

A Note from Your Editor, Joan Kurber

In the Spring of 2000, I believe it was, Kathy Sulock asked if I would take over the task of editing The First Order, as she already had enough to do (a slight under statement!) and I agreed. So, now in the Spring of 2020, I am passing this task off to Connie Bullard. Connie is well-qualified and is eager to assume this role – and I thank her for so readily accepting to do so.

I have enjoyed acting as editor of this publication, with its frustrations and all. And I guess I shall miss gathering the material which Rob Langsdale then so beautifully sets up for us – what an asset he is! I shall miss prodding late submitters to get their copy to me, which eventually does get in. But I shall continue to read the publication – and wish Connie all the best in her endeavors!

A Sad/Fond Farewell

On Mother's Day afternoon, several St. Stephen's parishioners staged a joyous 'drive-by' and shout out in front of the home of Edie Mingalone. Edie is moving, but in the absence of the ability to host a party because of the current situation, this was deemed the best way to say good-bye and many thanks for all the things Edie has done at St. Stephen's. She will be sorely missed, but we send her off to her new destination with thanks and love. God be with you, Edie! (See her letter below)

Dear Friends,

The "Drive By" was a wonderful surprise... thank you all for coming to say farewell to me. I will be leaving Pittsfield, but a very large part of my heart will stay in St. Stephen's. From the first day I walked through those doors, I felt I was home. In this, St. Stephen's is unique and it is the congregation that makes it so special.

All of you, especially the members of the altar guild, will be with me in spirit wherever life's path may take me. A long-time friend told me "God has a new plan for you, you don't know what it is yet, but follow your instincts and He will guide you." I believe that.

With the Corona Virus pandemic still in charge, I won't be able to attend a Church in my new location, but through the internet I'll still be able to attend St. Stephen's with you.

Thank you all for the wonderful years of worshipping with you at St. Stephen's.

One of my favorites is the old Irish Blessing:

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the rain fall softly on your fields
And may God hold you in the palm of His Hand.
Love Always, Edie

June

Happy Birthday:

- 1 Stephanie Mansfield
- 2 Joe Carchedi, Selah Ekstrom
- 3 Jim Brennan
- 8 Brad Swanson (91 years young!)
- 9 Priscilla Zuber
- 10 John Garinther
- 11 Audrina Maloney (13), David Winchester
- 12 Dan Moon (a milestone!)
- 13 Meilani Hamilton (9)
- 14 Taylor Eddy, Linda Engle
- 16 Susan Bedard (a milestone!)
- 17 David Turner (a milestone!)
- 18 Avery Hartman-Caesar (17)
- 19 Peter Champagne (9), Courtney Hamilton, Alyson Warman
- 20 Emilia Cobb (7)
- 22 Daniel Lavery (9)
- 23 Pam Aldrich
- 26 Summer Bush (11)
- 29 Marietta Cawse (a milestone!)
- 30 Jaylen Hamilton (11)

Happy Anniversary:

- 6 Katie and Scott Haviland (2009)
Sue and Thom Smith (1971)
- 8 Mary and David Turner (1985-35 years!)
- 11 Beth-Anne Hamling and Stephanie Mansfield (2011)
- 14 Wavelyn and Jeffrey Hine (1969-51 years!)
Debbie and Roy Stillman (1980-40 years!)
- 17 Veronica and Christopher Fenton (1989)
- 20 Ann and Don Phipps (1964-56 years!)
- 21 Paula and Bill Morey (1969-51 years!)
Maria and Nathan Zuckerman (1970-50 years!)
- 22 Maryann and Roger Schroder (1972)
- 24 Martie and David Ekstrom (1961-59 years!)
- 25 Josie and Scott Ellis (1994)
Nancy and Bill Travis (1972)
- 30 Mary and Steven Wheelock (1972)

Cafecito: Back to Basics

As we move steadily through the pandemic, we are returning to basics at BIO. And that means the most fundamental skill- listening. We are listening with special care and attention to our immigrant and Latino neighbors, who are disproportionately harmed by the outbreak, and overlooked in the current federal relief measures.

This has taken the shape of a Zoom gathering called *Un Cafecito muy familiar*, or “A family-style coffee chat.” Every week, between fifteen and twenty-five Spanish speakers gather to chat, share stories, and brainstorm ways to overcome both short- and long-term challenges presented by the pandemic.

Some attendees are grateful for the break from social norms. “I don’t have to keep my yard neat for the neighbors anymore,” one person said.

Others are thinking of their children. “I’m the only one who can leave the house right now, but the kids are always wanting to go out and run around,” one woman shared. “I fear what will happen if they go outside, yet I want to stay positive and give them a sense of normalcy.”

At the same time, she and other mothers on the call struggled to help their children with online learning and technology. “My two sons have videos to watch for school, but we have no internet.”

Receiving assistance comes with its own challenges. “It’d be helpful if the relief applications came with a detailed description of who qualifies. As a person in the middle of the citizenship process, it’s hard to know what I’m eligible for,” said one man.

In this rich space of companionship, struggle, and hope, we are uncovering issues that require an organizing approach as well as leaders with the strength to tackle them.

In the words of one attendee, “Uds. son unas estrellas, son luz para la oscuridad. “You are all stars, you are lights in this darkness.

Through listening and organizing, our lights will shine bright enough to illuminate the path ahead. More news to come soon...



Building Capacity, Moving Forward!

Cultural Humility

Our cultural humility group continues to meet regularly via Zoom. We most recently discussed Robin DiAngelo’s book *White Fragility*, as well as her accompanying talk for the *Putting Racism on the Table: Expanding the Table for Racial Equity* lecture series.

In our next meeting, we will be discussing articles from *The New York Times’ 1619 Project*, as well as a video lecture from the same series by Ibram X. Kendi, author of *How to Be an Antiracist*.

BIO Accompaniment Work

Our accompaniment work remains on hold during the closure of the courts and ICE offices. They will remain closed until June 4th at the earliest. We remain in touch with immigration lawyers and service providers for updates and key information.