

MARCH 2020

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The Evangel

TIME FOR A GOOD STORY

It seems awfully strange writing this, my first newsletter article to you, as I sit staring at the mounds of stuff still unpacked in our house in Mobile. I just finished my work at Trinity last week, and Sara and James Henry are still teaching and attending school here up through February 21st (our moving truck arrives the very next day!). After a long time of waiting – for you, waiting nearly four years for a new non-interim priest to arrive at St. Stephen's; and for us, waiting months for all the details to fall into place for us to return to a place we love – now we enter the manic hurry-up phase. Quick, just throw it in a box! Why would we keep that – just throw it away! We just have to make sure we can find our everyday wardrobe boxes in the storage unit! Our minds are so focused on getting a mountain of chores done that it is easy to forget the excitement and energy of being with you in less than a week as of this writing and eagerly anticipating the immense amount of storytelling that is about to take place.

As stressful as moving is (all of you who have done it can relate quite well, I'm sure), it is very much a reflection of the pattern of our overall life. A good deal of our life is built around schedules, and we endlessly struggle to manage the recurring rhythms of "hurry up and wait". To a large extent, we cannot control this. And yet we find ourselves pouring our focus, our time, and our energy on the things that have to be done and neglecting to tend to the "thin spaces" where God is most present to us and where our relationships to God and to one another tend to flourish and grow. These thin spaces are the moments where, whether it's over a meal, enjoying a hike or sitting by the lake, or spending a relaxing evening with family and friends, we can share stories. We can listen to the wonders our children experience during the day. We can soak in the wisdom of our parents or grandparents. We can share and hold each other up in the frustrations we experienced today. And in all these things, we can listen and dwell on the greatest story – the story of God's love revealed in Jesus that is manifest through those moments where God is speaking a special word through family, friends, or the stillness of nature.

Thus, it is important for me to establish opportunities immediately for myself and for all of us in our common life at St. Stephen's: to slow down, enjoy the thin spaces, and share our stories. You hopefully have already seen the announcement for the Sharing Our Faith dinners. While part of the objective of these is to give me a chance to visit with you and vice versa in small, intimate settings, the main goal for these dinners is to encourage us to seek a pattern where we may listen to each other's stories but also especially to be in touch with our own.

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Some of you, particularly those who have done EfM or are engaged in TRIP (Theological Reflections in Practice) groups, are already acutely aware of our human need to listen to God's story manifest in our own lives and in the lives of others. But it is important for all of us to remember that growing a church is much more than building attendance or boosting finances. It is creating a community of disciples deeply formed, the root of whose formation lies in creating time to seek out those places to learn, discern, and ultimately to find what it means to truly live as a child of God. These dinners are not meant to force you to share something uncomfortable; on the contrary, the biggest work you can do is make time to hear the stories others will share. Once we can listen to the stories of others, we become more confident to claim our own stories and share them with others with the hope that other people will hear God's call to them within this community that allows us to find and dwell in those thin spaces.

Lent is a great time to begin this practice. As we take on our Lenten disciplines, these practices are meant precisely to lead us away from distractions about things that control us and lead us toward the places where we may be still and listen – listen to God and listen to our neighbors. After all, loving God and loving our neighbor are the two great commandments. What better way for me to begin walking together with you as your new priest than for us to commit our lives to a way of sharing stories that shape us to live out these commandments in profoundly new ways.

I can't wait to start this holy pilgrimage with you, offering ourselves through story and discovering the story still untold that God is working out among us as we speak.

*Christ's Peace,
Father Bailey +*

FOOD BASKET MINISTRY

St. Stephen's feeds the truly hungry in Oak Ridge with our Food Basket Ministry. We provide a substantial food basket to 30 families four times a year. Please support this vital outreach when you visit the grocery store! Shopping lists are located in the the shopping carts near the office area and the Nave. You can place your contributions in the shopping carts or on the stage in the Parish Hall. Monetary donations are also gratefully accepted! Simply designate "Food Baskets" on your check.

The next Food Basket Distribution will be Saturday, March 14, 2020.

Volunteers are needed to help prepare the baskets on **Thursday, March 12 and Friday, March 13 at 9:00.** Many hands will make light work! Thank you!

~Mary Jeanne French, Food Basket Coordinator

PARISH HALL ART

The art of Jean Wheat Gregory is on display in the Parish Hall. A native Texan and graduate in art from the University of Texas, Jean is a longtime Oak Ridger and frequent instructor at the Art Center in oils and pastels. She is known for her portraits of children, two of which are on display. Art is in her genes as both her mother and daughter are also painters. Some of the paintings are for sale, others marked "NFS", but Jean has other unframed works at home that are similar and available. She would welcome your inquiries about them or about her portraits.



We welcome exhibitions of your art, or collections, to grace our walls. Contact Judy Kidd to schedule yours!

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

St. Stephen's is preparing to host the 2020 World Day of Prayer service on **Friday, March 6, 2020, at 7 P.M.** Contact Gay Marie Logsdon (logsburn@att.net, 483-7940) on how to get involved.



WOMEN'S INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Women's Interfaith Dialogue will meet at 10:45 a.m. on **Monday, March 2, 2020** at the Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge, 101 W. Madison Lane. Dr. Lynn Sacco of Gender Studies at the University of Tennessee is the guest speaker.

