



The Grapevine

March 2008

NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, LONGVIEW, WA
1428 - 22nd Avenue, Longview, WA 360-423-5600 www.sslv.org

At Annual meeting this year we had a chance to consider what attracted us to St. Stephen's, what kept us here, and what we found deeply precious about our faith as practiced here. Our intention was to high light the gifts we would like to share with others, and to continue a conversation about how we can even more effectively share the gifts we've been given with others.

I invite you to consider why you come to church. When we become aware what is most valuable to us, and give thanks, we are energized to make those gifts available to others. As you pray about this, bring inspirations and ideas about how to get the word out forward to your clergy and vestry members. We will be continuing to work on this one for some time to come!

Here are the most mentioned of what the eighty or so folks at annual meeting had to say:

What attracted us to St. Stephen's and why we stay; what is precious . . .

COMMUNITY

- (11) Feeling accepted, at home, welcomed, gracious people
- (6) Feels like home, comfortable
- (5) Community
- (5) Feeling accepted, at home, welcomed, gracious people

PROGRAM

- (8) Music
- (2) Preschool
- (2) Centering prayer

STAFF

- (4) Priests
- (2) Preaching

EPISCOPAL ETHOS

- (11) Episcopal (only one in town)
- (7) Anglican liturgy/ritual

THE WAY WE THINK...

- (5) Diversity of opinion okay, Differences are okay
- (3) Don't have to leave your brains at the door, Thinking for myself, Not required to believe a certain way (no hell threat)

The full summary will be reviewed by the vestry and will also be posted on the bulletin board.

~ Mo. Kathleen



St. Stephen's Mission Statement

St. Stephen's is a Christian Community, empowered by the Holy Spirit to bring others to Christ and to celebrate God's love through worship, fellowship, education, and service

The Staff

The Rev. Richard Green	Rector
The Rev. Kathleen Patton	Associate Rector
The Rev. John Ackermann	Deacon
Angela Warning	Parish Administrator
Ann Long	Pianist, Treasurer
Howard Meharg	Music Minister, Webmaster
Katie Lewis	Organist
Jean Watson	Bell Choir Director
Tracy Husmann	Librarian
Annie New	Children's Ministry Assistant
Judy Swanson	Children's Ministry Assistant
Roberta Horan	Child Care Provider

The Vestry

Diane Glase	Rector's Warden
Peggy Norman	People's Warden
Mary Lyons	Lloyd Solon
Stan Lewis	Alan Brunk
Duane Higby	Sara Hamilton
Barbara Dunlap	John Freeman, Clerk

The Delegates

Ken Henderson	Ann Mottet
Ned Piper	Sue Lane
Duane Higby	Jan Higby

The Alternates

Bob Bonner	Summer O'Neill
Chas Dean	Gretchen Niemi
Dave Hanson	Jan Hanson

Work, Fun, Bonding, and the Holy Spirit

by Greg Lopic

We (Fr. Richard, Larry Blinn, Rina Goodluck, Kathy Stephensen (substituting for Roger Griebel), Duane Higby, and myself) are back from a life changing experience in New Orleans.

Your spiritual and physical support was rewarded in many ways. One was just the volume of work that we accomplished in five workdays. Many walls were painted, molding put in place, laminate floors laid, and other work to make three homes more ready for habitation. The families who will occupy were all most appreciative of this work. Some people were able to work on landscaping and others with medical training (like Larry) helped with community clinics.

We did enjoy the festivities of Mardi Gras during non work hours. The parades were fantastic, the food good, and the music - - well it just doesn't get much better. There were 18 other people from the Diocese who made up the balance of the group. Relationships were quickly established and our goodbyes included promises to see each other again. The Holy Spirit was clearly at work throughout the week. Our work successes and the bonding that occurred between so many was a result of God's presence and love.

There is still so much to be done!! Driving through the devastated areas, mile after mile of homes that are mostly still unoccupied two and a half years after Katrina struck is an experience that cannot be captured on film or even adequately described. The impact is just numbing. Hundreds of thousands of people lost not only their homes, but most of their possessions as well. Many have not yet returned to New Orleans (over 100,000) and some of those never will because they do not have the resources.

Please continue to support the rehabilitation of New Orleans, both financially and in your prayers. Much has already been accomplished through your generosity and that of others, but the work is certainly far from over. May God continue to bless all those impacted by the hurricane and all those who have responded to the rebuilding efforts.



Closing Words

from Celtic Treasure
by J. Philip Newell

The earth is full of your goodness,
O God.

