Christian care to those going through stressful times in their lives. Stephen Ministry care can continue over extended periods of time. Stephen Ministers can be particularly helpful to at-home caregivers going through difficulties. Stephen Ministers can come to the home to meet with home caregivers so the home caregiver would still be available to the home bound family member. Meetings are typically once a week and would continue as long as they are beneficial.

If you are a caregiver for a homebound individual, or if you feel that you could use emotional or spiritual support from a Stephen Minister for other reasons, contact **Pastor Griffin**, or **Stephen Leaders Jane Wills** or **Bill Dichtel**. All Stephen Minister services are confidential and supervised.

Bill Dichtel, Stephen Leader



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

4	Art Dorsey	Erika Geier
	Soni York	
8	Paul Black	Sammi Crittenden
9	Joyce Beene	
10	Helen Allen	Martin Bleck
11	Steven Harms	
16	Bella Napier	Linda Reuben
	Carol Wiers	
17	Debi Austin	
21	Jo Schumacher	
23	Marcie Clark	Travis Meermans
24	Stephanie Leek	Karen Nester
25	Marilyn Asprey	Benjamin Berry
	Susan Voigt	
26	Diana Krieger	
27	Don Nelson	
29	Ursula Recktenwald	
30	Bob Hanny	



NEW MEMBERS



Tim and Ellen Weidman



Jim Weilmuenster

Contact the Church Office for contact information.

THANK YOU!



Thank you for your generous gift of \$1,000.00 to Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) ministries through ELCA Good Gifts.

Your Good Gift is a very good gift, indeed. With resources like seedlings and seminary courses, vaccinations and vegetable gardens, Bibles and blankets, you're equipping God's people – around the world and around the corner – with what they need to live abundant lives.

Thank you for your leadership in the vital ministries that we do together – and for your very good gift!

Rachael Wind, Executive for Development, ELCA



To Our Prayer Shawl Ministry Friends,

On behalf of Hospice House and Support Care thank you for your generous donation of prayer shawls. The prayer shawls are exquisite and the colors are lovely and soft! Your handiwork reflects your care and compassion. You can be assured the prayer shawls will be of great comfort to our guests and their families.

We thank you for your kindness and thoughtfulness in remembering Hospice House. Take care.

Trish Ulanick, Volunteer of Hospice House



MEN'S & WOMEN'S BREAKFASTS

- **November 5** – Women are invited to join together for breakfast the first **Tuesday** of this month.
- **November 7** – Men are invited to join together for breakfast the first **Thursday** of this month.

Both gatherings take place at **8:00 AM** at the Colonial Pancake House, at the corner of Page Street and Penniman Road, Williamsburg, VA. The get-togethers promote conversation and friendship in a casual setting.

GIVING OPTION - REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTION

As we are approaching the end of 2019, the decision was made by the Finance Committee to use the date of **Sunday, December 29, 2019** as the last day to receive donations to St. Stephen for 2019.



If you are over 70½ and have an IRA, you are required to take a yearly Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) which is treated for tax purposes as regular income. You have the option of contributing part or all of your RMD to any tax exempt organization. This contribution is called a QCD or Qualified Charitable Distribution and must go directly from the financial institution that holds your IRA to the charity. It counts as your RMD, you do not count it as regular income, but you cannot claim the donation as a charitable contribution.

In the past during the last quarter of the year, many IRA donations have been given to St. Stephen. Please ask your financial advisor to prepare the paperwork indicating your name on the check or check stub, reference QCD or IRA, designate 2019 or 2020, and forward your contribution to the church office **no later than the second week in December**.

If you give a QCD to St. Stephen, you can earmark the donation for Current Giving, the Building Fund, Endowment Fund or any special ministry that is important to you; such as, Godparents for Tanzania, Homeless Ministry, Campus Ministry, Preschool, etc.

If you have questions, please contact **Linda Vonderheide** or **Jane deSolms**.

