



# St. Stephen's E-NEWS

WHERE GOD IS SEEN, LOVE IS FELT, LIVES ARE CHANGED.

April 21, 2023

## SUNDAY SERVICES

St. Stephen's will observe **The Third Sunday of Easter on April 23.**

The Service Bulletins will be available to view and download from the [St. Stephen's website](#).

For the 50 days of Easter, the corporate rite of confession is not used in our liturgy. **See Page 3 to learn more.**

## WEEKLY PRAYERS

WE PRAY FOR PARISH MEMBERS

*Catherine Graves*

*Lisa Griggs*

*Gary & Katherine Grubb*

*Linda & Ed Hagaman*

*Virginia Hall*

*Please keep these people in your prayers.*

**A memorial service for Bill Whitten, father of parishioner Cathy Whitten, will be held at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, April 22.**

An obituary chronicling Bill's full and remarkable life is available [at this link](#).

*The Daughters of the King*

*Saint Agnes Chapter*

*Invites to Tea*

*The Ladies of St. Stephen's*

*Sunday, April 23, 2023*

*Parish Hall, 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.*

*RSVP*

*Sign-up Sheets in*

*Parish Hall | Narthex | Hospitality Center*

*Or Online at This [Link](#)*

*Hats - Optional*

## LETTER TO THE PARISH FROM FATHER BAILEY NORMAN

It goes without saying – it is a delight to be back as your Priest-in-Charge! I am excited to reconnect with you – and meet the amazing number of newcomers we have had during my time away!

Sara, James Henry, and I have all missed you tremendously. We look forward to rejoining the amazing ministry and Spirit-filled work you have undertaken under the leadership of Fr. Ashton Sims, Fr. Charles Fels, Fr. Howard Hess, and your Wardens and Vestry while we have been away.

This process of returning has been, by nature, very slow and deliberate.

The Bishop's office, your Vestry, and I wanted to make sure that all of my medical reports were sound to ensure that I was coming back without any significant constraints. Because of my long absence and to make sure I ease back into my work with you, I will be starting at 25 hours per week.

What this means is that, for the first couple of weeks, I will be working Sundays, Mondays, and Tuesdays. I will gradually add a few hours each week until, by the end of May, I should be back to full-time status. Even when I am back full-time, I will remain very careful to maintain good boundaries on my time and energy commitments as I continue my recovery.

I will preach this upcoming Sunday, April 23, and I hope you can be present on Sunday, April 30, after the 10:00 AM service for a luncheon hosted by the Vestry in which I will share a little about my journey over the past seven months. In addition, I want to hear from you what you've been up to in my absence and continue what I hope to be an ongoing conversation about our shared vision and dreams for St. Stephen's.

I am SO looking forward to seeing all of your faces over the next few weeks.

Christ's Peace,  
Bailey

**Parish Luncheon**

Sponsored by the St. Stephen's Vestry

**April 30th**

AFTER THE 10:00 SERVICE

Followed by "A Conversation With Father Bailey"

**Menu: Grilled Chicken, Sides, Dessert and Beverage**

**Reminder: The Daughters of the King** will use the Parish Hall and kitchen for the full afternoon, beginning at 1:00 p.m., on Sunday, April 23.

**Reminder: The Church office is open** from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

**See Pages 2 & 3 for More E-News**



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## PARISH LUNCHEON TO WELCOME HOME THE NORMANS

On Sunday, April 30, the St. Stephen's Vestry will host a Parish Luncheon to welcome the Norman family back home. Lunch will begin after the 10:00 a.m. service, with grilled chicken, various side dishes, beverages, and desserts on the menu. The children will then go to their regular Sunday School classes. The youth will remain for Father Bailey's talk.

In an effort to avoid repeating the same information multiple times, Father Bailey would like to speak

to the Parish about his time on leave.

We are calling this portion, where he will share with us what the last six months have involved, "A Conversation with Father Bailey". Please note that this will not be live-streamed.

Please plan to join us in the Parish Hall on the 30th for good food and great fellowship as with very grateful hearts we welcome Bailey, Sara and James Henry back to St. Stephen's!



Senior Warden Courtney Manrod and Roger Johnson pause near the Grove after leaving a recent St. Stephen's Finance Committee meeting. East Tennessee has been blessed with gradually warming spring temperatures and abundant rain, showcasing our church's grounds and providing a bright and colorful setting for prayer, worship, work, and fellowship.

## HELP NEEDED FOR CLEARFORK CAMP PREPARATIONS

Our preparations for our Clearfork camp are coming together. We request donations of old magazines, used paper bags for skits, and snack bag contents. Magazines will be used for arts and crafts activities, while paper bags will be used for other fun activities.

As for the snack bags, we ask

for non-perishable items such as granola bars, trail mix, and other healthy snacks to keep our campers energized throughout the day.

Donations can be dropped off at the parish office during regular business hours. Your support and generosity are greatly appreciated.

## ULSTER PROJECT OF EAST TENNESSEE SEEKING SUMMER HOST FAMILIES

St. Stephen's families have a history of volunteering their homes and time for the Ulster Project. Now, the project is seeking host families for this summer.

The project is an international program to help promote peace and reconciliation among the people of the six counties of Ulster.

The program exposes Northern Irish teens to a lifestyle that accepts cultural and religious differences and thereby helps end

the polarization that feeds political conflict and violence. Teens will arrive June 28 and leave July 21.

### What Does It Take to Become a Host Family?

- Participation in Shared Worship Services
- Have a 14- to 16-year-old living in the home
- Provide a bed, a drawer, and

some closet space

- Have the teen available to participate in Ulster Project activities
- There is no cost to participate in the project. Activities are supported by the project's fundraising activities.

Contact John Hough 865-405-5929 for more information.

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## WHY NO CONFESSION DURING EASTERTIDE?

It always strikes some people at St. Stephen's that, during the Easter season, something is missing in our liturgy! For the 50 days of Easter, the corporate rite of confession is not said in our liturgy. Does this mean that we stop sinning or receive a "get-out-of-sin-free" card during Easter?

Of course not! It simply communicates that, in the risen Lord, all of our sins are forgiven and put away. It is a stark and powerful reminder that God's grace in and through Christ is more than enough for us to receive forgiveness and renewal of life.

But because it is not in our Sunday liturgy, it gives more impetus during these 50 days to find the opportunities to say the confession in our own prayers outside of Sunday. I would encourage you to say it in your individual or family prayers at home. We will keep saying the confession in our 11:30 healing service and Eucharist every Tuesday because confession is a significant part of opening ourselves to receiving God's power of healing.

Even on Sunday mornings, you are encouraged to say the confession privately before worship or be more

intentional in preparing yourself for worship when you arrive at church (the short prayers beginning on p. 833 in the BCP are excellent for centering oneself before/after worship and communion).

The subtle changes in our corporate liturgy are also invitations to change or renew our daily prayer habits. My hope is that we always pay attention to these changes and see them as ways for us to renew our listening ears for the myriad actions in which God displays the vastness of the divine love for us.

*- Father Bailey Norman*

