



St. Stephen's E-NEWS

...Where God is seen, love is felt and lives are changed!

February 5, 2021

5 Epiphany

Isaiah 40:21-31

Psalm 147:1-12, 21c

1 Corinthians 9:16-23

Mark 1:29-39

SUNDAY WORSHIP WITH BISHOP BRIAN COLE



It's the fifth Sunday after the Epiphany, and we will have **ONE** service of **Holy Eucharist, February 7, 2021, livestreamed at 9 a.m., with a significant difference this week...**

Fr. Bailey will present some announcements, a very short reflection on this week's readings, special prayers specific to our congregation, and birthday and anniversary blessings. Following his video, we will then go straight into the Diocesan worship. This is a great opportunity for everyone to experience worship with different voices, in a little different style, and most importantly, for us to celebrate as one diocese and one church this Sunday. Okay...but why?

The Annual Convention for the Diocese of East Tennessee takes place this weekend virtually (St. Stephen's delegates are Judith Delaney, Cameron Ellis, Elizabeth Pack, Victoria Medaglia [alternate], and Bailey Norman). One requirement at each annual convention is the diocesan-wide celebration of Holy Eucharist. Since Convention is meeting virtually, the virtual worship that has been recorded for Convention is also being offered to each parish for this Sunday.

After the service, Fr. Bailey will be at the church (Vienna Road portico) for those of you who are delivering or picking up communion. The window for communion pickup will be from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Have a blessed weekend!

EYF

EYF will meet from 12-2 on Sunday, February 7, 2021 for donuts, pizza, and the movie *Evan Almighty!*

Bring a cozy blanket and a chair for our socially-distanced movie afternoon! See you Sunday!

Caroline Wood, Youth Minister
youthminister@ststephensor.org

INQUIRER'S CLASS

While our Inquirers Class has begun (with over 20 participants!), the opportunity is still available if you wish to join us! Please e-mail or call Fr. Bailey if you are interested in joining. We will be meeting Wednesday nights from 6-7 over Zoom leading up to the bishop's visitation with us on April 11, 2021.

PASTORAL CARE

JOIN US AS WE PRAY THIS WEEK FOR:

Craig Brent
Irma Brown
Emily Bruner
Sherry Burchfield
Jamie Burnham
David & Nancy Caldwell

Please include these people in your prayers.

SUNDAY SOCIAL TIME



Join our Zoom social hours with these credentials.

Morning [Coffee Hour](#) at 10 a.m.

Morning Meeting ID: 848 0379 6165
Password: 609987

[Evening Social Hour](#) is at 5 p.m..

Evening Meeting ID: 816 4332 4827
Password: 999944

ADULT FORUM IN LENT

CIVIL CONVERSATIONS IN UNCIVIL TIMES

For four weeks in Lent, we will examine how we can engage in constructive dialogue and where God may be purposefully leading us, both individually and collectively.

Live classes will be held via Zoom after church (10:30 to 11:30) on Sunday Feb 21, 28, March 7 and March 14. Recordings will be posted to the St. Stephen's YouTube channel for subsequent viewing.

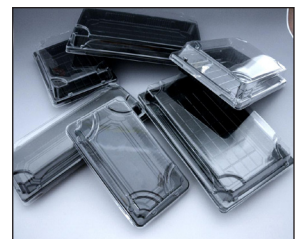
Courtney Manrod

Take-Away Containers

We are looking for some box-style take away containers - and we'd like to get about 90.

They are available at Dollar Tree sometimes, but we're really trying to recycle and avoid more and more Ziploc bags. If you have any that you would be willing to donate, we need the bottoms and lids! Thank you!

Sherry Burchfield, Christian Education Team





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LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

Most Episcopalians are scared of the book of Revelation. Some of that is due to its strange imagery. Some of that is how the book has been used to make crazy and often frightening predictions. During these unsettling times, Revelation is a book that, when explored properly, unlocks a world that, while radically different, speaks a message of hope and comfort to us.

