



The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

July 2023



SERVICE

There are many ways to serve. Often it can be as simple as opening the door for someone with loaded arms; or it can be as complex as donating a kidney. While it doesn't always matter how we serve, the fact remains: Christians are called to service. The two greatest commandments, after all, are love God with all your being and love your neighbor as yourself. And part of that show of love involves serving God and serving our neighbor.

The fact of the matter is, the Bible in its entirety, and the New Testament specifically, deal with the topics of love, justice, peace, and service more than any others. Some of my favorite Scriptural references to these include: "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8); "And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me'" (Matthew 25:40); "For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another" (Galatians 5:13). With just a quick glance at Scripture it becomes readily apparent that service is a vital element of faith and life.

Being a Christian is hard work. There is a common misconception in our society right now that being a Christian is easy. That all one need do is pray the right way or say the right things and your faith is taken care of. Or, an even more popular belief is that Christians are meant to be prosperous and that God wants us to be rich. Time and again the Bible tells us otherwise. Christ went out of his way to turn such beliefs on their heads; stating that in order to gain our lives we must lose them

(Matthew 16:25), in order to be exalted we must be humbled (Luke 14:11), in order to be rich we must give away our possessions (Mark 10:21).

Given all this, I am sometimes amazed that there are Christians in this world at all. After all, it means living lives of self-sacrifice, service, humility, and poverty; things we aren't always so good at. But in order to help us with this it is important to remember why we serve. We have been granted the greatest gift of all: "the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). We have been freed from the wages of sin, which is death. And in the living of our new lives in Christ we can become "slaves to one another" as we read in Galatians.

Therefore we are called to joyous service, confident in the knowledge that we love and serve because God first loved and served us. Our Christian calling, our Christian vocation of daily love and service to God and our neighbors, is driven by the Holy Spirit, is driven by the grace of God to us. Rather than saying we **must** serve, it is the Christian understanding that we **get** to serve. So serve!

Serve God in worship, prayer, daily work, reading God's Word, and devotions (try praying the divine hours!); and serve your neighbor in whatever way you can. And try to do so joyfully, aware that such service is to the glory and love of God. Listen to one another, do random acts of kindness, write someone a note or a thank you, pray for someone, pray **with** someone, fix someone a meal, visit someone, open the door for someone, give money to a charity, do your chores without complaint. Whatever you can do to serve God and your neighbor, do it! And do it out of the unfathomable love with which you have been showered by God in Jesus Christ.

In Christ,
Pastor Jon Nelson

CONGREGATION COUNCIL



Our June meeting was held on June 13, 2023.

In attendance: Pastor Nelson, Pastor Sheppard-Witt, Corey Knestrick, Lou Rossiter, Susan Kaufman, Alison Carney, Brandon Cave, Nancy Egloff, Pam Buckley, J.R. Lyons, Julie Meeks, Jeffery Berry, Paul Reier, Sandy Croushore.

- Synod Assembly was held in Roanoke June 9-11 and was attended by Pastor Jon Nelson, Council President Sandy Croushore, and Council Youth Representative, Jeffery Berry. While lots of business was covered, the most important item was the election of our Synod's new Bishop. After six Ballots, Pastor Phyliss Milton was elected. She will be the Synod's first woman as well as the first person of color to serve as our Bishop.
- Council has approved upgrades to our security system. We will be installing outside cameras as well as making upgrades to our "door systems."
- During the Summer there will be just one service each Sunday. We will meet for coffee at 9:00 AM and the Service will start at 9:45 AM.
- Pastor Jon will be on a much-needed vacation from June 27 to July 12. Pastor Larson and Pastor Harvey Nelson will lead worship on those Sundays.

The next Council meeting will be held on August 8.

Julie Meeks, Secretary, Congregation Council

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

For the summer, we are moving to one worship service, ending August 13. We will have coffee at **9:00 AM** and worship at **9:45 AM**. 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.



The Congregation celebrated the 15th Anniversary of Pastor Jon's Ordination between services on June 18.