ADULT FORUM LENTEN STUDY

**MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF PEACE:
A GUIDE TO CIVIL DISCOURSE.**

During Lent, the Adult Forum will explore the use of civil discourse as a skill that we can develop and use to build healthier communities. Instructors will teach civil discourse as a specific style of conversation that requires particular skills and practices. The goal of these conversations is to be in deeper relationship and to more truly know the dignity and worth of each other. If you plan on attending, please send Victoria Medaglia your email address and she'll be sure you get links to all materials. If you would like to lead one of the five sessions, please speak up! The Adult Forum meets at 9 a.m. on Sunday mornings.



DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

St. Agnes DOK Meeting / Study Program will be on **Wednesday, March 4, 2020.**

Communion service in the Chapel at 10:00 A.M., led by the Rev. Claire Keene.

Blessed fellowship! ALL are welcome!

LENTEN RETREAT

The St. Agnes DOK is sponsoring a Lenten Retreat at St. Stephen's: "Growing in Grace and Gratitude", led by the Rev. Claire Keene. Mark your calendars and plan to attend! **March 27-28, 2020.**

March 27th Friday

7:00-9:00 P.M. Light refreshments.

March 28th Saturday

8:30-9:00 A.M. Gathering with coffee and a light breakfast

9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Snacks and a box lunch will be provided. ALL are very welcome!

Registration forms will be available in the fellowship hall March 1st and in the Hospitality area. The registration deadline is March 18, 2020!

- Reservations are NECESSARY in order to provide the box lunch and snacks.
- Please leave your COMPLETED registration forms at the Hospitality desk or in the DOK mailbox in designated envelopes.
- Donations will be accepted at the Retreat!



LOOKING AHEAD

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

April 5	Palm Sunday
April 6	Stations of the Cross
April 7	Stations of the Cross
April 8	Compline with Fauré Requiem
April 9	Maundy Thursday
April 10	Good Friday



EASTER SUNDAY - APRIL 12, 2020

6:00 a.m.	Great Easter Vigil
7:00 a.m.	Easter Breakfast
9 a.m.	Choral Festal Eucharist
11:15 a.m.	Choral Festal Eucharist
12:30 p.m.	Easter Egg Hunt



SHARING FAITH DINNERS

Your enthusiastic response has filled the five Sharing Faith Dinners scheduled during Lent, and there appears to be enough interest for us to arrange additional ones after Easter. If you are interested and would let either Brent Sigmon or the church office know, that would help us plan for future dinners. Thank you!

EPISCOPAL YOUTH FELLOWSHIP - EYF

March 1:	Prayer Stations
March 8:	Little Mermaid at Oak Ridge High
March 15:	Giant Games
March 21-22:	Grace Point Camp Out!
March 29:	Bowling

For more information, please contact Caroline Wood, youthminister@ststephensor.org.

CLAIRE'S INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

"Everybody who has survived puberty knows what an upheaval it can bring- mentally, emotionally, physically, socially and spiritually. No one ever goes back to being a child after passing that hurdle. Adulthood brings us big transitions too. We may have thought that once we hit 21, everything would be set; we would have all the skills we needed to just keep going in one direction, gathering experience and becoming more expert, forging ahead.

But, like all other living things, we do not simply reach full grown maturity, then bide our time till death. Whether we expect it or not, adulthood is more like an adventure through the Smokies than a plateau on to which we step and just keep going. We encounter unexpected changes in terrain. We turn a curve to find a totally different vista, a new water source, even different weather. So adulthood has its own challenges, quandaries, and new phases. Life shifts with every curve in the road. We continue to face mental, emotional, physical, social and spiritual challenges. In fact, if we've been coasting on our youthful understandings of God, they are probably too small for us now. God keeps inviting us into rearranged lives, new ways of relating.

Come explore with us the changes we might expect as we move toward spiritual maturity. As in puberty, these changes are not signs of failure or causes for despair. They are signs of continuing growth in our relationship with God, ourselves, and each other. Please join us as we look in the mirror to discern who we are being called to become now."

If you have questions about the Retreat, please contact Jeanne Kring, Roni Boyd or Pat Swinney.



March Celebrations

BIRTHDAYS

- 3/5 Nancy Carow
- 3/7 Wes Singer
- 3/8 Chloe Kirk
- 3/9 Ted Swilley
- 3/10 Jane Cappiello
- 3/11 Dominic Giuliano
- 3/12 Bill Nestor
Jim Anderson
- 3/13 Gay Marie Logsdon
Virginia Jones
John Storey
Michael Manrod
- 3/14 Linda Hagaman
- 3/15 Jim Kring
- 3/18 Ed LaRose
- 3/20 Susan Meredith
- 3/21 Joy Fournier
- 3/24 Jonathan Heischman
Laura Ellis

- 3/25 Miranda Miller
- 3/26 Judy Kidd
- 3/27 Daryl Yearwood
- 3/29 Pete Peterson
John Joyce
- 3/31 Joe Plante
Ross Mol

ANNIVERSARIES

- 3/1 Jamey Kennedy & Allan Reiss
- 3/6 Jodi & Gregory Majors
- 3/16 Judy & Dan DiGregorio
Virginia & Charles Jones
- 3/18 Karen & Daryl Yearwood
- 3/25 Katherine & Gary Grubb
- 3/30 Stella & Bill Schramm



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