



The First Order

St. Stephen's Parish

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JUNE 2021



It's Time to Get Excited!

Dust off your name tag, roll out the welcome mat, and be safe, but don't be shy.

Last weekend my wife Chris, our dog Belton, and I were returning home from an early morning hike at Woods Pond and October Mountain State Forest. I was driving and Belton was in the back seat. He LOVES riding in the car. He's not a head-out-the-window kind of dog. He's content to sit up and survey the landscape – alert for squirrels, other dogs, and the most dangerous threats of all to his humans, UPS trucks and robot lawn mowers.

As we rounded a turn, not even a mile from our house, the car behind us sped up and pulled alongside our car. Startled, I turned and saw a woman in her seventies motioning eagerly. Completely disoriented at this point, I was trying to understand why this genial woman was challenging us – in our rather bland but reliable Toyota Corolla – to a drag race.

But in fact, she was asking us to pull over so she could tell us something. Since it was 8:15 AM on a Sunday and there was little to no traffic, we obliged. She rolled down her window and said, "I've been following you and I just wanted to tell you that I love watching your dog! He's adorable just sitting there

watching everything. Have a good day!" And off she went.

She was one excited person.

I won't be challenging you to any drag races or cutting you off on a back road, but I too am EXCITED!

And you know why....

We're headed back to our beloved church building for worship!

We're welcoming our wonderful new Rector for the first time in person in our building!

So...

Please dust off your name tag and wear it prominently. Help Nina get to know your name and your face.

And please give Nina and her husband Ken the full St. Stephen's welcome. We need to be careful, but we don't need to be shy.

Are you excited? Me too.

Just drive safely please.

*Craig Reynolds
Co-Warden*

**See page 2
for further info.**

In-Building Worship to Resume!

Dear Friends,

We are encouraged by the opening of our community as more people become vaccinated. We are eager to gather in person, yet we want to do so responsibly. During this time of pandemic transition your Rector, Wardens, and Vestry strive to:

- Safeguard everyone's health and well-being.
- Extend God's grace and love to all.
- Ensure our parish continues to be a vital, deeply engaged, and interconnected faith community.
- Embody God's love to those beyond the walls of the church.

Over the next few weeks, we have planned a transition to in-building worship. Our first service in the church building is planned for Sunday, June 6 at 9 AM. Our hope is to have this service simulcast via the web and Facebook (details on accessing these will be forthcoming).

We are trying to be both safe and sensitive to meeting people's needs. We are not all in the same place and we want to honor that.

- We will gather no more than 120 people at the service at 9:00 AM Sunday. All services will be in the large church.
- Pre-registration will not be required, but we will collect contact tracing information.
- Social distancing will be practiced at all times; upon arrival, during the service (pews will be roped off) and when departing. Households of course can sit together.
- At this time, we cannot have "lemonade and cookies" on the lawn.
- Masks will be required! Please, bring your own, but if you forget we will have some available. Remember, wearing a mask is about the other person.
- We will have hand sanitizers available at the entrances and throughout the building. Three single-occupant restrooms will be available on the main floor.
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What to expect at worship

- The entire service will be in a 'single use' service bulletin. We ask that you take it with you when you leave. All books have been removed from the pews.
- "The Peace" will not be passed.
- We are not allowed to have hymn singing; however, Joy Mullen will offer music.
- The same person will read the scripture lesson, lead the psalm, and offer the Prayers of the People at a given service. We will design the services to be about 50 minutes or less.
- Offering plates will be placed at the entrances but will not be passed.
- There will be no acolytes, altar servers, or choir assisting in worship. Rev. Nina will come to you for communion.

We will continue to adhere to state health regulations as they evolve.

Please note that the resumption of worship is the first step in a longer process of reopening the entire building. The building remains closed. Masks and social distancing continue to be required should you need to enter the building at times outside of worship services. Your Rector, Wardens, and Vestry are working on a plan to reopen the entire building in a safe and timely manner.

Thank you for your patience and support as we try to balance the excitement of being able to worship in person and keeping everyone healthy and safe.

Your Rector, Wardens, and Vestry
Nina Erin and Craig Valerie, Wendy, John, Leah, Mark, Angie, Louise and Chris

Join us Saturday

as we celebrate the day when freedom finally reached the last enslaved persons in America. All people of faith might mark this particular moment in our history mindful that the sin of white supremacy continues to impact Black lives in our time. This diocesan liturgy is being planned by the **Beloved Community Commission** as an entry point for deeper engagement with the story and to gather us all for prayer on this great day. Our presider will be the **Rt. Rev. Douglas J. Fisher**.

Diocesan Morning Prayer Juneteenth June 19th at 10:00 a.m.



Join via the
Episcopal Diocese
of Western
Massachusetts'
YouTube channel or
FaceBook Watch

Preacher: Dr. Deborah Harmon Hines

Friends Away, Staying Close

"Wonderful to read about "THE Table"
Glad to see it is still going strong. Are
other churches still taking the other days?
What a wonderful program for Berkshire
folks who need food, companionship etc.
A while ago I moved to Salt Lake City -
here with family close by. Hi to any/all
at fabulous St Stephen's Parish/Table who
may remember me.

Fondly Pam Hawkins"

June

Happy Birthday:

- 1 Stephanie Mansfield
- 2 Joseph Carchedi
- 3 James Brennan
- 10 John Garinther
- 11 Audrina Maloney, David Winchester
- 12 Dan Moon
- 13 Meilani Hamilton
- 14 Taylor Eddy, Linda Engle
- 16 Susan Bedard
- 17 David Turner
- 18 Avery Hartman-Caesar
- 19 Peter Champagne, Courtney Hamilton, Alyson Warman
- 20 Emilia Cobb
- 22 Daniel Lavery
- 23 Pam Aldrich
- 26 Summer Bush
- 29 Marietta Cawse
- 30 Jaylen Hamilton

Happy Anniversary:

- 6 Katie & Scott Haviland (2009)
- 6 Susan and Thom Smith (1971) Landmark!
- 8 Mary & David Turner (1985)
- 11 Beth-Anne Hamling & Stephanie Mansfield (2011) Landmark!
- 14 Wavelyn & Jeffrey Hine (1969)
- 14 Debbie & Roy Stillman (1980)
- 17 Veronica & Christopher Fenton (1989)
- 20 Ann & Don Phipps (1964)
- 21 Paula & William Morey (1969)
- 21 Maria & Nathan Zuckerman (1970)
- 24 Martie & David Ekstrom (1961) Landmark!
- 25 Josie & Scott Ellis (1994)
- 25 Nancy & William Travis (1972)
- 30 Mary & Steven Wheelock (1972)

Financial Update - April 2021

submitted by Leah Luczynski, Treasurer

Now that we are several months into the year, we will start to see the budget even out as compared to the beginning of the year, for example, when income appears abnormally high because of pledges that are paid in full for the year. As of the end of April we are net positive just shy of \$5,000.

Below are bar graphs outlining the average income and expenses for April 2018 – 2020 (BLUE) as compared to April 2021 (ORANGE). You'll notice that Pledge Payments are below average but General Investment Income is above average. On the expense side, you'll see salaries are up, this is due in part to cost of living increases as well as going from interim and supply priests (from May 2019 – Feb. 2021) to a full-time salaried priest. Other increases you'll notice are in General Expenses and Property Expenses. These increased mostly due to the updated lighting and electrical work that is now complete.