2023 SUPER SCHOOL SNEAKERS FOR GROVE!



This is the 18th year that St. Stephen members have the purpose-filled opportunity to provide sneakers for Grove community students so they can start school this fall in style. If you like to shop, please buy **GIRLS** sneakers in any size from 6 to 11 or **BOYS** sneakers any size from 6 to 12, including half sizes for both – these are the most needed sizes but any size will do. Deliver them to the Gathering Space by **Sunday, July 30** and we will take them to Grove. If you would prefer to make a monetary donation, please **make the check out to St. Stephen Lutheran Church with SHOES FOR GROVE** on the memo line. Cash is also accepted in an envelope marked **SHOES FOR GROVE**. Put envelopes with checks or cash in the offering plate or hand it directly to someone in the church office by **July 30**, and Grove will use our monetary donations to purchase sizes that are still needed. Thank you in advance for supporting this project in such a big way for the past 17 years! If you have any questions, please call **Marilyn Johnson** at [757-345-0806](tel:757-345-0806).

The Social Ministry Coordinating Committee



ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

Holly Ready is set to take the Preschool Director reigns from **Kristie Kelley** this summer. She assisted the school last year as a substitute and is eager to continue to serve the preschool and church community. Holly and her family live in Williamsburg and her husband, Randy, is hoping to retire from the Army and settle down here. They have two children, Ryan (a former Frog) and Leah (an incoming Giraffe). As a family they have lived in New York City and Hawaii, but have loved exploring Virginia these past two years. They are very active and enjoy being outdoors. Holly worked as a special education teacher and administrator in New Jersey and Georgia. She is excited to continue building upon the amazing school community and fellowship with the church here at St. Stephen.



