

# The Quill

#### THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

#### Williamsburg, Virginia

#### October 2018



### SPIRITUALITY, RELIGION, AND POLITICS - PART 2

Last month I offered definitions of three words that get to the core of what we are about, as followers of Jesus and as citizens. I asked what you thought about these, and received a number of very thoughtful responses! To keep us all thinking, I've posted excerpts of those responses below the original definitions. What would you add?

**Spirituality** is the desire for God. (This is true, even when the "spiritual" person does not know his/her desire is for God.) This hunger is created within us by God the Holy Spirit. As God draws us closer in our desire, the Spirit bears fruit within and among us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23

"I think this is good, Andy. I believe, though, that spirituality isn't just a desire for God, it's a desire for meaning in being. We might equate that with God, but meaning isn't necessarily equated with God."

"John Swinton, in his book Raging With Compassion: Pastoral Responses to the Problem of Evil, suggests that spiritual practices are concrete, specific behaviors that also might fall under religious rites, or even political action. Three that he specifically calls attention to are lament, thoughtfulness, and friendship. So, in short, I no longer think of spiritual or spirituality without thinking what specific practice am I being called to." **Religion** is the set of daily and weekly practices that the Spirit uses to cultivate and nourish the fruit of the Spirit within and among us. Engaging in these practices in community decreases the danger of self-absorptive narcissism. Additional indications of spiritual formation are: Hospitality to strangers. Inclusion. Perseverance in prayer. Self-control. Compassion. Humility. Meekness (which means courageous resistance against the impulse to respond to violence with violence). Forgiveness. Thankfulness. Offering blessings rather than curses. Sharing in others' joys and sufferings. Associating with the lowly. Loving and feeding your enemies. Responding to evil with goodness. Romans 12:2, 9-21; Colossians 3:12-17

"I think it becomes religion when the behaviors are associated specifically with a religious duty or obligation. I admit that part of my bias is that 'religion,' as understood in most homes, is unhelpful. I have a rather dim view of those who seek control over others under the guise of religion. Therefore, I am not a religious person; yet, I am a person who practices his faith. Those of us who choose to practice our faith together are a community, a body of faith. I would not use religion to describe Christianity."

"I would offer that religious practices are seasonal, built on the foundation of daily and weekly practices."

"I have come to the conclusion that all people are religious (all people have a religion, or have multiple religions, unexamined or not). In my observation, what makes something religious is, as you say, the presence of sort of a system of belief. It does not need to be organized or really that deep, but I believe all humans at some point form some type of structure for aligning those things that they are spiritual about, those things that provide spiritual connection for them or that nurture them spiritually. Religion connects with worship for me (more so than spirituality does), and, as David Foster Wallace said, we don't have a choice whether we worship or not. The only choice we get is what we worship. When I look out at the word, I see that everyone is worshiping something (or several things) whether they realize it consciously or not. And in every case there is some form or aspect of religion around it. One can even form a religion about not wanting to be perceived as religious."

"Meekness," one respondent wrote, means "strength under control."

"One nuance that I think is missing from your definition of religion is the distinction between religion and dogma. These are too often confused, certainly in popular culture, and all too frequently among Christians themselves. I've bumped up against this many times in conversations with friends and family who describe themselves as 'spiritual, but not religious.' My usual rejoinder is that I am very religious, but not the least bit dogmatic. For me, this means that I recognize that it is God (a whole different definitional dilemma) who calls me into constructive, loving relationships with God and with other people, but I am almost agnostic about the intellectual affirmations of 'truth' about who God is or how God manifests him/her/itself in creation. I think many people conflate religion (daily and weekly practices that the Spirit uses to cultivate and nourish the fruit of the Spirit) with religious dogma (specific intellectual affirmations or beliefs that dictate the form or content of those practices); for the casual reader, I think it would be important to disaggregate those two concepts."

**Politics** is living together and working together in community and in civic life. Followers of Jesus are called to act politically to make known in the world the characteristics Paul lists in Galatians, Romans and Colossians.

One respondent further defined politics as *"living* together and working together in community and in civic life with fellow Christians and those who have

different beliefs and opinions which should not be ignored."

"Your definition of politics is good. In our working it out however, we often interact adversely before seeing that there may be different possibilities of ways to achieve a commonly sought result."

What would you add to this – as we define our fundamental tasks of bringing God's good news through Jesus the Christ into the world? You have my e-mail address, right? And there's another Pub Theology coming up!

**Pastor Andy Ballentine** 

## CAN WE EVEN USE THE WORD "CHRISTIAN" ANYMORE?



What has "Christian" come to mean in the media? Does it describe us? Are there substitute words or phrases that we could use?

