



The Grapevine

October/November 2009

NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, LONGVIEW,
WA

1428 - 22nd Avenue, Longview, WA 360-423-5600 www.sslv.org



Dear Ones,

The theme of our recent Diocesan Convention in Vancouver was "Being the Church in Anxious Time". It is a topic that is certainly timely. These are the "interesting times" that the Chinese curse wishes upon enemies. We are only slowly recovering from a worldwide economic tsunami that continues to haunt us with uncertainty. We are engaged in two foreign wars, and very polarized domestic politics that constitute a "culture war". Swine flu precautions can make us cautious beyond reason. Natural

disasters around the world infuse a sense of unspoken fear for our own safety. Life is uncertain, and anxious.

So here we are, living in these anxious times while following the Way of Christ. Jesus never promised that following him would take away any and all sources of stress. He never said there would be no more threats, economic problems, or disease. What he has invited us into, though, is a life in which shifts in our priorities and the source of our identity can trump the anxieties we experience in the face of what life brings us.

When we "seek first the Kingdom of God", we take our refuge in a state of heart and mind given over to God and to our neighbors. We have our identity in the expansive open consciousness we discover in deep silence. We grow in our ability to let stress merely pass through us without taking up permanent residence. We expand in our understanding of the depth and breadth of Life so that what we perceive to be threatening no longer has so much power. We continue to learn that the realm of the "possible" is limitless in the Kingdom.

Without following the Way of Christ, we are left to fall back only on our own limited devices. But that only leads to more anxiety, because in our deepest heart we know that is not enough.

Blessings,

Fr Richard+

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*

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
Roberta Horan	Child Care Provider
Katie Jerome	Child Care Provider

The Vestry

Diane Glase	Rector's Warden
Ann Mottet	People's Warden
Mary Lyons	Jan Hanson
Rob Sudar	Alan Brunk
Duane Higby	Michael O'Neill
Barbara Dunlap	Janice Stixrud, Clerk

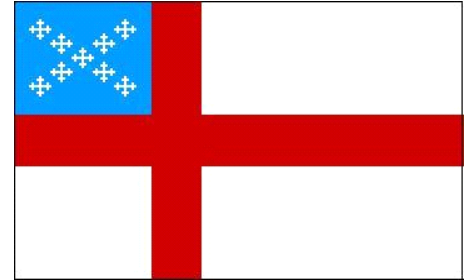
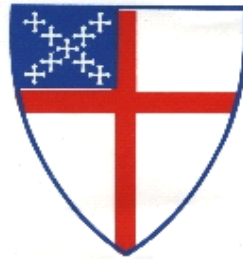
Convention Delegates

Michael O'Neill	Summer O'Neill
Howard Meharg	Gretchen Niemi
Dave Hanson	Jan Hanson

Convention Alternates

John Freeman	Diane Glase
Joel Rupley	Chere Weiss
Buddy Patten	Marlene Norman

Did you know . . .



The Episcopal Church Shield is a familiar symbol found on signs and in newspaper ads in cities and towns throughout the United States, usually accompanied by the words, "The Episcopal Church Welcomes You," together with information about a local church's location and worship schedule.

The shield and its corresponding Episcopal Church flag were officially adopted by the General Convention of 1940 and are rich in symbolism. The shield is usually presented in red, white and blue. The red cross on a white field is an ancient Christian symbol, white representing the purity of Jesus and the red representing his sacrifice on the cross and the blood of Christian Martyrs. The red cross is also known as the cross of St. George, patron saint of England, and indicates the Episcopal Church's descent from the Church of England.

The blue field in the upper left is the color traditionally associated with the blessed Virgin Mary and is symbolic of Jesus' human nature, which he received from his mother.

The X-shaped cross is the cross of St. Andrew, patron saint of Scotland, and recalls the Episcopal Church's indebtedness to the Scottish Episcopal Church for the consecration of its first bishop, Samuel Seabury, as Bishop of Connecticut in 1784.

The St. Andrew's cross is made up of nine smaller cross-crosslets that represent the nine original American dioceses which met in Philadelphia in 1789 to adopt the constitution of the Episcopal Church. They are: Connecticut (established in 1783), Maryland (1783), Massachusetts (1784), Pennsylvania (1784), New Jersey (1785), South Carolina (1785), Virginia (1785), and Delaware (1786).

With a little help from our friends, we hope to return to a monthly schedule of Grapevine publications. Beginning with this issue, Margaret Lopic will introduce two new and regular features. One will be a snapshot or two of some of our newer parishioners. Hopefully, that will make it easier for all of us to be acquainted with our church family members. The second will provide a glimpse into the background and ministry of not-so-new parishioners.

