



The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

November 2023



SAINTS

On All Saints Sunday we give thanks for the saints who have gone before us, for the saints still among us, and for the saints of God still to come. We give thanks for the examples of faithful living that the saints have given us as they navigated the stormy waters of life, and also for the faithful acts of service we are empowered by God's Holy Spirit to do in our own seas. We give thanks, too, for the fullness of eternal life in which the saints of God who have gone before us now partake and which we have yet to fully enjoy.

The custom of commemorating the saints of the church, especially martyrs, on a single day originated in the fourth century. By the eighth century, the festival commemorating all saints had been moved in England and Ireland to November 1 in order to Christianize the Celtic harvest festival of Samhain which marked the beginning of winter and communal attention to the dead. In current Christian use, the day is dedicated to thanksgiving for all the unnamed who died in the Lord. In many assemblies, the names of the local dead are read aloud, a focus originally associated with All Souls Day on November 2. The conflation of the two emphases fits with the Protestant belief that the all the Christian dead are saints and none needs release from purgatory.

This year we will celebrate the lives of saints who have died in faith on Sunday, November 5. In our worship we will have candles lit in their memory and will pray in thanksgiving for their faithful witness to us. While we traditionally recognize the saints we have lost during the past year, we also invite the congregation to share the

names of any saints you would like to recognize on this Festival Sunday.

I would also like to invite you into a time of reflection this month. Through the work of the Holy Spirit we have been given the gift of faith. That work often comes to us through the witness of loved ones. Perhaps it was a beloved grandparent, Sunday school teacher, or friend who helped nurture in you the faith of/in Christ. I would invite you to reflect on all the people who have had a hand in your faith; and the many ways that the Holy Spirit has spoken to you through others. And with those saints in mind, I would invite you to give thanks to God for them. And if some of those saints are still living, I would also encourage you to give them a call, send them a card, or find some other way to express your thanks to them for being a part of your faith journey.

We are richly blessed; and we are called to share those blessings with others. We have been witnessed to; and we are called to witness to others. I trust that someday (perhaps even now) someone will be giving thanks to God for the witness you were/are to them!

We pray: Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

In Christ,
Pastor Jon

CONGREGATION COUNCIL



Our October meeting was held on October 10, 2023.

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

- There was continued discussion of our HVAC system replacement options after some Council members and Pastor Nelson recently met with a consulting engineer. We are awaiting cost estimates for replacement of the existing system (similar type but new), and for a new heat pump system alternative.
- The St. Stephen Lutheran Church and Our Saviour's Lutheran Church shared ministry team is meeting to review and discuss shared ministry progress, as well as compensation for Pastor Sheppard-Witt.
- A review of St. Stephen's ministry plan shows clear progress in many areas and opportunities for continued focus.
- Installation of the new console for our sound board is planned for early December.
- Council discussed our recent building security system upgrades. Information/clarification to the congregation about key fob use is forthcoming.
- We are seeking input from an electrician or electrical engineer regarding lighting problems in the worship space. Troubleshooting by a Council member is underway.
- Our Finance team continues work on the budget, which Council votes on in December.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for November 14.

Alison Carney, Secretary, Congregation Council



MEN'S & WOMEN'S BREAKFASTS

- **November 2** – Men are invited to join together for breakfast the first **Thursday** of this month.
- **November 7** – 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.



NOTES FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

All donations for 2023 must be received by **Sunday, December 24**. Any donations that come in after that date will be credited to 2024. If you have any questions about donations you can reach me at finsec@saintstephenlutheran.net or 757-869-2949.

Also, please remember to turn in your **Pledge for 2024**. You can mail in your Pledge Card, place it in the offering plate, or you can call me at 757-869-2949 or email me at finsec@saintstephenlutheran.net.

Karen Nester, Financial Secretary



Chaplin Gordon Gabram

Carol J. Gabram (Music Fund)

JR (Griff) Griffin

Helen Allen

Hank Mallue

William and Shelby Hawthorne

CAMPUS MINISTRY



At a recent Region 9 Lutheran Campus Ministry Network (LuMin) meeting, we were introduced to a new LuMin initiative/course entitled “On Campus for Good.” I’ve signed up for it and will be talking more in-depth with our Campus Ministry team. The resource developed as a desire to provide congregations with an in-depth guide to starting a campus ministry. What came out of it was this resource - which is also being used by existing campus ministries to reimagine or re-energize their ministry with students.