**Next Pub Theology Tuesday, October 2, 7:00 PM** at Billsburg Brewery (just opposite the Jamestown Settlement parking lot).



*MEN'S & WOMEN'S BREAKFASTS* 

- October 2 Women are invited to join together for breakfast the first Tuesday of this month.
- October 4 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.

## HAPPYBIRTHDAY

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

1	Martha Clements Bob Phipps	Hank Mallue
2	Kevin Drake	
3	Chuck Hilbinger Sharon Powell	Heather Macdonald
4	Keith Egloff Jaina Leek	Caitlin Leek
5	Brad Sipes Ellie Bergh	Ruby Umberger
6	Ellen Bushman	Sandy Peterkin
7	Tom Berkey	Jon Toler
8	Roberta Sulouff	
9	Gene Clements	Jayme Lawson
10	Ilianna Ogborn	
11	Celie Collins	Evelyn Kernan
13	Jane Gingerich	
14	Brenda Lee	
16	Linda Laity Hite	
	Alyssa Jones	
17	Joel Gillespie	Elizabeth Stein
18	Kara Meermans	
19	Martha Reier	
22	Barbara Morris	
25	Ginny Hilbinger	Kym Reubush
27	Joan Miller	
29	Neil Bailey	Corky Umberger
31	Pam Groman	

## What a of a response to our ELCA World Hunger appeal on God's Work Our Hands Sunday!

The Social Ministry Coordinating Committee is very appreciative of the congregation's generous support of its efforts to fund fish farms. The \$3,000 contributed will buy 12 villages a fish farm. Each village will be taught to raise a fast growing fish like tilapia. These fish will not only provide valuable protein for these villagers' diets but also a source of income.



ELCA's matching grant will buy an 12 additional farms. Just think what a blessing our congregation will be to the hungry people of 24 villages!

Susan Neidlinger Social Ministry Coordinating Committee



1...&...2...&...3...&...4...&...

Who: Teachers, Parents, Baby Sitters, Ushers, Council Members, & YOU!

What: CPR/AED training

Where: St. Stephen's Fellowship Hall

When: Saturday morning Oct. 27, 9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon

**Why:** The average response time for first responders once 911 is called is 8-12 minutes. For each minute defibrillation is delayed, the chance of survival reduces by approximately 10%. Fortunately, with CPR/AED training, which takes just a few short hours, you can gain the skills necessary to help save a life.

In this CPR/AED course you will learn how – and when – to initiate CPR, and how and when to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). This course combines lecture and hands-on skills so you will be ready to deliver care when it's needed most. This class will teach adult and child CPR and AED use, infant CPR, and how to relieve choking in adults, children, and infants.

**Cost:** \$40. Some scholarships are available if needed, and Child Care will be provided.

#### For More Information Contact:

- Marcie Clark (775-9664)
  parishnursemc@saintstephenlutheran.net
- Diana Tiller-Dichtel (232-5924) parishnursedt@saintstephenlutheran.net



## NEWS FROM THE ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE

#### **Putting Endowment Funds to Work**

\$3951 for the newly installed video security system covering the Preschool and other areas of St. Stephen was authorized by the Endowment Fund Committee in September. Funding for special current projects is one of the defined purposes of the Endowment Fund.

#### "Leaving a Legacy" Saturday, October 6

That's the program segment the Endowment Fund Committee and Cindy Aergarter from the InFaith Community Foundation in Minnesota will present as part of the **October 6** Challenges and Changes in Later Life program. Ms. Aergarter's presentation – "Spreading Joy, Changing Lives, Living Generously," is sure to be inspirational as well as informative.

#### New Members of the Endowment Fund Committee:

- Joyce Beene moved to Williamsburg with husband Joe in 2013 after 35 years in Fairfax, Virginia. Joyce holds BA, MS and JD law degrees. She and Joe volunteer as St. Stephen Caring Cooks and with Sunday night LSA dinners. They love the book studies at St. Stephen and haven't missed one since arriving.
- Jim Cobb is a retired Pastor still active in supply and interim pastoral assignments. He sees endowment funding as essential for the future of congregations. The Rev. Dr. James Cobb and wife Judy – who's also ordained – met at Gettysburg Seminary. While a student at the College of William and Mary, Jim was an LSA member here!

Other members of the committee are **Glenn Joppa**, **Bob Harman** and **Charlene Smith**.

We're all eager to talk with you about participating in endowing the future.

Endowment Fund total value as of September 15, 2018 was nearly \$290,000.