WELCOME TO

Pete Castinet

Pete is a new and faithful parishioner who started attending in January when his wife died. They moved to Kelso to be with her sister. However, sadly, both his wife and his wife's sister died. You might recognize him by the cast or brace he wears on his right arm. He looks forward to a positive medical report on December 15 so he can return to full use of his wrist and hand. Pete was on Ski Patrol and also was a Ski Instructor at Lake Tahoe. He attends Adult Bible Study on both Wednesday and Sunday, comes to church almost every Sunday and also joins others at Stephen's table on Wednesday. He is a masterful sign carver & most recently created the sign for the community garden plot where Farmer Ron (Schauer) planted and reaped the bountiful harvest of Yukon Gold potatoes for FISH.

Sarah and Maggie Cave

Sarah Cave comes to church with her beautiful little girl, Maggie. Sarah was born in Los Angeles, moved to Manhattan as a baby and then to Berkeley in 2nd grade. Much to her Episcopal priest father's dismay, she was the radical Berkeley teen and refused to be confirmed. But she plans to rectify that one day soon. She graduated from Berkeley High and Mills College. In 1977, she moved to Seattle to attend the UW. She graduated with a Master's in healthcare administration. Sarah has been working for PeaceHealth since 2002 but just recently came to Longview where she serves as Vice President of Strategy, Innovation, and Development. She is responsible for planning, business development and marketing/public affairs.

Maggie is 2-1/2 and full of energy. Recently, when the line for Communion wasn't moving fast enough, Maggie just walked up to the Communion Rail and stuck up her hands. Sara retrieved her, but not for long! Maggie saw an opening at the rail and made a dash for it. Her smart Mother knelt beside her and they took Communion together. We should all have some of Maggie's enthusiasm about receiving the sacrament!

The next Grapevine will come to your door December 12.

Deadline for submitting articles for that issue is December 7.

It will feature parish activities that will occur between December 12 and January 21 (and may even include favorite Christmas recipes from famous St. Stephen cooks!)

Do you want to donate a book or two to the library? Just stick it in the "To Be Shelved" spot, under the NEW BOOKS shelf.

If you have more than just one or two books to donate, email library@sslv.org OR stick a note on the Librarian's box (on the wall outside of the office).

Thanks! Traci Husmann

Monday Contemplative Prayer Returns!

Looking for a quiet start
to your week?
We are gathering for meditation
at 2:00 on Mondays
in the Sanctuary



SHARING IN THE LIFE OF...META PIERSON

Meta was raised in the Christian Church. When she married, she moved to Adrian, Oregon, a small farming community (population 147 in the 2000 census.) Her husband was a Presbyterian, so she joined that church and raised her three children there. Over the course of the years, she moved to Portland with her children, re-married, moved to Central Point, and with her hearing aide specialist husband, and bought a second business. There was so much work, it kept them very busy.

In 2000, she and her husband moved to Longview to be near family. After he died in 2004, Meta “wanted and needed a church that would bring some meaning into my life.” Her stepdaughter, an active member of St. Augustine’s on Whidbey Island, nudged her toward St. Stephen’s. It was a new experience for her, but she says, “I enjoy the service here.” Not too long after Meta joined the church, her daughter, Elaine, started attending and now sings in the choir. Together, the two often gift us with the coffee hour treats we enjoy each Sunday.

Meta has thought a lot about what her ministry is. “Reaching out to other people,” she says and smiles. In addition to coffee hour, Meta is an eager participant in the Wednesday morning Bible study group. She has not had the opportunity to study the Bible, to learn so much about history and the context of what is being taught. Its importance to her is apparent when she comments about the value of people coming together and discussing the meaning of different readings. “There should never be a cancelled class: someone should offer to be the substitute leader if Father Richard is not able to be there.”

Meta believes in taking advantage of every opportunity that presents itself. “You never know what will be expected of you.” She relishes the many opportunities here at St. Stephen’s - and everywhere. Children and adults, too, should understand how important it is to be as educated as possible. “Take advantage of the wealth of talent around you, listen to people, be interested, and learn as much as you can. Stretch yourself!” She seems to be practicing what she preaches.

IN-GATHERING SUNDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2009

Our In-Gathering Sunday for the 2010 Budget Year is happening November 1, 2009 right here at St. Stephens. Bring your Pledge Card, filled out with the amount of money you feel the Holy Spirit is encouraging you to give next year in support of all our ministry.

