



The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

August 2024



MUSIC

Have you ever gotten chills when listening to music? I certainly have. And I must admit, I'm not always sure why I get them. But there is definitely something about music that can really touch a person. I have gotten chills listening to all sorts of different music, different instruments, different styles, and in different situations. I suspect most of you have as well.

The impact of music is so well known that it is used extensively in media. You know exactly when something bad is about to happen in a horror movie by the change in the tone of the background music. The star-crossed lovers fall in love at first sight while happy and romantic music plays. The clumsy oaf takes a pratfall to a belittling ditty. Music is powerful.

We can even compare human lives to pieces of music. I find this an intriguing analogy. At different times in our lives the tone and tenor of our music changes; sometimes it's glorious and joyful and sometimes it's somber and sad. Sometimes our lives sing solo, and sometimes our lives intersect with many other pieces of music, with many other people's lives. This idea appeals to me, in part, because I love to think of God as composer, director, and audience. I imagine the beautiful music God creates for and hears from creation.

That's not to say it's always beautiful; after all, we are certainly capable of causing chaos and strife in our lives. But God is the great improviser and can weave even the most discordant notes into glorious music.

Even when it seemed all of creation was thrown into chaos and the music might even end, when Christ was on the cross, God wove the music into a resurrection magnum opus.

I'm certainly not the first person to entertain this analogy. One of my favorite authors, J.R.R. Tolkien, used this exact idea in the first section of his book "The Silmarillion." The beginning of that book is a creation narrative in which Eru ("The One") first creates a group of spirits or demiurges (Ainur) and gives them a theme from which they are to make great music. Melkor — whom Eru had given the "greatest power and knowledge" of all the Ainur — broke from the harmony of the music to develop his own song. Some Ainur joined him, while others continued to follow Eru, causing discord in the music. This happened three times, with Eru successfully incorporating his rebellious subordinates' discordant notes into the greater musical composition each time.

It's an intriguing thought, all of creation as the music composed by God. I also find this a somewhat reassuring thought: God as great composer, great director, and great improviser; easily capable of weaving powerful themes, melodies, music from even the most humble life. I wonder, what your life sounds like. I wonder how God is using you in the great masterpiece of creation.

In Christ,
Pastor Jon



HEATING VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM (HVAC)

HVAC PROJECT PLEDGE DRIVE UPDATE

To date we have received \$182,970 in pledges or contributions toward the goal of \$300,000. Don't forget that we are still accepting pledges. You can place your pledge card in the offering plate, turn it in at the Church office, or email your pledge to:

finsec.saintstephenluthern.net

Karen Nester, Financial Secretary



STEWARDSHIP ESSENTIALS

The word "stewardship" invokes thoughts of monetary wisdom and financial contributions, but it includes so much more. We also have the opportunity (and the privilege) to use our time and talents to serve. We can serve both our local congregation and worthy organizations in the community. Each month we will focus on some of these opportunities.

For August, we are emphasizing worship and music in our church. Our music director, Karen Ives, is always looking for new faces (and voices) in the music she oversees. This includes: Matins Choir, Chancel Choir, Cantors, St. Stephen Ringers, Instrumentalists, and Children's Music.

Do you see the same faces involved in other aspects of worship? Again, new faces are always welcome. Whether you are able to serve at one service or monthly, your time and talent are valuable contributions to our

congregational life. Each service requires the following servers and the person in charge is listed beside the duty.

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bread Baker | Amy and Brian Berg |
| Audio-Visual | Nancy Carter and Beth Grant |
| Acolyte/Crucifer | Diane McCurry |
| Communion Assistants | Diane McCurry |
| Altar Guild | Carol Weir |
| Lectors | Karen Ives |
| Ushers | Karen Nester |
| Greeters | Diane Tiller-Dichtel |
| Banner Committee | Janice Mayfield |

Offering your time and talent is a great way to be connected and get to know other church members. Extraverts and introverts needed. I know we all appreciate those who do serve. We can lighten their burden by joining their ranks.

Susan Williamson

FROM HIS HANDS AND MEALS ON WHEELS.



"Summer Meals for Kids 2024" needs our help each Tuesday this Summer from **June 18 through August 20** to help prepare lunches for local children. It is estimated that 300 lunches per day will be prepared between 8:30 am and

10:30 am at the WISC (Williamsburg Indoor Sports Complex), 5700 Warhill Trail. Please review the available slots on the SignUpGenius link to Make Sandwiches, Pack Lunches, or Bake Cookies (deliver cookies between 8AM and 11AM). Sign up at this [link](#). If you have any questions, please contact **Jim Ivey**, 757-608- 8990, or **Randy Punchard**, 757-870-8410.