#### Bob Harman, Endowment Fund Committee



On **Friday, November 2 at 6:00 PM** we'll gather for a potluck dinner in the Fellowship Hall.

At **7:00 PM**, our own **Nancy Egloff**, the Historian at the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, will give a presentation on the major new exhibition she's been working on that will open **November 10** at Jamestown Settlement.

**"TENACITY: Women in Jamestown and Early Virginia"** will explore little-known, captivating personal stories of real women in Jamestown and the early Virginia colony and their tenacious spirit and impact on a fledgling society. Visitors will hear stories of the first English women in the Virginia colony beginning in 1608 and the Powhatan Indian women they encountered. Exhibits will examine stories of the first documented African women to arrive in Virginia in 1619, and the Virginia Company of London's effort that same year to recruit English women to expand the Jamestown colony. From women's roles to women's rights, the exhibition will connect issues of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and their relevance today.



## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING ABOUT ST. STEPHEN?

Learn more about St. Stephen Lutheran Church and meet others who are new to our congregation. Join **Pastor Griffin** on **October 14** and **October 21**. Our Inquirer's Class will meet downstairs in the College Room from **10:00 to 10:45 AM** on both Sundays. For those interested in joining our congregation, we will receive new members on All Saints Day, Sunday, **November 4**.





Thank you so much for your support! I am truly grateful for your recent donation of \$1,000 to Williamsburg Area Faith in Action. Your gift makes it possible for hundreds of seniors to remain happy, healthy and independent in their homes with just a little help from our caring volunteers.

Whether it's a ride to a doctor's appointment, a trip to the grocery store, helping to sort mail, a caregiver support visit, or a visit from a furry companion, your generosity makes it possible for seniors to age in place.

"Carol", the primary caregiver for her husband with a serious illness, is grateful for the caregiver support she receives from our faithful volunteers. Carol said, "How can I possibly express our appreciation for the wonderful gifts of time and support you have provided to my husband and to me? My husband has been given the wonderful gift of kindness and generosity of your volunteers. Your volunteers' gifts of conversation, intelligence and a lifetime of memorable experiences are therapy beyond words."

Because of you, Carol knows that she can take a break from the daily routine of caring for her husband and that he will be cared for by a cheerful and trusted volunteer. Thank you for making it possible for her to receive the respite she so desperately needs.

On behalf of Carol and hundreds of seniors in our area, please accept my gratitude for your support. We couldn't do it without you.

Ashleigh Washington, Executive Director



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

## STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. STEPHEN



#### **Stephen Ministry Support in Grieving**

Loss of a family member, whether a wife or husband, parent, sibling or child is often devastating and recovery from the loss may take months or years. Even with loss of a friend, church member or business associate, many of us can develop an overwhelming sense of grief.

Often, the support lent by other family members, friends, our community or others can help us through the initial shock and recoil from such a loss, but within a few weeks, it is normal for all of us to feel somewhat abandoned, alone and confused without the vital, missing person in our lives.

Certainly, our Christian faith is comforting in such difficult times. In addition, the support of a Stephen Minister can provide a listening ear and caring support for an extended period as needed through such difficult times.

A Stephen Minister can be there well after the community support appears to fade. He or she can be a reflective listener, lending support, providing spiritual comfort, providing prayers and providing reassurance.

Pastor Andy or Pastor Cheryl may offer the services of a Stephen Minister to those going through loss of a family member or other loved one. Don't hesitate to partake of those services as they can be of great help to those of us going through such a difficult loss.

**Bill Dichtel, Stephen Minister** 

#### GIVING STATEMENTS

Nine Month Giving Statements (for the period January through September) will be sent out the week of October 14 using the e-mail addresses on file at the church office. For the members who do not have e-mail addreses, their statements will be mailed. Please review the giving statement, and if you have questions, please contact Linda Vonderheide (757-645-4059) or email at gandl525@cox.net.



## ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

Another year has begun!

Our Preschool teachers and staff greeted new and returning children and parents the day after Labor Day. There were a lot of smiles as well as a few tears – from both children and parents. We distributed "Parent Survival Kits" as children were dropped off in the morning – reassuring parents that their children were indeed being cared for with much love.

Our first scheduled St. Stephen Preschool Spirit Night at Chick-fil-A in the Monticello Marketplace was cancelled because of the uncertain weather of hurricane Florence. We will reschedule this popular event at a later date.

Be sure to look for our student's artwork at **An Occasion for the Arts on Saturday, October 6 or Sunday, October 7.** Mrs. Kirkpatrick, our Preschool Art Teacher, always has wonderful examples of our students' artwork for display.