But in our conversation with one of the leads, Chris Heavner, the title of the program sticks with me. “On Campus for Good.” What does it mean to be on campus for “good?” We’ve had an established ministry with William & Mary since 1956. Like with congregational ministry in general, it is easy to get into the routines, the rhythms, the cycles and lose sight of the “why” we do something - the whys of worship, of fellowship, of service. We do it just because we do it. But getting to the deeper whys provide a basis for excitement and engagement.

It is something that we must think about (and remind ourselves to think about). Why do we do Campus Ministry? What do we hope that the students will get out of it? What do we hope that the congregation will get out of it? What do we hope for in the wider communities of William & Mary and Williamsburg? How does Campus Ministry and LSA fit into the wider mission and vision of St. Stephen, a God-called and a God-gathered community serving in this place? How is this ministry centered in our faith in the love of God made known in Jesus?

I hope to be exploring these kinds of questions with the Campus Ministry committee, as we dream and imagine this ministry for today and into the future. If you want to be part of this exciting discernment conversation, I hope you’ll join us. Give me a call, send me an email or a text, send a carrier pigeon! I’ll be happy to connect you and get you involved. I hope to get a meeting together in the next month or so. Thank you for your continued support of Lutheran Student Association (LSA)!

Peace,
Pastor Alex

LSA Calendar of Events

- **November 10, 5:00 PM:** *Game Night.* Congregation members are invited and encouraged to join us!!
- **November 12, 7:00 PM:** *Ice Cream Social* with Adopted Church Families
- **November 22-26:** *W&M Thanksgiving Holiday*
- **December 2:** *Saturday Morning Coffee at Aromas* in Merchants Square around **11:00 AM**
- **December 8:** *W&M Last Day of Classes*

thankyou



On behalf of Olde Towne Medical & Dental Center and the patients we serve, I would like to thank you for your generous contribution of \$1,500 to support our mission. We appreciate your trust in our mission and in our services.

For the past 29 years, Olde Towne has provided quality medical and dental care to more than 10,000 citizens living and working in the greater Williamsburg area. Together, with your support, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of the children and adults we serve with limited means to access quality healthcare. We at Olde Towne serve to meet that need.

Our mission remains steadfast: “To assure access to quality health and wellness care to the residents and workforce of the greater Williamsburg community.” We turn no one away. We see your gift as a truly vital component to our continued success of serving our community. Your gift is the gift of health.

Your support is deeply appreciated. May I take this opportunity to simply say, “Thank you.”

Aaron L. Thompson, Executive Director



MUSIC NOTES

MUSIC MINISTRY IN ACTION!

The Paul Weber/ Florence Jowers Hymn Sing was held on Sunday afternoon, September 29. Paul introduced his new hymnary "*So Great a Cloud of Witnesses*" and his wife Florence accompanied on organ and piano.



Our Blessing of the Animals Service was held on October 4. The Faith Formation Youth sang, chimed, and taught the congregation a version of Psalm 8. Our St. Stephen Ringers also played a rendition of "*All Creatures of Our God and King*."



Tom Keesecker's presentation between worship services on October 15 combined readings, poetry, humor, and delightful piano arrangements. The choirs and handbells also sang/rang his arrangement of "*Around You, O Lord, Jesus*" for worship that morning.



Karen Ives, Music Director



STEWARDSHIP ESSENTIALS

When I was a child, our family always (not just sometimes, but always) celebrated Thanksgiving with the Whipple's. Russ and my father were best of friends. They had been college roommates before going off to war in 1942. After the war they spent a couple of months together in England and Norway exploring their family roots. They both moved to California after returning to the US, and were one another's best men at their weddings. Clearly, their friendship meant much to each man, and they made a point of expressing that in our yearly Thanksgiving celebrations.

Now, 60 years later, I still give God thanks for the way our families supported one another through the years. I also give thanks for teachers, coaches, youth leaders and neighbors who were such a big part of my growing into the person I am today. And I could fill a couple of pages if I were to try to list all the blessings that have made a difference in my life (but for brevity's sake I won't try). Truly, I am greatly blessed. And it is because I have been richly blessed that Thanksgiving can be such a conflicted time for me. You see, I know that so many others do not have similar blessings in their lives.

All around the world people have struggles where I have blessings. Our southern border is overwhelmed by people fleeing violence and crushing poverty in Central America. The Rohingya, Uighur and other peoples endure systemic oppression and even genocide in their homelands. Ukrainians and others live with the constant fear of missiles and bombs falling from the sky. And crushing poverty is the reality of a billion people around the world. So, while I'm giving thanks for my blessings, I'm also wanting others to share in God's blessings.