Graduation for Frogs, Koalas and Hippos



Giraffe class end of year celebration Summer Camp



Mrs. Ruane with some Frogs students at Shoofly Spirit Night



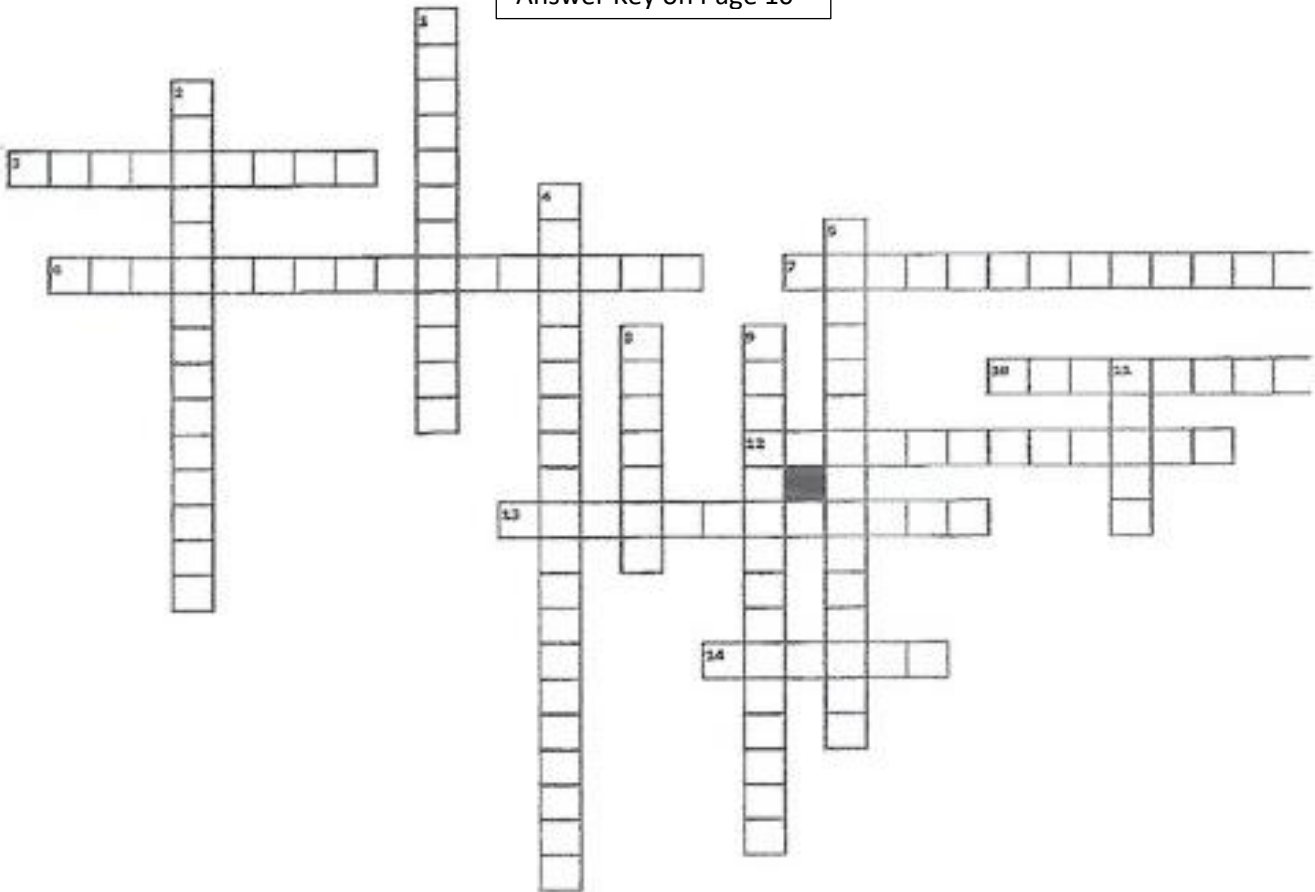
Summer Camp



MUSIC NOTES

Favorite Hymns

Answer Key on Page 10



Across

- 3. "They Crucified My Lord" is this genre
- 6. From "Billy" Walker's Southern Harmony
- 7. Christmas Carol by G.F. Handel
- 10. "Lift High ____" (Two words)
- 12. This hymn was written by a former slave ship captain.
- 13. Composer of "Isaiah in a Vision Did of Old"
- 14. Harmonizer of Lutheran Chorales such as "O Sacred Head Now Wounded"

Down

- 1. Part of Beethoven's Ninth symphony
- 2. Martin Luther penned this hymn
- 4. We sing this every Palm Sunday.
- 5. Swedish Folk Tune sung often at funerals
- 8. "Come Join the Dance of ____"
- 9. Ralph Vaughan Williams composed this tune
- 11. "Of the Father's Love Begotten" is an example

Choose from these answers: Trinity, Joyful Joyful, Martin Luther, What Wondrous Love, All Glory Laud and Honor, How Great Thou Art, Spiritual, Chant, For All the Saints, Joy to the World, The Cross, Amazing Grace, J.S. Bach, A Mighty Fortress.

Karen Ives, Music Director



STEWARDSHIP ESSENTIALS

God's Work, Our Hands

As a retired pastor in the ELCA, I am still on quite a few emailing lists in our national church office. And one of the ELCA's annual emphases that has started to reappear in my inbox is about "God's Work, Our Hands Sunday" coming up in September. This is a church-wide emphasis on serving others in our communities and beyond – showing God's love for all Creation through our giving of our time and our efforts in some concrete way. You may have one or more of the bright yellow/orange T-shirts with "God's Work, Our Hands" boldly printed on the front and St. Stephen Lutheran Church (or a previous church) printed on the back. I still have two from my time at Apostles Lutheran Church in Gloucester. They are showing their age more and more, but I still like to wear them, especially when working with our group that builds handicap ramps for the Williamsburg area Housing Partnership. It might surprise you how many comments I receive whenever I wear it – anything from a simple "thumbs-up" gesture to a five-minute conversation about being a channel of God's blessing to others. If you have a shirt of your own, you have probably experienced this yourself. Not only does it encapsulate a hands-on approach to stewardship, but it opens the door for easy yet meaningful evangelism with others who may just be looking for a little good news in their day.

I do not know how our congregation will choose to engage in "God's Work, Our Hands Sunday" in September. However we choose to do it, I hope to participate. And I encourage you to do so also. It's about the easiest way I know to overcome our inhibitions about sharing our faith and showing God's love with people outside of our inner circle of relationships. And the more we do it, the more natural it becomes. Which

is a good thing, because being a follower of Jesus is all about bringing Good News to others. And in essence, I think that's what stewardship is all about – using God's gifts according to God's intention, as a blessing for others.

Blessings to you, my fellow Stewards and beloved Children of God!