We are settling into a routine with the Williamsburg-James City County Library's Mobile Services Van (bookmobile) coming to our school twice each month. It comes on a Thursday and a Friday so that all of our students are able to borrow books, begin their love of reading, and their love of the public library.

We are thankful for all of the support that St. Stephen continues to give the Preschool. Over the summer, Jim Ogborn did some major work on our playground and both he and John McCurry helped to make our storage closets much more manageable. Thank you for the continuous flow of yogurt containers for use in our Art Class!

Sandy Peterkin, Administrator









#### Are There Only Two Sides to Every Story?

Check out "Three Sides," a monthly podcast featuring stories from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). As a church that believes God is calling us into the world, together, Three Sides will present diverse voices from across the ELCA. Listen as we share unique stories from the many expressions of this church:

- From our members whose lives are grounded in faith, love of God and neighbor.
- From our congregations that work every day to share the love of Christ with all God's people.
- From our global companions and partners that join us as we work to build up Christ's church throughout the world.

Check it out at <a href="http://www.livinglutheran.org/podcast/">www.livinglutheran.org/podcast/</a>

Typically, it's said there are two sides to every story. But often a middle or third side of the story is revealed, providing another perspective to consider.



I am still collecting "Box Tops for Education" for Lutheran Family Services Minnick School in Harrisonburg, VA. The

school uses the box tops for school supplies and field trips. Please put the box tops in the basket located in the gathering space. Participating products can be found at the Box Tops for Education web site at www.boxtops4education.com/earn/participating-products.

Campbell Soup has ended its label program - please do not save them for me.

## AUTISM



Ms. Susan Reese. St. Stephen Lutheran Preschool teacher for our three-yearolds, received the first official autism awareness car sticker put out by James the City Police County Department.

As a parent of a child with autism, she shared her concerns regarding her son's safety in emergency situations, and inspired the Police Department to increase their training on autism awareness as well as design and produce stickers and magnets for the local community. JCCPD is also trying to partner with other law enforcement departments in order to make these stickers available in other areas.



**Chris Einarsen** 

## CHALLENGES AND CHANGES IN LATER LIFE: LAST THINGS - NOT JUST FOR ELDERS!



The people who love us will be so grateful if we have cared for our final arrangements! Join us on **Saturday, October 6 from 8:30 AM – 12:00 Noon at St. Stephen Lutheran Church** to learn about planning for death. Save the date!

**Pastor Cheryl Ann Griffin** 

## "Death for Beginners"

**Karen Jones** is the author of *Death for Beginners: Your No-Nonsense, Money-Saving Guide to Planning for the Inevitable.* Karen will offer information on the difficult subject of planning for one's own death or organizing funerals for loved ones. She will discuss topics ranging from cremation, burial, caskets, services, and organ donation, offering definitions, examples, pros and cons, and helpful worksheets for narrowing down the best options. Karen emphasizes practicality and frugality, citing that if smart choices are made beforehand then expensive choices made in grief can be avoided.

#### "Funeral Planning"

**Pastor Judy Cobb** is a member of our congregation who retired after serving the ELCA for decades. It has been one of her passions to help people plan their own funerals. To this end, she has put together a work book to help. She believes that planning a funeral service is a gift to many people. It relieves the family from great stress when in the midst of grieving. When you choose hymns and scripture they become a statement of faith that gifts all who hear. Judy will talk about how to plan your service, ensuring that your values are expressed.

## "Leaving a Legacy"

**Cindy Aegerter**, Senior Gift Planner from InFaith Community Foundation will talk about how our generosity can continue to benefit our many ministries through our Endowment Fund. Our legacy giving now and in the future will provide financial security for the church to not only continue its current ministry and programs, but to further expand them as opportunities and needs arise.

As Ellen Hinlicky said at the first gathering of the Endowment Fund's 1956 Society, "If you believe that God has called your church, St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Williamsburg, Virginia to be a part of the ongoing effort to shine the light of Christ's love to the world, in this place and into the future, then an endowment is a statement of conviction, and of confidence, and especially of hope."