If you are unable to attend November 1, please mail your pledge card to St. Stephens: 1428 - 22nd Avenue, Longview, WA 98632. Or, you can send an email to the Treasurer, Ann Long at: sslvtreas@comcast.net, stating the amount of your Annual Pledge, along with your phone number. Ann will either acknowledge your email Pledge with a reply email or will call you by phone to verify.

These are exciting times! St. Stephens is an exciting Church! You are a generous congregation. Thank you for all your support this past year – not just financially, but your time, your effort, your enthusiasm, your worship and your prayers. Through all the letters and Stewardship moments on Sunday, we have been given a great glimpse of the many ministries you participate in and support. Because of you, St. Stephens Church is a major contributor to the welfare of our community. St. Stephens himself is honored.

Wayne Amondson, Stewardship Team

Attractive Cards for Sale

Inexpensive packets of cards with various designs from our beautiful parish hall quilt are again available. The packets make nice hostess or small Christmas gifts. Or you can use them yourselves for thank you notes, get well cards, or just short messages to someone who is in your thoughts and prayers. Purchase them after church on Sunday, just ask Margaret Lopic or Tracy Husmann. During the week, see Angie, in the office.

Calling all knitters, quilters, and people who crochet (crocheteers?)

Legacy Health System has a real need for your skills. They provide "passage" quilts and afghans to dying patients. These are called "Blankets of Love" and are later given to the family of the recipients.

They need donated quilts or afghans that are that are approximately 40" by 60" for adults and 42" by 42" for children.

If you are interested in helping with this marvelous ministry of care, please call the spiritual Care Office at Legacy Salmon Creek Hospital 360/487-3440. If you have any further questions, please contact the Chaplain's office at x. 73440.

What a wonderful way to spend your winter hours!
Thanks, Jane Brunk

St. Stephen's Altar Guild

reminds everyone that floral tributes are a lovely addition to our Sunday services. There are opportunities to sign up to donate flowers in October and November. The sign-up chart is in the hall, across from Deacon John's office.

There are several ways to provide flowers. The Altar Guild can purchase and arrange them for about \$30.00; they can be ordered from the florist for \$70.00-\$80.00; or you may select and purchase your own.



Checks should be made to St. Stephen's and given to the office with an indication it's for flowers.

Community of Hope needs you

A cup of water for a thirsty stranger ... A visit to a parish member in the hospital who has had surgery ... Encouraging a new parishioner who just lost her job ... Taking a hot dish to a family grieving the loss of a parent ... Praying a list of parishioners and friends struggling with addictions: All these - and more - are expressions of lay pastoral care, and most of us do at least some of them.

St. Stephen's Community of Hope team is providing the first of a series of workshops designed to make opportunity for parishioners to increase their knowledge and skill at lay pastoral care. This first series, FOUNDATIONS OF LAY PASTORAL CARE, is scheduled for the first three Tuesdays in November (11/3, 11/10, and 11/17) in the Parish Library, from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Instructors are Michael Wright, Mary Lyons, and Fr. Richard.

This series of FOUNDATIONS OF LAY PASTORAL CARE will provide the Biblical, theological, psychological, and spiritual foundations of lay pastoral care and address questions such as "What is lay pastoral care? Why do we do this; how does this fit the work of the parish? How is it different from giving "friendly advice? What is a Biblical picture of pastoral care? What are examples of pastoral care addressing common problems parishioners might experience? What are the expectations of the work of pastoral care? What are its limitations? How does pastoral care change the provider? How does it affect the spiritual life of the provider?"

Take advantage of this opportunity to develop your knowledge, skills, and understanding, and to learn more about what you are already doing. Add your name to the sign up sheet on the board outside the parish office, and block out the first three Tuesdays in November.

St. Stephen's Community of Hope Team

Convention Thoughts

by Gretchen Neimi

I was honored to represent St. Stephens at the 99th Convention of the Diocese of Olympia. My favorite part was the music, which ranged from old standards as “In Christ there is no east or west,” to the southern gospel hymn, “We gather at the River,” to Taize and modern songs. The music was led by energetic and enthusiastic young musicians, one of whom, in his early twenties and a graduate of WSU (go Cougs!) did a wonderful job with the music for the final Eucharist.

Bishop Rickel talked of his three goals for the Diocese which included Congregational Development (developing healthy congregations,) Stewardship of our Resources, and Concentrating on those 35 and under. My passion is with the final one, as welcoming young people back in the church is extremely important to the future of our church.

My favorite moment was watching our own acolytes, Dax McCoy, who carried the cross, and Aiden Green, participate in the Eucharist. The pride in Dax’s eyes, and his words of excitement (“this is the biggest group I will ever acolyte for!”) said it all.