Jim Larsen



A WORD FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Have you ever wondered how your donations reach the right place? Have you ever wondered what is the best way to give? Donations from the Sunday offering plates are added to donations that have come in to the Church Office. Our dedicated Tellers meet to record the donations. Every category (such as general fund, building fund, homeless fund, etc.) has a code so we can make sure that the correct amount is allocated to the correct fund.

If you have a donation check you should place it in the Sunday offering plate, deliver it by mail or hand it directly to someone in the office. Checks will be kept in a secure location until our Tellers can record them and deposit them. Checks that are mailed come to our locked mailbox and are secure. All funds are kept in a secure location. Please do not leave checks in any of the mailboxes in the hallway.

My job is to double check the information recorded by the Tellers and to record the donations that come in by way of Vanco, our electronic processing service. I do not handle money directly so checks should never come to the Financial Secretary. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions, at 757-869-2949 or email finsec@saintstephenlutheran.net.

Karen Nester, Financial Secretary



RIP MEDICAL DEBT

Thank you so much for your \$5,762 donation to RIP Medical Debt! Your gift will abolish debilitating medical debt, giving recipients and their families a fresh start and empowering them to embark on a new path of greater financial stability. For the populations served by medical debt relief, this donation is a radical act of generosity and can be wide-reaching within communities.

We, along with more than 3,000,000 beneficiaries and their families, are very grateful for your compassionate action. Your support has helped RIP Medical Debt abolish over \$5 billion of medical debt since inception. On behalf of our program beneficiaries, thank you!

Scott G. Patton, Director of Development



Thank you for choosing to support enCircle. Your gift of \$700.00 goes directly toward supporting our students at Minnick Schools, children and families in counseling, adults in group homes and family care homes, foster children and families, as well as undocumented immigrant and refugee children. We are grateful for your generosity and commitment to the important work enCircle is doing.

This spring I had the pleasure of witnessing the awards ceremony and end-of-year celebration at the Wytheville Minnick School and the Minnick Games at the Roanoke school. Both events displayed the commitment and love of our Minnick School community, from teachers to students and parents. It takes everyone to help make the world a more loving place, and we are grateful that you have joined us in that mission.

The support of folks such as yourself goes a long way toward ensuring that everyone in our community feels empowered. Our programs are growing and expanding,

allowing enCircle to extend a loving hand to more folks who need it. Our growth couldn't happen without your support! Thank you for making the world a more loving place! In peace,

Ashley Morales, Philanthropy Coordinator



Thank you for your recent donation to the Williamsburg House of Mercy - I'm so very grateful for your support of our mission.

Over the past weeks, we've been busy meeting with community partners and continuing the on-going conversation of what can we bring to the table to help with the most vulnerable population in our area. We share in the commonality that we're each making every effort to answer the door to whoever comes knocking. Whether they come knocking here or somewhere else, we're able to call upon each other to help. It is a critical approach to ensure that we're making strides as a communal force. Did you know that when someone calls our outreach number to get assistance in paying for utility bills or rent to avoid eviction, we send the word out to a whole group of other organizations and churches to see if they can pitch in with us? This helps eliminate the financial burden falling to one organization. The need is plenty and without the help of our partners we would not be able to help as much as we do. We are grateful to them.

The need continues to grow, even with the pandemic behind us. Our weekly food distribution lines are nearing 260 families a week on average which is an increase from earlier this year. Why is that? Children are nearing the end of the school year so they are home more without after-school activities and soon without classes. Food goes quickly in households with growing children! We expect these numbers to continue through the summer so please consider donating a bit more during this time. Hunger does not take vacation! Thank you for remembering the Williamsburg House of Mercy through your donation,

Liz Buckley, Interim Executive Director

NO SHAME. PERIOD.

On behalf of No Shame. Period., I would like to thank all of you who contributed toward the 300+ period packs we provided for elementary and middle schools in our area. Not long after making the packs at our women's retreat, **Pam Buckley** and I took a trip out to New Kent to deliver packs to three schools.

The nurses were absolutely thrilled to receive them! They told us how useful they are and that they are so cute that the girls don't have to be embarrassed to carry them with them. Also, at one school, they had even collected some empty makeup bags for us! This was a huge contrast to last school year when I first started delivering them. Then, the packs were unknown and sometimes unexpected! Now, they see how important they are.