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR



With a "normal" **Advent calendar**, you open a door each day to see a picture, take out a chocolate or get some other prize. With a **reverse advent calendar**, you begin with an empty cardboard box. Every day for 24 days, beginning December 1 (the first day of Advent), you add one item. After 24 days, at the end of the Advent season, when the box is full, we will collect them and donate them to FISH, our local food pantry.

The Social Ministries Coordinating Committee is asking church members to join with our Preschool families to promote this easy way of giving to the community.

Not only is this a fun thing for the whole family to do together - picking the items to go into the box - more meaningfully, it teaches children (and adults) the importance of helping others, especially at Christmas time.

We will collect items in the Preschool and in the Gathering Space. Together we can make a huge impact on our local food pantry.

Copies of the Reverse Advent Calendar are available in the Gathering Space. Please contact **Sandy Peterkin** (229-6688) if you have any questions or would like a Calendar mailed to you.

Social Ministries Coordinating Committee

188 SMILES AND THANKS



... from the students in Grove that received new school shoes! My personal thanks to everyone in the congregation who participated so generously by purchasing shoes or giving me money to do so.

Marilyn Johnson

Social Ministry Coordinating Committee





CAREGIVING

November is National Caregivers month. This is a way to raise awareness of family caregiver issues, celebrate the efforts of family caregivers, educate family caregivers about self-identification and increase support for family caregivers. Over half of the people who care for someone at home are women with more than 1 million young adults over the age of 18 being very active in caring for someone at home. Some of the difficulties faced may include holding down a job, long distance caregiving, friction in the family, the type of disability and even your own feelings.

Transportation can become an issue as our elders age and have to give up driving. It can be difficult to help them navigate their loss of independence and to know when it is time to get help. It is even difficult to find help or know where to start when looking for an agency. In the transition, the caregiver sometimes loses their ability or desire to care for themselves.

Some tips to help take care of yourself:

1. Seek support from other caregivers.
2. Take care of your own health.
3. Accept offers of help.
4. Watch for signs of depression.
5. Be open to new technologies that can help you.
6. Watch for signs of depression
7. Communicate effectively
8. Organize medical information
9. Make sure legal documents are in order
10. Give yourself credit for doing the best you can.

If you find you are in need of help, give me a call. I can help you navigate any processes about which you feel you are unsure. My door is open.

Diana Tiller-Dichtel, Parish Nurse



The Community of Faith Mission (COFM) sponsors a homeless shelter program operating during the colder months of the year (November-March), providing overnight sleeping accommodations as well as dinner, breakfast and lunch. COFM includes more than 30 churches in the Williamsburg Area, including St. Stephen.

- The COFM shelter program begins this year on **November 17**.
- We will serve as a partner church with King of Glory Lutheran and Williamsburg United Methodist (just down the street), when we provide the shelter **December 8-15**.
- **Jo Hanny** is our congregational coordinator (229-5089 or rbrt.hann@gmail.com) and **Sandy Peterkin** is our meals coordinator (879-1052 or sandypeterkin@yahoo.com).
- The following items are needed:
 - regular and decaf coffee
 - paper towels
 - instant ice tea mix
 - instant lemonade mix
 - Capri Sun juice (box of 10)
 - white sport socks (men's and women's)
 - underwear – all sizes (men's and women's)

Please place articles in the Community of Faith Mission bin in the Gathering Space. Contributions may be made by writing a check to St. Stephen, putting "Homeless Ministry" in the memo line. Questions? Contact **Jo** or **Sandy**.



VISIONING SESSION

On September 14, 2019, Pastor John Wertz, Assistant to the Bishop, Virginia Synod, conducted an all-day Workshop with the congregation.

Stories Help with Perspective

Pastor Wertz opened this day of visioning at St. Stephen in terms of stories: What are our stories and what do our stories say about who we are, where we've been and where we might be headed?