MUSIC NOTES

TOP TEN REASONS FOR NOT JOINING THE CHOIR ... and Why That's no Excuse!

10. **I can't read music.** There are many strategies for learning. Many anthems can be found on YouTube with individual parts often highlighted. Make notations on the scores. Come early or meet outside with Karen or another choir member to practice parts. Sometimes the whole choir sings, for instance, the alto part – giving those in that section confidence and providing a good practice in reading someone else's "line."
9. **I'm scared of auditions.** Easy answer – you show up, you're in. All are welcome.
8. **I can't come every week.** It is important to have a sense of commitment, but then there's that pesky thing called "life." There are illnesses, care giving responsibilities, grandchildren visits, another musical commitment like the Williamsburg Symphony. The hope is that you can spare the 45- to 75-minute commitment most weeks.
7. **I've never sung anywhere but the shower.** This is just like singing in the shower, except for the water, being naked, and being alone.
6. **I don't have childcare.** We can figure that out.
5. **I don't know what part I sing.** We can figure that out too.
4. **I have musical dyslexia.** See #10 above.
3. **I can't take direction.** Have you seen or heard Karen in rehearsal?! She is a benevolent dictator.
2. **I sometimes have a tough week and don't want to share those down feelings.** Singing releases endorphins which reduce stress and anxiety levels and contribute to a positive mental state.
1. **The plate in my head receives messages from outer space when I sing in harmony.** Not an issue – the choir chairs have been retrofitted with an intergalactic interceptor shield.

TOP TEN REASONS TO JOIN THE CHOIR

10. You can wear whatever you like to church because choir robes cover everything, at least at the 11:00 service. If you think the choir robe is going to be too hot – join the Matins Choir and wear what you like, but remember you'll probably be on camera!
9. You get to be first to communion. We all want to be the first ones in line to the buffet, and when you're in the choir, you get to go first – **if** the usher tells you it's okay.
8. The Choirs are an instant family full of wonderful people, unique people, funny people, caring people, loving people.
7. You may meet your new best friend(s).
6. You have a reserved seat for the service every time.
5. You contribute to the understanding of the lectionary readings for the day – maybe even more so than the sermon does – oops, sorry Pastor Jon.
4. Studies show that choral singing improves our mood, with a decrease in stress, depression and anxiety. Let Karen do the worrying about when to come in. You worry about whether you have the right piece of music in front of you.
3. You can praise the Lord with body, mind, spirit, and voice, while having fun.
2. Choir focuses on **DOING** rather than **OBSERVING**.
1. The three F's: Fun, Fellowship, and occasionally Food. Enough Said.

Karen Ives, Music Director





AUGUST

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Bonnie Raquet | |
| 4 | Beth Grant | |
| 5 | Heidi Flatin | Elizabeth Geier |
| 6 | Forrest Fenstermaker (90!) | |
| 7 | Kristen Carter | JR Lyons |
| 8 | Pat Fretz (93!) | Claire White |
| 9 | Doug Moore | |
| 10 | Klara Cave | |
| 11 | Josiah Hallman | Thom Recktenwald |
| 12 | Dave Clark | |
| 14 | Norm Fashing | Dave Joppa |
| 17 | Bethany Brisson | |
| 20 | Lana Olson | |
| 22 | Jeane Moore | |
| 25 | Aaren Battle | |
| 26 | Nancy Canny | |
| 28 | Ellen Weidman | Jane Wills |
| | Ann Booth Young | |
| 29 | Rich Brown | Linda Vonderheide |
| | Joe Yancey | |
| 31 | Paul Kristiansen | |



MEN'S & WOMEN'S BREAKFASTS

- **August 1** – Men are invited to join together for breakfast the first **Thursday** of this month.
- **August 6** – Women are invited to join together for breakfast the first **Tuesday** 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.



ST. STEPHEN FALL 2024 WOMEN'S RETREAT

"WALKING THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY"

- Evening social **Friday, September 27.**
- Day retreat **Saturday, September 28**, led by our own Christina Nelson.
- **Sunday sermon, September 29**, by Kristen Berkey-Abbott.

Venue: St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Plan to come (and bring a friend!) for part or all of the retreat weekend. A light continental breakfast and box lunch are provided on Saturday. Registration opens early August.

Women's Retreat Outreach Project

At our 2024 Women's Retreat, we will put together School Kits for Lutheran World Relief. We will be assembling these kits during the retreat. You are welcome to work on these in the fellowship hall at any time throughout the day!