Our women's retreat collected a surplus of pads, wipes and bags and made lots of extra notes of encouragement. Many of you have expressed interest in using these to make more packs this summer to help stock the schools for the next school year. What we still NEED are makeup bags or opaque pencil cases and new GIRL's underwear size 10-16 or WOMEN's size small. Many women have a small stockpile of makeup bags, so please ask your friends! Likely, they have some to spare. So start collecting and watch for a date to make the packs in August!

With gratitude,

Jeane Moore, Volunteer, No Shame. Period.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The following actions were taken at the June 25 Congregational Meeting:

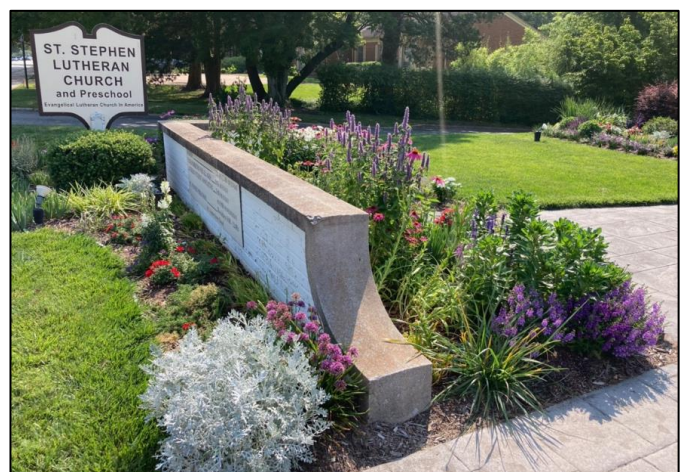
- Second term reappointments to Congregation Council expiring in June 2026: **Sandy Croushore**, **Julie Meeks**, **Roberta Sulouff**, **Jeffery Berry** (Youth Representative).
- New appointments to the Endowment Committee for terms expiring in June 2026: **Tom Peterkin** and **Reed Nester**.
- Approval of the Shared Ministry Agreement with Our Saviour's Lutheran Church.



Habitat for Humanity is coming back to James City County. The need for affordable housing has not decreased since St. Stephen's last involvement with Habitat for Humanity. They have continued to build 200 homes and rehab 400 others in this area. Since their latest builds were in New Kent County, it made it difficult for us to be involved. They are in the process however of securing land in James City County. The Social Ministry Coordinating Committee hopes we can again be involved in the fall of 2023.

In the meantime, other opportunities to show support are available: August 19 is the Williamsburg REALTORS Raising The Roof 1 mile and 5K Run/Walk event – all proceeds benefit the construction of a Habitat home in James City County for a local family. Registration is at runsignup.com/Race/VA/Williamsburg/WilliamsburgREALTORSRaisingTheRoof.

Susan Neidlinger



STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. STEPHEN



Guys Need Stephen Ministers Too!

In Stephen Ministry, more requests come in for women Stephen Ministers to help women than for male Stephen Ministers to help men. I was a little concerned when I first noted this pattern. Did it mean that male Stephen Ministers were not effective? Did it suggest that we should stop offering Stephen Minister services to the men of our church?

When I looked into the situation, I realized it was a much broader problem than just in our church. In fact, numerous medical studies have shown that men are considerably less likely to seek psychiatric counseling when they are depressed or have other major psychiatric symptoms than women are. As a result, psychiatric symptoms tend to be much worse when men finally do seek care or are forced to receive care. An extreme example is that the rate of suicide in men is three times the rate of suicide in women.

Why are men so resistant to seeking help when they are having emotional challenges or other troubles? There are apparently many reasons for that...

- After growing up watching John Wayne movies, men in our culture feel that they have to be ruggedly independent and that asking for help is a sign of weakness. Clearly, we could learn a lot from the fairer sex on this issue. We need to learn to see that asking for help is a sign of strength and maturity, not a sign of weakness.
- Many men may feel embarrassed by their situation or feel vulnerable if word of their situation would get out. Psychiatrists and counselors go to great lengths to maintain confidentiality and we in Stephen Ministry run a completely confidential program as well. This confidentiality is strictly maintained.
- Some men may feel that Stephen Ministry may not deal with the issues that they are confronting. While it is true that Stephen Ministers are trained lay Christian counselors, you would be surprised at the depth of training,

experience and confidential supervision available to our Stephen Ministers. If indeed a gentleman's situation would prove to warrant a psychiatric professional counselor, one would be recommended and help would be available to help set that up, if desired.