## OCTOBER 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 Andy Ballentine**

1	Paul Kristiansen	Joe Philipoom
2	Kathie Eichfeld	
3	Emma Timberg	
8	Phil McKenna	Dorothy Hinders
12	Erik McKenna	
13	Katy Peterkin	
14	Stan York	
18	Greg Fitzpatrick	
24	Jennifer Voigt	
27	Sandy Peterkin	Jonathan Hallman
31	Sharon Powell	PJ McAteer

Others with October baptism anniversaries: Meghan Osborn, Sara Osborn, and Ann Booth Young

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



#### Gwen Agor

5759 Penobscot Hall, Room 310 University of Maine Orono, ME 04479-5759



**Thord Einarsen** Keith and Nancy Egloff – Jean Kuhn Memorial Fund – Immigration





Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for Philip Arnold, Sally Crocker, Kathie Eichfeld, Julie Francis, Bobbie Harms, Susanna Owens, Paul Reier, and Corky Umberger.

<u>God has given Doris Bass</u> 95 years of life! Send her a card!

<u>Pray the blessings of resurrection faith</u> for Frank Youngk and family as they mourn the death of his father, Steve; for Lori Harms and family, as they grieve the death of her father, Allan Bullman; and for Gary Toler and family on the death of his mother.

<u>Pray God's blessings</u> on Roberta and Dave Sulouff, Shana and Rich Wilkins, Jayme and Paul Lawson, and Antoinetta Rogii Stimson and Clare Daniel Stimson as they wait for the birth of their babies.

<u>Pray for those unable to come to worship</u>: Doris Bass, Preston and Birdie Burton, Carolee Bush (under hospice care), Martha and Gene Clements, Bob and Angie Groom, Elsie Hall, Stan Hobday, Donna May Hochstetler, Mary Jamerson, Sonja Landvogt (under hospice care), Helen Lenox, Dick Reeves, Jessie Schmitthenner, Jo Schumacher, Jean Shivel, Joanne Shue, Jerry Trone, and Ladonna Wiederholt.

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Belinda Adams, Jon Alt, Mary Ann Arnold, Jane Ayers, Tom and Bea Black, the Blume family, Eliza Bicknell, Don Brannon, Marla Canny, Elaine Cari, Ray Cole, Rosemarie Cristofolo, Toni Day, Karen Deperini, Kathryn Dieter, Holly Doyle, Bubba Drury, Angela Earl, Lucy Eyler, Inge Felbier, Tammy Fine, Mary Fitzgerald, Sonya Frantz, Mertie Funkhouser, David Gade, Bill Gottschalk, Sam and Ronny Hayes, Sharon Hegland, Chip Hilbinger, Emily Holdredge, Polly Jarrell, Anne Johns, Sherry Johnston, Fran Kibler, Chris Kinney, Art Kirk, Rebecca Krueger, Terry Krull, Catherine Lanning and family, Arthur Lapp, Bonnie Lent, Mildred Lindblad, Charlotte Litterer, Jackie Lohr, Hannah Mac, Abby Mayer, Bob and Mary Meyer, McGraw Family, Heidi Morris, Joan Nares, Eric Nelson, Mary Newberg, J. Drew O'Neal, Inge Petersen, Dino Polizois, Jackie Randall, Jenny Rice, Shann Rufer, Marie Scheiding, Bruce Semanchik, James Smith, Evelyn Spear, Pierrette Tipton, Tait Walker, Pat Ward, Sue Weilmuenster, Helen Wills, Donna Wood, Peggy Wright, Aaron Zabell, and Diane Zulawski.

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

#### Dated Material Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization US Postage PAID Permit No. 34 Williamsburg, VA



## Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



## The Quill www.saintstephenlutheran.net

#### Congregational Officers:

President Vice President Interim Treasurer Financial Secretary Congregational	David Wills Amy Bergh Jane deSolms Linda Vonderheide	378-2715 566-4557 565-5646 645-4059						
Secretary	Carol Wiers	564-0164						
Church Office: Phone: (757) 229-6688 email: All email addresses are: @saintstephenlutheran.net								
Church Staff:								
Pastor	Andy Ballentine	229-6742						
	email	Pastorab@						
Pastor	Cheryl Ann Griffin	876-6371						
	email	Pastorcg@						
Parish and Preschool								
Administrator	Sandy Peterkin	Office@						
Director of Music	Karen Ives	MusicDir@						
Parish Nurses	Marcie Clark	Parishnursemc@						
	Diana Tiller-Dichtel	Parishnursedt@						
Preschool Lead Teacher	Susan Ruane	Preschool@						

#### Church Council: Bob Achenbach

David Allen
Alan Balma
Amy Bergh
Dave Gamble
Jeanne Garrison
Corey Knestrick
John McCurry
Doug Moore
George Vonderheide
Carol Wiers
David Wills

645-8220 206-1430 566-4557 564-7030 229-0978 367-9904 606-389-1082 903-4969 645-4059 564-0164 378-2715

October 2018

206-1789

*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.