Beginning the visioning session with a devotion, Pastor Wertz shared the Bible story that we know as the story of the prodigal son. Through his reading of this story in the Gospel (Luke 15:11-32), we come to see the familiar prodigal son story as a whole NEW story – **the story of the gracious Father!** This new perspective of the familiar story reminds us that our gracious Father loves, forgives, accepts and celebrates our return to Him, **always.**

Review Decades and Identify Themes

Pastor Wertz asked those gathered to reflect on and discuss St. Stephen in recent decades, noting significant events, staff changes, ministries (preschool, college, etc.), building/property changes and others, for the specific decades. Those gathered around the many tables in the room had a block of several minutes to discuss together and identify significant events during each of the following decades:

1980-1989
1990-1999
2000-2009
2009-2019

After the four "decade" table breakout groups, Pastor Wertz led those present to begin to identify the "themes" from each of the four decades. He noted that where there are common themes across the decades, we are likely to see those themes in our future as a congregation.

Share the Saul – Paul Story

In sharing the story of Saul, who became Paul, Pastor Wertz emphasized how Paul claims his strengths, meets people WHERE they are, becomes a "bridge," and starts at the beginning.

Our stories are not perfect, and it's okay. God chose Paul to prove He can forgive anyone (1 Timothy 1:12-16). God's mercy can save even the most sinful person! We are Easter people, who know the gift of possibilities.

Determining Leadership Needs

Pastor Wertz asserted that St. Stephen is a strong and active congregation. St. Stephen is in the top one-third in terms of size, of the 145 congregations in the Virginia Synod. As he shared this statistic, Pastor Wertz also cautioned St. Stephen about comparing our congregation with others in considering the needs of our congregation regarding leadership. For example, one of our Synod's top 10 largest congregations replaced a departing pastor with a deacon. Another, a congregation smaller than St. Stephen, has two pastors. Leadership needs for St. Stephen are specific to and dependent upon the needs of our congregation.

Table Theme Sharing

As the final exercise of the visioning session, Pastor Wertz invited each table group to share its respective theme(s) we want to see continue at St. Stephen; these were recorded and collected. This exercise helps the congregation begin to think about the call process, about writing a story about who we are and what we need.

ALL Are Needed To Inform the Call Process

ALL are encouraged to share personal perspectives to inform the call process – including not only those who attend worship regularly and those who actively participate in various ministries of the church, but also those who haven't been to St. Stephen in a while, those who were not at the visioning session, those we help through our ministries, and St. Stephen's partners and neighbors.

Alison Carney



Brandon, Erika, Sonja and Klara
Cave
6620 Terry Drive
Fort Benning, GA 31905



MUSIC NEWS

All Saints Sunday Celebration

On **Sunday, November 3**, we celebrate the festival of All Saints remembering our St. Stephen members and family who have gone to the church Triumphant this past year. While we revere those who have gone before us in faith and remember them in love, we are reminded that God unites all the faithful in to the one holy catholic and apostolic church – the church on earth and the church in heaven through holy baptism. In holy baptism God makes saints out of sinners. In Holy Communion God forgives the sins of all the saints. On this day we give thanks for all the saints “who from their labors rest,” who have fought the good fight, who have gained the crown.

On **Sunday, November 3** at both worship services, our choirs will present a large choral work by Aaron David Miller: *Behold Your Saints in Glory: Worshiping with the Saints*. This exceptional work for choir, organ, trumpet and assembly is a complete multi-movement programmatic piece, including readings and prayers from the saints through the ages. Some of those saints include Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Francis of Assisi (1182-1226), Patrick of Ireland (c.372-466), and Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997). Holy Communion will be included in our assembly's liturgy as well as a reading of names deceased this past year in the congregation.

“A Strolling Afternoon Musicale” (AKA an Organ Crawl!) on Sunday, November 3.

Here's your chance to see the inside of the worship spaces of our Jamestown Road neighbors and to experience their worship music! Our Matins, Chancel and Handbell Choirs will all be a part of this fun afternoon. Refreshments will be served at your “final destination” – Williamsburg United Methodist Church. Come here a part or all this afternoon's array of musical gifts from our neighboring congregations.

- **3:00** - First Church of Christ, Scientist. Tonia Herrin, pianist.