The most important point is that both the women and men Stephen Ministers are here to serve the members of our congregation. They have unselfishly given a good amount of time towards training and maintaining skills to be ready when their skills are needed. They desire to serve by relieving anxiety, depression, sadness, feelings of loss, anger or other emotions brought on by the challenges of modern day life.

Both women and men experience these feelings and emotions and if they are getting excessive or are controlling your life, you may need to consider requesting a Stephen Minister. If so, contact either **Pastor Jon Nelson** or **Bill Dichtel, Stephen Leader**.

Bill Dichtel, Stephen Leader

Bill.dichtel@gmail.com

Cell phone: (757) 232-5334





JULY

2	Lindsey Phipps Napier	
3	Pam Anderson	Alison Carney
6	Kathie Eichfeld	Diana Tiller-Dichtel
8	Edith Haecker	
11	George Vonderheide	
13	Margaret Bleck	Rosemary Stimson
14	Virginia Cummings	Janice Svendsen
16	Janell Nickols	
19	Cooper Bailey	
21	Linda Baumgarten	
22	Vee Nelson	
23	Edward Delehanty	Karen Schlicht
	Joanne Shue	
24	Doc Anderson	Caroline McKenna
	Dan Shoenfelt	
25	Katy Peterkin Wood	
27	Carl Stauffer	
29	Sebastian Sulouff	
31	Armand Teague	



MEN'S & WOMEN'S BREAKFASTS

- **July 6** – Men are invited to join together for breakfast the first **Thursday** of this month.
- **July 11** – Women are invited to join together for breakfast the second **Tuesday** of this month (moved to second Tuesday because first Tuesday is July 4).

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.



OVER-THE-COUNTER HEARING AIDS

This is a new thing now. You can purchase hearing aids over-the-counter in stores. This sounds great to someone who has trouble hearing in crowds. Prior to this, hearing aids could only be purchased by visiting an audiologist or physician. You can think of them as the hearing equivalent of reading glasses you purchase over the counter. They do help to an extent, but they don't address all the problems that could be causing the hearing loss. There are a number of things that can be going on to cause hearing loss and, if left untreated, can cause even more problems. Did you know that there is research that indicates that some dementia can be traced back to hearing loss?

You don't need a hearing test to buy hearing aids over the counter. However, if you see an audiologist, you will get an ear exam and a hearing test. You may need to have wax cleaned out of your ears prior to fitting a hearing aid. There are different types of hearing aids to help with different types of hearing loss. As with any electronic equipment, hearing aids need to be checked and reprogrammed from time to time. Your hearing may change as well. Some hearing aids are made to connect to smartphones and tv's so that you can hear at your own level instead of turning the volume up so loud the neighbors can hear your program!

It is just a dangerous to use a device incorrectly as it is to use nothing at all. If after seeing an audiologist, you both decide that over the counter hearing aids are just right for you, it is a wise choice. You should still have your hearing checked at intervals to make sure you are doing the best you can for your health.

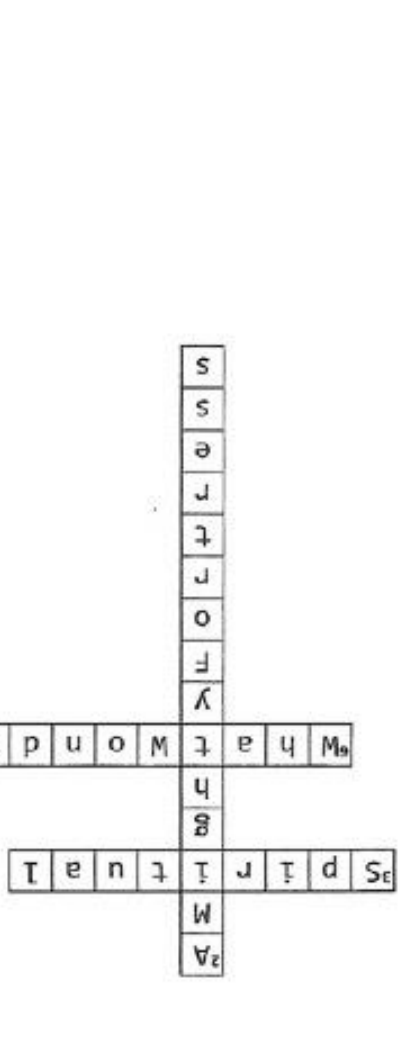
Call or email if you have questions.