It sprouts green and grows into the
roundness of fruit.

Its touch and its taste enliven our
souls.

Let us know the seeds of life's
goodness within us and between
us.

And let us handle its gifts with
wonder.

The blessing of heaven,
the blessing of earth,
the blessing of sea and of sky.

On those we love this day
and on every human family
the gifts of heaven,
the gifts of earth,
the gifts of sea and of sky.

March is adopt-a-shelf month in your parish library

by Tracy Husmann

Do you have 5-10 minutes to spare this month? Your St. Stephens librarian (that would be me) needs your help.

In the effort to make our wonderful library even more so, please consider adopting a shelf this month. Each shelf needs a one-time inventory, comparing the books on the shelf to the catalog (that's a fancy word for "The List of Books in the 3-Ring Binder").

Each shelf also needs a one-time "Spine Label Inspector"; someone to make sure the spine labels (the little stickers with numbers on them) are up-to-date and decent-looking. This involves looking at the labels and making a little note on the inventory sheet - no label-making skills required!

The shelves hold an average of 40 books each, so giving a little love to one shelf shouldn't take up too much of your time.

What, you say that you don't want to be limited to ONLY 10 minutes? Of course you can be both Inventory Ace AND Spine Label Inspector! Of course you can adopt more than one shelf! You could gather friends and family, each choose a shelf, and make a mini-party (if you planned ahead, you might even get some pot-luck love in there, too). You could pick a quiet time and leisurely leaf through the books on your shelf, maybe finding inspiration and insight during Lent.



The Grapevine

The Grapevine is the newsletter of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and is a convenient way to communicate with all of its members. Do you have a meeting coming up, a poem that spoke to you that you would like to share, or anything of interest for the parish as a whole?

Just let Angie know you've an article and then send it by email

sslvadmin@comcast.net

or place a hardcopy or cd in the mailbox located on the Parish Office door by the 20th of every month.

If you would like to participate in another way, let Angie know you are willing to help with the mailing!



Dear Ones,
In just the last few days the crocus have begun to show their lovely heads above the ground. Every year I seem to forget about them in the dark and dreary winter, and then there they are, quietly bursting above the mossy soil. This year they are even wearing appropriate Lenten purple in honor of the

season.

Another phenomenon that speaks to me in this context is the annual "miracle of the dead branches" at our altars. Each year the Altar Guild arranges bouquets of dead branches instead of flowers in Lent. The starkness of the dark branches is, over time, destroyed by the green buds and eventual leaves which sprout and grow in the days leading to Easter. I love the message of hope which they convey.

The whole teaching of Easter seems to be summed up in these simple lessons from Nature. Life is infinitely stronger than death, and that which is attuned to Divine Wisdom understands that and is capable of overcoming death and the grave. This is God's grace written all around us. May our hearts and minds be open to receiving both the teachings and the grace.

Richard

RECYCLING IS GOOD!!!

We would like to make another run at separating recyclables from pure trash within the St. Stephens buildings. A lot of what is currently thrown away is actually quite recyclable. So, rectangular bins have been placed in strategic locations throughout the buildings to accept all recyclable materials.

Acceptable:

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Junk Mail
- Corrugated (cardboard) boxes
- Cereal Type boxes
- Pop, juice, and water bottles (#1 PET)
- Milk bottles (#2 PE)
- All colors of glass containers
- Aluminum cans and clean foil
- Tin cans (best when clean and without labels)

Unacceptable:

- Anything else!

If you're not sure then just throw it in the regular trash. Thanks for your help and participation in this effort.

~ Greg Lopic

Stephen Award for 2008

Each year a person or persons is recognized at the Annual Meeting for their contribution to the life and ministry of St. Stephen's Church. For 2008, the recipients of the engraved plaque and our deep appreciation for their life among us are Peg and Mark Norman. The Normans grew up at St. Stephen's and have spent most of their lives as a faithful part of the parish. A career move for Mark is taking them to Tacoma for the next adventure in their life.

Both Mark and Peg have made significant leadership contributions to the parish: as wardens, vestry members, youth leader, search committee chair, and many others. Their open-hearted, welcoming, and fun-filled natures have been a major influence on the tone of life in the parish. Always trying to bring people together, they were often at the center of fellowship for those of any age, from small gatherings to large parish-wide events.

Our loss will be some other parish's gain as they take their considerable gifts for ministry and community on to their next parish. They go with our love, best wishes for the future, and blessings on their new life in Tacoma.

Snow can never emit flame.
Water can never issue fire.
A thorn bush can never produce a fig.