I can't make the world's problems go away; but I can make them just a little less. The hours I spend volunteering in our community make a difference to

some. The money I donate to our church and to church-related organizations touch the lives of even more people with tangible signs of God's love. And while I can't give enough to change the world, when my gifts are combined with the gifts of others, change does happen.

As you consider your blessings this year and give God thanks, I invite you to consider also the needs of others of God's beloved children. Like Abraham (see Genesis 12), we have been blessed in order to be a blessing to others. Let us be a blessing together as we generously share what we have with those whose needs are great. Together, by God's grace, we can and will change the world.

Your brother in Christ,
Jim Larsen



THE CHURCH MOUSE HEARS

... that the program of the October 22 inaugural concert of the recently installed organ at Phi Beta Kappa Hall had this acknowledgement:

"Special gratitude is extended to Ward and Jane Bourn who made the enhanced acoustics possible in this Concert Hall."

The program explained that the new concert hall possesses an incredible adjustable acoustical environment, rendering it suitable for both lectures and concerts. The organ sound is projected evenly throughout the room. This plaque appears on the wall by the right entrance.





ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

October was a busy month for our Preschool!

Bookmobile started in October. The children just adore Mr. Chris and his animated story telling. They all are able to climb up into the Bookmobile and choose a library book to take home for the month. At noon, the children often proudly display their book to their caregiver before feeling they are ready to get into their vehicle.

Fire Prevention week was October 9-15 and we celebrated with a visit from the Williamsburg Fire Department. The children practiced crawling under a smoke blanket to safety and learned how to dress like a fire fighter. Outside, the children excitedly explored a firetruck close up and were shown many interesting tools that help keep them safe.

Our first field trip of the year was to Pumpkinville! Students, parents, and teachers enjoyed time together outside, had a tractor ride, and chose a pumpkin to take home. Everyone enjoyed their time in the sun on two wonderful fall days.

The month ended with a Halloween costume parade through the halls where the preschoolers visited each office and received a festive goodie. We have the most precious children and their costumes were just adorable.

We are all looking toward our first **Spirit Night at Sal's by Victor on November 14 from 5:00-9:00 PM**. Parents, teachers, and congregation members may choose to dine in or take out – with some of the proceeds coming back to our school. Please be sure to mention St. Stephen when you order and check out!

Our teachers and children all thank you for your continuing support of our Preschool.

Holly Ready, Preschool Director



Story time with Mr. Chris



Fire Prevention Week



STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. STEPHEN



The Holidays are Coming!

Fall has finally arrived and with it comes back to school, special holidays and events, and the pressure that all these extra activities and responsibilities can generate. Trying to fit in with all the holiday activities with the routine of life can be frustrating and confusing. You want to get everything possible done to meet your obligations and keep the family happy. But there may not seem to be enough time to make everybody happy and maintain your sanity.

This feeling is sometimes referred to as “holiday blues.” It comes from trying to meet expectations from friends and relatives, your own wishes to make friends and family happy and recapturing the experience of happy times from the past. There are many articles available in health journals that give good advice about limiting eating and drinking and getting enough sleep and exercise. This is good advice to follow, but it is difficult to handle by yourself.

You have read in former bulletins that Stephen Ministry provides a calm environment where your concerns can be discussed in confidence. With the advancing holidays the program can also be an oasis of calm and healing that will let you focus on the important matters for yourself and your family. Taking the time out for even an hour a week can regenerate your enthusiasm for family, friends and holiday traditions.

You do not have to shoulder these burdens alone. The gift Stephen Ministry brings to us at St. Stephen is that you do not have to suffer the burdens of holiday stress and family demands by yourself. Just being able to talk to someone who gives you their undivided attention during a quiet meeting time can help you focus on what is important in your own life.

Meeting with a Stephen Minister does not mean a long-term commitment. You may just need to have some time out from the frenzied activity that surrounds to get another view and have a quiet “time out.”

There are many things that can contribute to the holiday blues. Whether it is something as simple as overscheduling yourself or a deeper emotional need, it is possible to work through your feelings and start anew.

A Stephen Minister is fully present in the moment with you and can help you focus on your thoughts and the emotions that accelerate your anxieties. In a calm, personal environment, you can look at your concerns calmly and perhaps understand that your concerns can be managed and that there is nothing that you cannot handle. Because you are no longer alone.