- **3:45** - St. Stephen Lutheran Church. Karen Areheart Ives, Director of Music
- **4:30** - Temple Beth El. Nesim Halyo, Director and Conductor
- **5:15** - Williamsburg United Methodist Church, Tom Marshall, Organist

Visiting Handbell Choir to Ring at St. Stephen on Sunday, November 17

The Radiance Ringers adult bell choir and the Young Clappers youth bell choir from Morning Star Lutheran Church, Matthews, NC, will be offering special music in worship at both services on **Sunday, November 17**. The two bell choirs have been participating in a weekend handbell festival Kingsmill Doubletree Hotel. The two choirs are directed by Morning Star's Minister of Music, Ed Tompkins. Ed has served at Morning Star for almost 16 years. Prior to that, he served 16 years at a Presbyterian church in Richmond, VA. Ed has known St. Stephen's Director of Music for many years as they have worked together at various Lutheran events.

Karen Ives, Director of Music

HEATHER MACDONALD HONORED



The Geological Society of America, at its 2019 annual meeting, recognized the contributions of William & Mary's **Heather Macdonald** (left) with a set of sessions dedicated to her contributions to earth sciences education at two-year colleges. Heather is Chancellor Professor in William & Mary's Department of Geology. You can read more about Heather on William & Mary's web site.

www.wm.edu/news/stories/2019/geological-society-recognizes-wms-heather-macdonald-at-its-annual-meeting.php



ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

October is Fire Prevention Month and again our dramatic play area was transformed into a Firehouse. Children took emergency calls and dispatched their friends to help those in need. Our Williamsburg Fire Fighters came two days to teach our students about fire safety. We learned to check our smoke detectors twice each year; how to stop, drop, and roll if we were on fire; that if fire fighters came to our house in an emergency, we shouldn't be afraid of them when they are wearing all of their fire-fighting gear. We got to go out and look at a firetruck and an ambulance.



For the first time in decades, our children's artwork was not on display at An Occasion for the Arts. The committee was not going to show preschool artwork, but offered us one panel once we called to inquire. Unfortunately, that was insufficient space for our students' art, so we staged our own showing over the Occasion weekend in our

Gathering Space. Those attending the Blessing of the Animals on Saturday, October 5 were able to view the art before or after the service; congregation members were able to enjoy the art before and after worship on October 6; and parents and students were invited to visit the Gathering Space on Monday and Tuesday, October 7 and 8, for coffee, muffins and a stroll through the artwork of their children. Art Teacher Kelly Kirkpatrick worked with students in each class to create unique masterpieces!

Our first field trip of the year was to KelRae Farm. Students, parents, and teachers met the farm animals, had a tractor ride, made a bird feeder and chose a pumpkin to take home. Everyone had a wonderful time!

Thank you for coming out and supporting our Halloween Costume Pancake Supper on October 28. It is always fun to see children (and adults!) dress up for Halloween. The pancakes, toppings, and everything were delicious! Thank you for your continuing support and help! Our Preschool is thriving!

Sandy Peterkin, Administrator





NOVEMBER BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

The significance of baptism, Luther teaches in the *Small Catechism*, is “that the old creature in us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned and die through daily contrition and repentance, and on the other hand that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.”

Your baptismal anniversary is an opportunity to light a baptismal candle and to give some prayer time to reflecting on your experiences during the past year on your journey in faith!

Pastor Cheryl Ann Griffin

1	Jim Cobb	Barbara Morris
10	Josh Egloff	Carolyn McKenna
11	Henry Mallue	Hannah Wiers
15	Greta Scheitrum	
16	Ilianna Ogborn	Hunter Ogborn
18	Bethany Brisson	
22	Jim Weilmuenster	
30	Julian Jefferson	

Others who were baptized in November:

Audrey Root

Were you baptized in November, but your name isn't on the list above? Let us know!



PRAYERS



God has blessed Gene Clements with 90 years of life and Ginny Hilbinger with 92! Send them cards!

Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for Brian Agor, Mitzi Balma, Joe Beene, Jack Behlendorf, Ward Bourn, Kristin Carter, Art Dorsey, Jeanne Garrison, Dianne Harris, Lynn Knestrick, Reed Nester, Paul Reier, Linda Reuben, Anne Schone, Laura Spencer, and Mitchell Stauffer.