The only bittersweet moment was saying goodbye to Bishop Nedi, who is retiring early next year to move to Ohio to be near her grandchildren. There is a lot of love for this wonderful lady in the diocese!

We learned from Nathan Dugan about using our money wisely (SHARE, SAVE, SPEND) and I followed his advice by not spending my last \$12 at the Cathedral Shop (which I wanted to do) and instead putting it in the offering basket to be given to three ministries in the Columbia Region, including our own Cowlitz County Habitat for Humanity.

Stir up Sunday

Just so you know, the Sunday before Advent is sometimes nicknamed “Stir-Up Sunday” after the opening lines of the collect for that day. The term comes from the collect for the day in the Book of Common Prayer of 1549.

“Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen”

Through an association of ideas, the day subsequently became commenced, especially in England, with the preparation of Christmas puddings in readiness for Christmas.

Advent begins November 29!!

Advent, from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning “coming,” is a season of the church year, the period of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus; in other words, the period immediately before Christmas. It is also the beginning of the western liturgical year and commences on Advent Sunday. Christians believe that the season of Advent is a reminder of the original waiting that was done by the Hebrews for the birth of their Messiah, as well as the waiting that Christians endure today for the second coming of Christ. The usual liturgical color for Advent is purple or violet: used for hangings, vestments, and often the tabernacle.

This Grapevine was to have included information about Advent activities. However, Mother Kathleen was called away to be with her very ill brother in Sacramento. Please include her family in your prayers.

There will be multiple opportunities for Advent awareness, both in our church community and in your home. Please check the website as we get closer to the end of November to see what will occur at St. Stephen’s.

Sunday Evening Spoken Compline

Come experience the lovely practice of evening prayer, 7:30 on Sunday nights. A simple service of Compline will be offered each Sunday evening, with a time for meditation and with sung Compline on fourth Sundays.

As we go, a leadership team will be formed and trained, and a rota established so that lay leaders can officiate. Let Fr. Richard or Mo. Kathleen know if you are interested in participating in this way.

Much Accomplished

Thanks to an energetic crew many projects were completed or moved along during the Sept 12 work party. Most significant were getting the high windows in the back of the church washed and replacing loose glazing in the chapel windows.

Credit goes to Carl Gerhart, Dave Hanson, Mary Hoover, Pat & Ron Schauer, and Gary & Judy Swanson for working with us. Special thanks to Margaret Lopic for her participation and the good food.

Another individual deserving ongoing accolades is Jim Hajek. He is like the secret grounds keeper: rarely seen himself, but beautiful results all around.

Greg Lopic & Rod Farley
Properties Committee

Second Annual Halloween Hospitality October 31 5:30 until 9:00

Join us and spend your evening serving warm cider and cookies to neighborhood families looking for a brief time-out, a place to sit or a clean restroom hosted by friendly folks!

The "Church Ladies" may be playing a "ghostly game of chess" in the dimly-lit library. Fear Not!



World Cafe

by Michael O'Neill

Recently I hosted a conversation on behalf of the Communications Team regarding communications at St. Stephens. We gathered in one of the upstairs classrooms to experience a format called The World Café.

I had read about the sense of excitement filling a room as many conversations began unfolding around one topic. But there was a part of me that doubted simply putting people around a table to speak with each other would do the trick until it happened. Suddenly I was walking through a room alive with people coming together as a community to share with each other. And in that sharing, as each person began to tell their own story, a bigger image began to form.

It was hard to interrupt the conversations and ask people to move to different tables to form new groups. But the table hosts started things back up by highlighting the ideas of the previous group and summarizing their own sense of the conversation. They did a wonderful job of continuing the energy that had been built from the first round of conversation.

When we moved to the third round of conversation, I still felt like I was cutting people off just as they were getting started. However, people caught on quickly to the concept so the transition was almost seamless. I heard similar ideas being brought up at each table in the first two rounds. In the third round though, the thoughts were much fuller and the excitement around them had the whole room buzzing.

I am so thankful for the openness of everyone who participated in that conversation. The willingness to try something a little different created a host of ideas to explore as we work to improve how we communicate with each other and as a congregation to the community. Many people expressed the desire for small groups in a variety of places on different topics. One suggestion was to use the World Café format again either within the parish or out in the greater community.

At Stephen's Table on October 28, I will be hosting another World Café around the topic of Stewardship. Everyone is invited to join in this conversation about how we fit into Christ's Body in the world. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to come together as a parish and get excited about all that we are able to do together at St. Stephens.



A Service of Remembrance

*with music by
The Columbian Choral Ensemble
and
beautiful instrumental music*

Monday, November 2, 7:00 pm
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

*Free will offering to benefit
Community Home Health and Hospice*

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

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