Diana Tiller-Dichtel, Parish Nurse

FAVORITE HYMNS

Answer Key

Favorite Hymns



Across

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7. Christmas Carol by G.F. Handel

10. "Lift High" (Two words)

12. This hymn was written by a former slave ship captain.

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Down

1. Part of Beethoven's Ninth symphony

2. Martin Luther penned this hymn

4. We sing this every Palm Sunday.

5. Swedish Folk Tune sung often at funerals

8. "Come Join the Dance of _____"

9. Ralph Vaughan Williams composed this tune

11. "Of the Father's Love Begotten" is an example



JULY 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 Jon Nelson

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Rita Kristiansen | Sandy Reed-Bryant |
| 2 | Nicholas Brisson | Brenda Lee |
| 3 | Christina Davies | |
| 5 | Noah Delehanty | |
| 14 | Ruth Fenstermaker | |
| 16 | Theo Bergh | |
| 24 | Kylen Saunders | |
| 29 | Stephanie Judy | |

Others who were baptized in July:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Lou Rossiter | Regina Root |
|--------------|-------------|

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

PRAYERS



Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for **Joe Beene, Ed Brown, Kristin Carter, Karen Einarsen, Jack Harris, Sharon Jacobs, Marilyn Johnson, Evelyn Kernan, Jim Mayfield, and Linda Reuben.**

Pray for those unable to come to worship: **Joyce Behlendorf, Martin Bleck, Ed Brown, Birdie Burton, York Doerr, Bob and Angie Groom, Edith Haecker, Pat Janot, Jeanne Nelson, Joanne Shue, Darlene Simon, and Kay Wasaff.**

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Dawn Allen, Roberta Barbour, Donald and Carol Baum, Rose Baumgarten, Sally Blackburn, Nelson Blish, Mary Bloom, Jerry & Elijah Connor, Judy Craun, Doug Crinklaw, Judy Drezek, Derald Edwards, Deanna Harbison, William Harbison, Char Henry, Brian Johnson, Mason Jones, Sean Kelley, The Kennedy family, Bob Lamoureux, Ron Luchetti, Julia Mahony, Marnah Lund, Doug Mayes, Laura Mcgolin, Detra Michaels, Bob Myers, Gina Peterson, Paula Rega, Betty Roth, Naomi Schmidt, Inge Seiter, David Shoberg, Kelsey Slay, Vasili Soultoukis, Chad Strausbaugh, Marie Talmage, Charley Underdahl, Caleb Winig, Rickey Winsette, Linda Wright, The Graduating Class of 2023.



FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING

Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.



The Quill www.saintstephenlutheran.net July 2023

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<i>Vice President</i>	Corey Knestrick	757-367-9904
<i>Treasurer</i>	Pete Davis	757-345-0596
<i>Financial Secretary</i>	Karen Nester	757-869-2949
	email	Finsec@

<i>Congregational Secretary</i>	Julie Meeks	804-432-5149
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_____ @saintstephenlutheran.net



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	email	Pastorjn@
<i>Parish Administrator</i>	Hollie Jones	Office@
<i>Director of Music</i>	Karen Ives	MusicDir@
<i>Parish Nurse</i>	Diana Tiller-Dichtel	Parishnurse@
<i>Preschool Director</i>	Holly Ready	Preschool@

Congregation Council:

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Alison Carney	703-819-6607
Brandon Cave	816-510-9409
Sandy Croushore	757-476-5789
Nancy Egloff	757-293-8547
Susan Kauffman	757-903-2669
Corey Knestrick	757-367-9904
J.R. Lyons	757-920-5355
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