Just so, your heart can never be free from oppressive thoughts, words, and actions until it has purified itself internally.

Be eager to walk this path.
Watch your heart always.
Constantly say the prayer "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me."
Be humble.
Set your soul in quietness.

-Hesychios

Save the Date

8th Ministry Resource Day
Saturday, April 19, 2008
Highline Community
College
Des Moines

Over 50 free workshops
to provide resources and
educational experiences
for people involved
in all areas
of congregation ministry and
administration.

More information to follow.

Young Adult Ministry Launches – Bring a Friend

There is a growing pool of people
in their twenties who have begun
connecting at St. Stephen's. After
a dinner gatherings at the home
of the Patton Greens and one at
the Edmestons, the group has
made a plan to make a Portland
field trip.

On March 9, we'll leave the
parking lot at 4:30 to go have an
early dinner and attend Taize
worship at Trinity Cathedral.

Spread the word, bring a friend!

Book Gifts to Your Parish Library

by Tracy Husmann

Imagine my surprise when I recently discovered some books that have mysteriously appeared in the parish library! Have they been accidentally left there? Are they awaiting the return of their rightful owner?

It is generous and kind of you to think of the library when you find yourself with perfectly good books that you no longer need to have sitting on your shelves at home. Please keep the following few guidelines in mind when you consider gifting your books to the St. Stephens Library:

- If you don't tell me, I won't know that a book has been donated. Any book(s) found lying about in the library area will go into the Lost and Found.
- If you don't tell me, you won't get a nice thank you letter that can also be used for tax write-off purposes.

You can send me an email at library@sslv.org. There is a Library "box" on the wall outside Angie's office, next to the bishops.

Our library real estate is extremely limited. While I'd love to accept each and every book, there is just no room at the inn.

We've reached the point that for a book to be added to the library, we have to consider removing another book from the library.

New-to-us books *must meet a need* in our library. New-to-us books also cannot create or add to an imbalance in subject coverage.



Now, let's go for a stroll with Mr. Webster for a moment: *Donate* is defined as "give to a charity or good cause". *Gift* is "something acquired without compensation". *Condition/stipulation* is

"specify as a condition or requirement in a contract or agreement; make an express demand or provision in an agreement".

The little numbers at the bottom of most of our hymns...what do they mean?

Howard Meharg

At the bottom of the page of most hymns in our hymnbook you'll often find some little numbers. Sometimes, instead of numbers, you'll find letters, like "LM" or "CM." These represent the poetic meter of a text. Each number represents the syllable count in each line. A hymn text of 8.7.8.7 means that there are four lines of poetry, with the 1st and 3rd containing eight syllables each, and the 2nd and 4th containing seven. We should always remember that with our hymns we are most often dealing with metrical poetry.

Since some meters are widely used, over a period of time publishers have decided to use abbreviations...using letters instead of numbers. One common meter, with many, many hymns using it, is 8.6.8.6. It was so common in the 17th and 18th centuries that it was called *Common Meter* and abbreviated to C. M. Here's an example:

O **God**, our **help** in **a-ges past** (8)
 our **hope** for **years** to **come**, (6)
 our **shel-ter** **from** the **storm-y blast**. (8)
 and **our** e-**ter-nal home**. (6)

Accented syllables are in bold, meaning these are stressed more than the others. Each accent grouping forms a larger unit called a *metrical foot*. The weak/strong grouping makes an *iambic foot*. The opposite of this, a strong/weak two-syllable grouping, makes a *trochaic foot*. Here's an example:

Light's a-bode, ce-**les-tial Sa-lem**.

Using the metrical indications for meter and being aware of the metrical "feet" being used, one could easily use a text for several hymn tunes.

Currently we're using the hymn tune called "Hyfrydol" (Love Divine, All Love's Excelling) to sing a metrical version of the creed. Its metrical marking is 8.7.8.7 D. The "D" presumably means that the 8.7.8.7 is repeated (doubled), for each stanza of the hymn continues through two sets of 8.7's.

God's Beauty

by Jean Watson

I was awakened at 6:30 am on a recent morning by the snow plow. I excitedly got up and in the dark went out on the porch and measured 1 1/2" of white, fluffy snow. I was instantly glad I was retired and didn't have to worry about going down the hill to Clark College.

So I went upstairs to work on the borders which would complete the first narrow quilt top. The measurements, cutting and sewing went so smoothly, I was oohing and aahing as the quilt top came together.