Pete Davis, Stephen Minister

PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

We are finally moving ahead with a new St. Stephen Pictorial Directory. The photo sessions will take place on **December 11 and 12 from 2:00 PM until 8:30 PM** and you will need to reserve your households time slot. There is not a sitting fee and every household will receive one free 8x10 of the photo that they select to be in the directory. You will also have the option to purchase additional photos and have the opportunity to have multiple photos taken. Every household that sits for their photo will also receive a copy of the directory. If you have any questions please contact **Hollie Jones**, Parish Administrator, office@saintstephenlutheran.net, 757-229-6688.

PICTORIAL
Directory

It's time for our
NEW Parish
Directory! Every
family receives a
FREE 8x10 family
portrait and a
printed directory!

Save The Date!
December 11th
and 12th

*It won't be
OUR
directory without
YOU!*



NOVEMBER

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



THANKSGIVING AND GIVING THANKS

The holidays come with high expectations that can lead to sadness, anxiety or depression. If you suffer from depression or severe anxiety, seek professional help. If, however, you feel lost, overwhelmed or a little down, there is good news for you. Being grateful has scientific studies to show it will help improve general malaise. The word gratitude is derived from the Latin word *gratia*, which means grace or grateful. Gratitude is thankful appreciation for what you have whether tangible or intangible. Gratitude is associated with greater happiness.

Gratitude can be expressed in the past by remembering a happier time in life, the present by being aware and appreciative for what we have now, and the future by

being optimistic about things to come. There are ways to cultivate gratitude:

- Saying thank you or writing a thank you note not only provides uplift for you, but also the recipient of your thanks. It will help to nurture your relationship as well.
- To even say thank you mentally will bring warm feelings to you as think about the kindness for which you are thankful.
- Keep a gratitude journal. Writing down one thing daily that you are thankful for will start the day on a positive note.
- Count your blessings. Try to sit down once weekly and write down the things you feel are blessings in your life.
- Meditation helps you to focus on the present moment without judgement. You can focus on things such as the warmth of the sun or the sound of the wind and feel grateful.
- Prayer, in all its many forms, is another way to express gratitude.

Whatever you choose to do, let this be a Thanksgiving full of happiness and gratitude for you and yours.

Diana Tiller-Dichtel, Parish Nurse





NOVEMBER 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

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Barbara Morris | Sarah Shoenfelt |
| 10 | Carolyn McKenna | |
| 11 | Hannah Wiers | |
| 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!

Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for **Aaren Battle, Brian Bergh, Ed Brown, Kristin Carter, Marcie Clark, Jack Harris, Sharon Jacobs, Marilyn Johnson, Evelyn Kernan, Julia Mahony, Jim Mayfield, Randy Punchard and Linda Reuben.**

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

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Dawn Allen, Paula Battle, Donald and Carol Baum, Rose Baumgarten, Sally Blackburn, Mary Bloom, Ann Bunn Jerry & Elijah Connor, Judy Craun, Doug Crinklaw, Katie Czajkowski, Sophia Czajkowski, Judy Drezek, Derald Edwards, Joel Gillespie, Cheryl Griffin & family, Joan and Frank Goodhart, Catherine Harbison, Deanna Harbison, Bradley Kim Joan and Laurie Heintzelman, Char Henry, Zac and Jen Holtzman and family, Brian Johnson, Don Johnson, Mason Jones, Connie Kendrick ,The Kennedy family, Bob Lamoureux, Ron Luchetti, Marnah Lund, Doug Mayes, Laura Mcgolin, Maddie Murray, Bob Myers, Katie Orcutt, Gina Peterson, Paula Rega, Marci Ries, Sharon Rogers, Betty Roth, Inge Seiter, Kelsey Slay, Vasili Soultoukis, Chad Strausbaugh, Charley Underdahl, and Caleb Winig.



Virginia Lutherans

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 November 2023

Congregational Officers:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <i>President</i> | Julie Meeks | 804-432-5149 |
| <i>Vice President</i> | J.R. Lyons | 757-920-5355 |
| <i>Treasurer</i> | Pete Davis | 757-345-0596 |
| <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@ |
| | Alex Sheppard-Witt | 717-434-5037 |
| | email | Pastorasw@ |
| <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:

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Jeffery Berry (Youth Member) | 804-432-5149 |
| Pam Buckley | 757-707-4564 |
| 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 |
| Julie Meeks | 804-432-5149 |
| Paul Reier | 757-566-0092 |
| Lou Rossiter | 757-345-6206 |
| Roberta Sulouff | 978-854-2085 |

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

Editor: Reed Nester
 reednester@gmail.com

Article deadline: Fifteenth of the month.