Each kit will contain the following items:

- 70-sheet Spiral Notebooks of wide or college-ruled paper, approximately 8"x 10½"; no loose leaf-paper. Four notebooks will be included in each kit.
- Crayons: 1 box of 16 or 24
- Ruler: 1 with centimeters, or centimeters on one side and inches on the other
- Pencil Sharpener: 1
- Blunt Scissors: 1 pair
- Unsharpened No. 2 Pencils with Erasers: 5
- Black or Blue Ballpoint Pens (no gel ink): 5
- 2½" Eraser: 1

We are asking for donations of these items. Please look for a basket and poster in the gathering space. Monetary donations can be made by writing a check to St. Stephen and putting "Special Campaign - School Kits" on the memo line. If you have any questions, please contact **Pam Buckley**, GuamMom16@aol.com, 757-869-3373.

Thank you for any help you can give



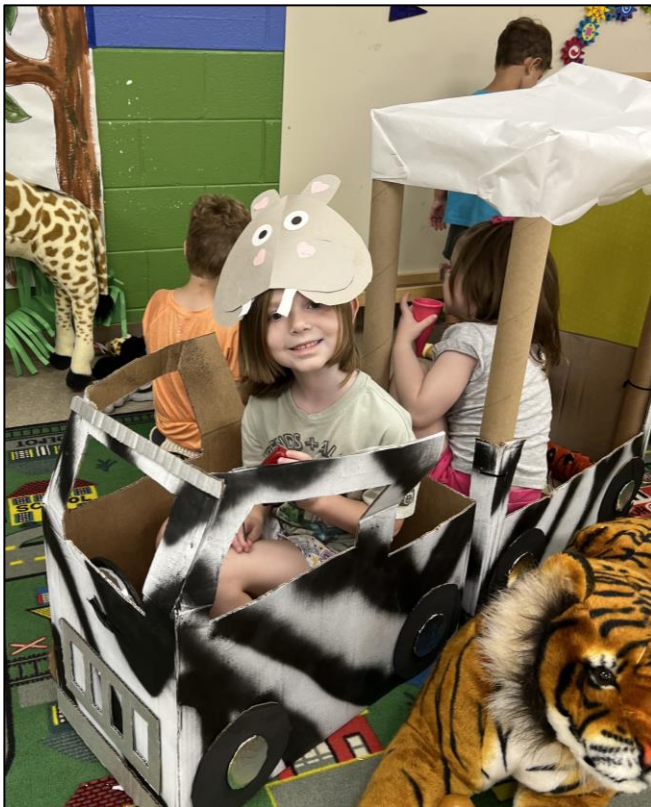
ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

Our little summer campers have been having the best time! We were excited to welcome some new friends in weeks three and four of camp.

During “Jungle and Safari” week our campers had a hippo parade around the school, visiting all the offices. We also traveled near and far in our safari car, and explored different animals. Our campers engaged all of their senses and have continued to explore during “Blast Off into Space!” week.

Mrs. Ruane and Mrs. Reeves have been showing off their creative sides with homemade rocket ships, a mission launch station and some moon sand full of alien spaceships. We can’t wait to share about our final two weeks of summer camp starting the last week of this month and into the first full week of August!

Jessica Kimball, Preschool Director



STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. STEPHEN



You Don't Even Have to Have Your Own Personal Crisis!

Many people assume that a person requesting the help of a Stephen Minister has a personal crisis going on. Yes, that is frequently the case: They may be having a health issue, be going through a separation or divorce, be going through a crisis and loss of faith, or may be experiencing a major depression. However, in many cases, it's not a crisis of their own making or of their own particular life that is the challenge. It may be due to stresses piled on by the world around them that they could use help with. Having a Stephen Minister to talk to, to verbalize with about the situation, to regain footing with and to get stabilized can be tremendously helpful in such situations.

What kind of situations am I talking about? Well, just a few examples...

- Your best friend from childhood who you still have coffee with once a week is going through a crisis and wants to put all of their problems at your feet. You want to be there for them, to provide the best help for them, and don't know where to start. You feel overwhelmed!
- Your son-in-law in another town has a cancer diagnosis. His treatment is going well but your daughter is distraught and worried. How can you be supportive of her in her crisis?
- You worry about adult children deployed in the military or moved to other areas of the country with employment...No specifics of danger but distance generates fears and anxiety!
- You have concern about memory lapses in your aging spouse and what that may portend for the future.
- You have anxiety about children and grandchildren in schools or on the street after hearing about availability of guns or drugs or other lurking dangers.