Join Fr. Bailey this Lenten season as he explores this eccentric and yet marvelous book of the Bible. Each day during Lent, we will put out a video that will walk through the entire book, explaining not only its meaning but also its relevance for how God calls us to live today. The study will begin on Ash Wednesday and be broadcast on our YouTube channel. Hope you can join us!

DIOCESAN CONVENTION

This Saturday, your parish delegate: Judith Delaney, Cameron Ellis, Elizabeth Pack, Victoria Medaglia (alternate), and Bailey Norman. will be meeting virtually with delegates from every parish and worshipping community in the Diocese of East Tennessee for our annual Convention. Diocesan Convention is the time when connections are made, the bishop encourages us and shares with us the opportunities of mission going on in the diocese, and diocesan leadership is elected and commissioned.

VIRTUAL ASHES - ASH WEDNESDAY DURING THE PANDEMIC

It has been a frequent conversation among my clergy colleagues – How do we do a contact-less Ash Wednesday? It seems to defeat the purpose when the priest can't smudge a big glob of ash on your forehead! These conversations have been fruitful, and from them I have developed the following rite by which we are doing Ash Wednesday (Wednesday, February 17):

- **First, the service will be totally virtual.** (I grind my teeth as I type this, as I especially long for this service to be in person. But physical separation remains appropriate at this time). The service will be broadcast at 9 AM that morning.
- In the forthcoming Evangel, I'll go into a little history on the origins of Ash Wednesday. It will explain the reason that, instead of ashes this year, we will be using DIRT. Between now and Ash Wednesday, a set of prayers and instructions (similar to the prayer card that has come with our pandemic communion distribution) will be sent out both physically and electronically for the purpose of self-imposing dirt on your forehead.
- How will this be done? At the appropriate time during the service, when I self-impose dirt, you will administer the ashes to yourself. If there are others in your household, it is certainly appropriate for you to administer to each other.
- How will you get dirt? Well, of course dirt is everywhere, which is part of the reason for substituting dirt instead of ashes. Does it have to be "magic" dirt? This question is certainly humorous on the surface, but while it hasn't been phrased exactly like that, many people who are familiar with the Ash Wednesday liturgy and its special blessing over the ashes have asked what is appropriate liturgically. So here are three options for you in this regard:
 - **Option 1: PICK-UP :** You can come by the church anytime after 9 AM on Tuesday February 16, 2021, to pick up a small plastic bag of dirt, which will be regular potting soil. These bags will be on a table outside the glass office doors under the portico.
 - **Option 2: DELIVERY:** We will have a sign-up like we do with communion where these same small bags of dirt can be delivered to you sometime on Tuesday.
 - **Option 3: DIY:** You can get your own dirt from anywhere ranging from your own yard, God's wider creation, or even potting soil from a store.
- When the dirt is blessed during the service, no matter when you watch it, consider the dirt you acquired by one of the three methods above to be blessed from afar and appropriate for administering.

As with everything else in the past year, Ash Wednesday will look very different from its usual form. But to so many of us, rituals have become even more important as buoys in the turbulent waters of our world. The simple act of being called through the smudging of dirt/ashes on our foreheads to remember our mortality powerfully reminds us especially now that true and sustaining life comes from the One who formed us from these very elements and from His Son who shared our mortal existence and rose beyond it into the perfection of God's eternal love for all people. I look forward to worshipping with you on this special day.

Bailey

Diocesan Convention, continued...

For this year, our own Betsy Ellis is running to serve on Bishop and Council, which is essentially the diocese's equivalent of the Vestry. Fr. Bailey is running to serve on the Disciplinary Board, an advisory committee to the bishop that deals with misconduct within the church. We also want to recognize and thank our own Jim Anderson who is rotating off from serving a three-year term on Bishop and Council. Please pray for the work of Convention and for those who are called to serve in our diocesan leadership.