It was getting light out so I raised the sheer shade of my sewing room window and just stared at the beauty outside. I felt so small. Here I was so excited about the colors and patterns of the quilt top, thinking they were so beautiful, and here was grandeur out my own window.

I don't normally sew large quilts, so these quadriad quilts are large by my standards. But looking at the snow on every single branch, I realized how small my efforts were by comparison. Here was beauty on a grand scale with exquisite detail and pattern that I could never match.

Still, I was involved in making something for God's dwelling place, and that is special in itself. Creating that quilt while being surrounded by God's beauty is both a humbling and inspiring experience.

The description in John's Gospel of Jesus "full of grace and truth" presents us with a person who created space around himself for others to see the Kingdom of God. He was neither truthless in his grace, nor graceless in his truth.

The Rt. Rev. James Jones
 Bishop of Liverpool
 in *Fallible Church*
 edited by Kenneth Stevenson

Once upon a time when the offering plate came around, everyone had something to offer. We all had our nice clothes on and, if you were a girl, you had your head covered. And we had our nickels or quarters ready. So it has bothered me a lot for the last few years when I pass the empty plate without putting anything in it. In my own self-conscious way I always hope that my pew pals know that I pay my pledge monthly – so eventually I would put something in the plate.

Well, then, I met Greg Rickel. (I get more chances than some of my St. Stephen's family because I go to a meeting in Seattle that he attends.) Bishop Rickel wonders aloud if our children will ever be stewards. "What message do we give when we put nothing in the plate and then it goes forward for a cursory nod and is set aside, hidden, whisked away?" "Doesn't money have anything to do with our spirituality? Is it yukky?" Fr. Richard and I talked about the offering plate dilemma. We decided that the offering plate needed to stay on the altar. Have you noticed?

Bishop Rickel again. He said, "Real giving begins *after* you pledge." I knew that. At least I think I did. So I tried something new. I have done it for several weeks. Every time the offering plate comes by, I find a dollar or two or more to put in it. I also want to have small cards available in the pews so I can make an outward and visible sign of my offering of thanks for someone or something or in praise of God's grace. Father Richard says OK.

I doubt that I will ever raise my dollar over my head, as Greg Rickel has done, if the plate should happen to pass by without my contribution. And I know I will never rush up to the altar and spread my money upon it, as one bishop did, if the usher fails to allow me to give my gift.

This is not a request to increase your pledge. What you give is between you and God. But there is something wonderful about really participating in the offering – every week, every time, in a tangible way.

The little numbers at the bottom of most of our hymns...what do they mean?

[continued from page 6]

With this in mind, and finding another hymn tune that supports the text well, we could (and did) find another melody to which we can sing our creed. After Easter we'll sing that text to the tune called "Nettleton," better known as "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing." It's also 8.7.8.7 D and the words to the creed fit beautifully. It's also a powerful and stately melody that gives musical support to the powerful statement being made in the words.

(My thanks to Howard Helvey from whose article I borrowed much of this material. Howard Helvey (b. 1968) resides in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he is active as a composer, arranger and pianist; and serves as organist/choirmaster of historic Calvary Episcopal Church.)

Book Gifts to Your Parish Library

[continued from page 5]

Essentially, what I'm trying to say here is, Gifts Don't Come with Strings Attached:

- £ If the books you wish to share are laden with stipulations, you may want to consider donating them elsewhere.
- £ Donated books may find their homes elsewhere if they don't fit in our library. This may include offering books to another parish library or the public library. On some occasions, a book may actually be sold, with the proceeds being used to purchase books and supplies for the library.

I know this goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway: The library is not a dumping ground. If a book is in poor repair, painfully outdated, or otherwise not appropriate it needs to find a home elsewhere.

Craey

Holy Week Services

- 3/16 Palm Sunday Eucharist @ 7:30 am & 10 am
- 3/17 Eucharist @ 6 pm in All Saint's Chapel
- 3/18 Eucharist @ 6 pm in All Saint's Chapel
- 3/19 Eucharist @ 6 pm in All Saint's Chapel
- 3/20 Maundy Thursday @ 6 pm
- 3/20 Vigil at the Altar of Repose
- 3/21 Good Friday Services @ Noon and 6 pm
- 3/21 Stations of the Cross @ 5 pm
- 3/22 The Great Vigil of Easter @ 7:30 pm
- 3/23 Easter Services @ 7:30 am & 10 am

St. Stephens Episcopal Church
1428 - 22nd Avenue
Longview, WA 98632
Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage PAID
Longview, WA 98623
Permit #6