Many things lead to appropriate anxiety or sometimes free-floating anxieties. When these may be getting the better of you, talking with a Stephen Minister may help to bring things back into appropriate perspective.

If you feel that you feel that anxiety is getting ahead of you and that you would like to have confidential sessions with a Stephen Minister, contact **Pastor Jon Nelson** or **Stephen Leader Bill Dichtel**. All services are strictly confidential.

Bill Dichtel, Stephen Leader

UPCOMING SHARED MINISTRY EVENTS FOR WOMEN

An All-Lutheran Women's Retreat is planned for **November 7-9, 2024** in Glen Allen, VA. The retreat leader will be Author Jacqueline Bussie. I will post a flyer for anyone interested.

Pam Buckley

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

We have moved to our summer schedule of one joint worship service. We will have coffee at **9:00 am** and worship at **9:45 am** on these Sundays. This worship service will be live-streamed as well. We hope that this joint service will help foster connections between "8:30 folk" and "11:00 folk" as well as give our worship leaders a lighter Sunday morning for these weeks of summer.

Our final joint service will be on "God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday" on **September 8**, which will give us some extra time for a service project that morning.





AUGUST BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES



PRAYERS

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 Jon Nelson

| | | |
|----|------------------|---------------|
| 2 | Laura Bergh | Edith Haecker |
| 5 | Linda Baumgarten | |
| 25 | Alison Carney | Evelyn Judy |
| 26 | James Ogborn | |
| 28 | Brian Crittenden | |
| 29 | Sandra Witt | |
| 31 | Randy PUNCHARD | |

Others who were baptized in August:

| | |
|------------------|--------------|
| Amber Jansson | Carla Javier |
| Christina Nelson | |

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

Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for **Trudi Arnold, Karen Bailey, Ed Brown, Steve Bushman, Kristin Carter, Jack Harris, Sharon Jacobs, Jim Mayfield, Carol Meyer and Helen Nelsen.**

Pray for those unable to come to worship: **Martin Bleck, Ed Brown, Birdie Burton, York Doerr, Bob and Angie Groom, Pat Janot, Marilyn Johnson, Jeanne Nelson, Darlene Simon, and Kay Wasaff.**

God has blessed **Forrest Fenstermaker** with **90** years of life! His birthday is Friday, August 4 - send him a card!

God has blessed **Pat Fretz** with **93** years of life! Her birthday is Friday, August 8 - send her a card!

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Bob Alt, Donald and Carol Baum, Rose Baumgarten, John Black, Sally Blackburn, June Brantley, Sharon Brown, Linda Bonfiglio, Mary Bloom, Amy Carl, Karin Cavanaugh, Ruth Ann Coski, Judy Craun, Sophia Czajkowski, Sue Hassan and family, Nick Havola, Bradley Kim Joan and Laurie Heintzelman, Char Henry, Lisa Hill, Jaxon Ireland, The Jacobs Family, Brian Johnson, Don Johnson, Connie Kendrick, The Kennedy family, Marnah Lund, Trish and Matthew Macerelli, Laura Margolin, Jack Mayfield, The Keith Meins family, Liz Montalvo, Brian Moore, Becky Murphy, Ed Moninger, Bob Myers, Silvana Oderisi, Denise Ogborn, Lori Ogborn, Kurtis Schultz, Lou Schuster, Chad Strausbaugh, Charley Underdahl, and Caleb Winig.



FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING

Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



**St. Stephen Lutheran Church
612 Jamestown Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185**

The Quill www.saintstephenlutheran.net August 2024

Congregational Officers:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <i>President</i> | Julie Meeks | 804-432-5149 |
| <i>Vice President</i> | J.R. Lyons | 757-920-5355 |
| <i>Treasurer</i> | Brian Agor | 757-561-5889 |
| <i>Financial Secretary</i> | Karen Nester | 757-869-2949 |
| | email | Finsec@ |
| <i>Congregational Secretary</i> | Alison Carney | 703-819-6607 |

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

Church Staff:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Pastor</i> | Jon Nelson | 320-295-8861 |
| | email | Pastorjn@ |
| <i>Parish Administrator</i> | Hollie Jones | Office@ |
| <i>Director of Music</i> | Karen Ives | MusicDir@ |
| <i>Preschool Director</i> | Jessica Kimball | Preschool@ |

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| | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
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| Alison Carney | 703-819-6607 |
| Brandon Cave | 816-510-9409 |
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