Pray God's blessings on Sara Harms and Ray Beatty and Christina and David Johnson as they wait for the birth of their babies. Christina is the teachers' aide in our Preschool.

Pray for those unable to come to worship: Doris Bass, Martin Bleck, Preston and Birdie Burton, Gene and Martha Clements, Bob and Angie Groom, Mary Jamerson, Billie Jo Purse, Dick Reeves, Jessie Schmitthenner, Jo Schumacher, Jean Shivel, Joanne Shue, Jerry Trone, Ladonna Wiederholt

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Gary Abrams, Brian Anchondo, Mary Ann Arnold, Jane Ayers, Gary Baumgarten, Rose Baumgarten, Laurie Berger, Eliza Bicknell, Tom and Bea Black, Blume family, Julie Boardman, Lou Byers, Jr., Terri Byers, Marla Canny, Elaine Cari, Rosemarie Cristofolo, Robin Daniel, Graham Darnell, Karen Deperini, Will Draughton, Nancy Ely, NeYsa Ely, Inge Felbier, Mary Fitzgerald, Pinkie Ford, Steven Friend, Betty frazee, Hollis Fulton, David Gamble, Jr., Robert Gay, Carole Gilman, Laurie Giner, Andrea Gonzalez, Bill Gottschalk, Kara Gustafsson, Fred Guy, Barbara Harvel, Nick Havola, Sharon Hegland, Emily Holdredge, Terry Holland, Will Hosey, Marian Hunt, Robin Jones, Thornton Kennedy, Fran Kibler, Chris Kinney, Art Kirk, John Knestrick, Rebecca Krueger, Torri Larson, Christopher Lee, Devin Lee, Mildred Lindblad, Jackie Lohr, Julia Lopac, Bill Macdonald, Patrick and Kristin McGraw, Brittney McQuaga, Al Meyer, Eric Nelson, Mike Overdorf, Dino Polizois, Jenny Rice, Edith A. Roberts, Shann Rufer, Marion Seidl, Inge Seiter, Patricia Simpson, James Smith, Sharon Smith, Evelyn Spear, Charley Underdahl, Tate Walker, Tim White, Nancy Wiers, Curtis Wikins, John Wilson, Donna Wood, and Aaron Zabell.

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
612 Jamestown Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185
www.saintstephenlutheran.net



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
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Congregational Officers:

<i>President</i>	David Wills	378-2715
<i>Vice President</i>	Amy Bergh	566-4557
<i>Treasurer</i>	Rich Brown	565-5646
<i>Financial Secretary</i>	Linda Vonderheide	814-404-8992
<i>Congregational Secretary</i>	Carol Wiers	564-0164

Church Office: Phone: (757) **229-6688**
email: All email addresses are:
_____@saintstephenlutheran.net



Church Staff:

<i>Pastor</i>	Cheryl Ann Griffin	876-6371
	email	Pastorcga@
<i>Parish and Preschool Administrator</i>	Sandy Peterkin	Office@
<i>Director of Music</i>	Karen Ives	MusicDir@
<i>Parish Nurse</i>	Diana Tiller-Dichtel	Parishnurse@
<i>Preschool Lead Teacher</i>	Susan Ruane	Preschool@

Church Council:

Bob Achenbach	206-1789
David Allen	645-8220
Amy Bergh	566-4557
Ellie Bergh (Youth Member)	566-4557
Sandy Croushore	476-5789
Dave Gamble	564-7030
Jeanne Garrison	229-0978
Linda Laity Hite	876-7431
Corey Knestruck	367-9904
Doug Moore	903-4969
George Vonderheide	645-4059
Carol Wiers	564-0164
David Wills	378-2715

The Quill is published monthly by
St. Stephen Lutheran Church
612 Jamestown Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Editor:

Reed Nester
reednester@gmail.com

Mailing:

Pam Buckley

Article deadline: Fifteenth of the previous month.