



The Servant of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Update from Sr. Leah Sokunin, LC:

I'm back from my Lindisfarne Community retreat, and visit with my sister, and I've decided to go ahead with an idea that I've been sitting with for quite a while. I'm hoping to start a contemplative prayer/meditation practice at St. Stephen's. With the change in the Wednesday schedule it would now be possible to have a meditation period before the 6:30 Eucharist. I'd like to know if anyone is interested in this. I am already at church on Wednesdays from about 2pm on, doing altar guild chores, and I'm planning on staying for the 6:30 Eucharist anyway.

If you would like to join me for meditation on Wednesdays please let me know. Speaking of the altar guild, we really need more helpers. If you are interested in what the altar guild does, and think you might be able to give some of your time, please come and talk to me. (I also need someone to take

If I was asked to sum up the message of the Gospels in one word, that word would be love. God's love for us, and our love for him. The mission of Jesus, and therefore our mission as well, is to carry this love into the world.



From the Gospels we see that:

God's love reaches out to all. No one is excluded from it, it crosses the boundaries of culture, religion, race, ethnicity, gender and age.

God's love transforms. Our mission field lies amongst our family, friends, work, neighbors, colleagues, and the people we meet as we go about our daily life.

The Rev. Canon Pablo Ramos, D.D., Vicar



Message from the Bishop's Warden, Carly Burton

Greetings to all, and I hope you are enjoying the nice weather we have been having lately. At the Bishop's Committee meeting this past Sunday, one of the issues we discussed was the ongoing maintenance issues we have been having with the church buildings.

The latest problem we are facing is the repair of the water damaged floors in the classroom area. We have had numerous costly repairs and replacements lately but the bigger issue is how can we continue to maintain a very large facility with very limited funds. Even with outside income from the other groups and the grant from the diocese we will continue to struggle financially to maintain our church facilities. In addition, the annual grant from the Diocese will be diminishing so we cannot continue to rely on the Diocese to rescue us when large, costly repairs are needed.

digital photos for an inventory of our vessels and linens, and put them on a flash drive for me.)

My thanks to all of you — you make St. Stephen’s amazing.



Coffee Hour Corner

The reason I believe the coffee hour is important enough for me to personally see that it happens begins with how each of us has their own reason for attending the worship service. However, the liturgy is intended to be a consistent action taken to express our gratitude for God and therefore we put aside what is personal with us to be part of the community. At the coffee hour, we have the opportunity to learn more about the other persons we worship with and let others know more about us. While I've known many of you for years, it still never fails to surprise me how much more there is to know about everyone including me. Even though all of us have busy lives, please stop by to get to know your fellow believers better.

Love,
Fran

I am asking your help in exploring our options for the future. I have listed some possible options but the Bishop’s Committee and Father Pablo want your input on any ideas you have for the future of St. Stephens. Some possible options are as follows:

- 1.Continue to try and maintain the facilities as we have done in the past.
- 2.Enter into lease agreements of the facilities to outside groups to raise money for repairs.
- 3.Sell the building to an outside group (Diocese owns the facilities) and rent space as needed.
- 4.Sell the building and move to a new location.

These may seem like radical ideas but we need to think outside the box to try and figure out where we need to be going into the future. Please let myself, Father Pablo or the Bishop’s Committee know if you have other ideas.



Beyond weeds and furnaces

Earlier this year I became Junior Warden and was suddenly directly exposed to all the things that are ailing our beautiful building. Some more leaks from the abundant rains and a new set of roof patching, a furnace that is ready to perish and so, so many weeds and out of control trees on a very large property. I was aware of these issues in a distant part of my mind, but as junior warden it all suddenly became a monetary reality. Seeing each and every bill come in for things that we must do because they are important in a practical way put a dollar sign on the building for me. I am thankful we can afford it, because we really do need a building, the money going into it is no small amount.

We talk a lot about Church as being more than a building, but for many churches like our own, it becomes almost impossible to be more than a building. Having a heated or cooled building, keeping leaks and mold at bay and having a decently maintained yard are common sense things. Not to mention electricity and running water,

Food for thought:

Infuse your life with action. Don't wait for it to happen. Make it happen. Make your own future. Make your own hope. Make your own love. And whatever your beliefs, honor your creator, not by passively waiting for grace to come down from upon high, but by doing what you can to make grace happen... yourself, right now, right down here on Earth.

Bradley Whitford

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***Worship On Wednesday***

Worship on Wednesday (WOW) is taking on a new format.

5:00 pm until 7:00 pm, Amy will work with the children on different craft projects,

6:30 pm - 7:00 pm Eucharist

7:00 pm Dinner

8:00 pm Fellowship

**Why don't you give it a try**

these are not luxury items, they are a necessity. Being on the Bishop's Committee for a few years now, I know for a fact that we have cut down on almost everything we can. This building eats all our resources and provides a wonderful space and a good shelter for us. I am grateful for the building.

And yet, when I think about the mission of the church, my soul hurts, because I see that our wonderful building takes it all and there is too little to give to what could be true growth. I think of all the work days that we had together when we spent half the day pulling weeds, trimming trees, tidying up. What if we had spent that time in Bible study? What if we had spent that time in prayer? What if we had spent that time sharing our faith stories with each other, crying and laughing together?

I truly believe that having a beautiful space is very important for a church and I also enjoy the discipline of work, especially when I know I am contributing to making this holy space a little bit more tidy and special, but at the same time I recognize that there are ways in which I am not growing spiritually because, after giving the building our energy, there is little energy left to come together to grow spiritually.

I pray that together as a community will find a way to do both.

Daniela Lee, Junior Warden

