



The First Order

St. Stephen's Parish

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JULY 2021

What's Happening at St. Stephen's? A Lot!

By Craig Reynolds, Co-Warden

For a variety of reasons, I almost skipped writing an article for this month's First Order. But then I took stock of everything that's happening around the parish, and I knew I had to bang out a quick update.

As the headline asks, what's happening at St. Stephen's? A lot!

Worshipping Together in Our Church Building! We've been holding church services in our beautiful sanctuary since Sunday, June 6. How wonderful to be together again! Health and safety protocols are being observed. Parish leaders are engaged in an ongoing review of public health and parish safety issues to update these protocols as we move forward. Many thanks to the team who put the transition plan in place – Tom Dillon, Chris Plankey, Joan Evans, Roy and Debbie Stillman, Sarah Morrison, and the Rev. Nina Pooley. And much gratitude to Altar Guild, Lectors, Roy Stillman, Nina, and others for their ongoing support of our worship services.

Opening the Building to Outside Groups! Beginning in late June/early July, outside groups, including several 12-step meetings, will once again be gathering at St. Stephen's. Many thanks to Chris Plankey, Sarah Morrison, and others who developed and distributed a checklist of health and safety protocols for outside groups to follow. These guidelines – similar to those followed for worship – will also be reviewed and adjusted as circumstances warrant.

Banners and Buttons! By the time you read this, two 3' x 5' banners will have been placed on the building, expanding our presence on Park Square, and boldly proclaiming God's love for everyone in our community. Many thanks to Nina for banner design and development and to Chris Plankey, John Garinther, Bill Carter, and others for the design and installation of the banner support system. Nina also designed and developed "Pride Buttons" for St. Stephen's members to wear at the Berkshire Pride Rally late last month.

St. Stephen's Table! Table continues to operate on a take-out basis. On one recent Thursday and Friday, Dan Moon and his crew of dedicated volunteers served

nearly 150 meals to people in our community. One meal featured delicious hand-rolled meatballs!

Visioning Process! Nina has gathered the Vestry and former Profile and Search Committees for the initial phase of a "visioning" process. The goal is to build on the important work the parish did in preparing to call a new rector. More on this to come!

Parish Archives! Don Phipps has taken it upon himself to organize and catalog information from the most recent decades in the parish's history. Many thanks to Don for embracing this enormous task. If you are interested in helping with this fascinating project, please contact Don directly.

Young People's Fellowship! In late June, a group from YPF provided hospitality to hikers on the Appalachian Trail, supporting the outreach efforts of Christ Trinity Church in Sheffield. Our thanks to Matt Behnke and his crew for this collaborative mission work.

Livestreaming and YouTube Channel! With the transition to in-church worship, our digital ministry has transitioned as well. Thanks to the blood, sweat, tears, and expertise of Ken Pooley, our service is now livestreamed on our website each Sunday and archived on our new YouTube channel. Thank you, Ken. We're continuing to refine and improve the livestreaming process to make it even more engaging and simpler to produce.

Working Groups! Your Vestry and other parish leaders have formed some working groups to manage the numerous tasks involved in re-opening our building and re-engaging with one another in ways both familiar and new. We may tap you on the shoulder for help in this process!

Parish Audit! A consultant from the diocese recently completed an audit of our financial records for 2020. The Finance team – lead by Sarah Morrison and Leah Luczynski – received the audit equivalent of gold stars! Thank you to Sarah, Leah, Bert Boos, Josie Ellis, Don Phipps, Joan Evans, and others for your faithful financial oversight.

If this is what's happening in the "quiet" month of June, consider what's in store for the coming seasons. Be sure to join in!

Graduation News

Heather Macfarlane graduated from Champlain College, Magna Cum Laude, Bachelor of Science, double major International Business and Criminal Justice with a minor in Finance. Inducted into Omicron Iota chapter of Delta Mu Delta an international honor society

Mackenzie Ellis graduated from Stonehill College, bachelor's degree in Management with a double minor in Spanish and Entrepreneurship

Nicholas Trapani graduated from Taconic High School

Genese Latini received her MBA from Mass. College of Liberal Arts



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GIFTS AND NO
GRACE.’

- JOHN BUNYAN

July

Happy Birthday:

- 2 Wendy Coakley
- 3 Cynthia Hand
- 5 Samantha Reynolds
- 5 James Donovan
- 6 Felyce Stetz
- 7 Arysa Maloney, Gabriel Carrington
- 9 Karen Wallace
- 10 Janous Slonski, Karla Ann Boudreau
- 11 Mike Coakley
- 13 Tom Drury
- 14 William Frazier
- 17 Paula Morey
- 18 Randy Thomas
- 20 Horace Harris, Austine Bodenstab, Michael Di-Grigoli, Heather Macfarlane
- 22 Joan Morrow, Philip Blanchard, Elizabeth Chisum
- 23 Joan Kurber
- 24 Trinity Cookis, Jayvon Dillard
- 25 Sarah Fenton, Isabella Ameen
- 26 Lynne Blanchard
- 27 Leah Luczynski
- 28 Patrick LeBourdais, Beverly Appleton LANDMARK!
- 30 Jennifer Laurin, Molly McNeil, Edith Mingalone

Happy Anniversary:

- 2 David & Elizabeth Oakes
- 11 David & Mary Adams
- 12 Jeff Pringle & Karen Wallace
- 13 Jim & Marietta Cawse
- 14 John & Evelyn Pieloch
- 17 Robert & Tonya Reynolds
- 21 Seth & Heather DiGrigoli
- 28 Michael & Ursula Champagne

Financial Update - May 2021

submitted by Leah Luczynski, Treasurer

As of the end of May, we are net positive \$1,571 (does not include unbudgeted). Year to date, income is underbudget by about \$26,600 or roughly 12.5%. However, expenses are also underbudget by approximately \$24,800 or roughly 12%

Below are bar graphs outlining the average income and expenses for May 2018 – 2020 (BLUE) as compared to May 2021 (ORANGE). You will see that General Investment Income was over \$10K for the average of 2018 – 2020. This is because in 2018 – 2019 (Jan. – May) we had to take money from our Endowment several times to pay bills. When we take money from the Endowment, it is categorized as income under the heading General Investment Income. So it was not that we were earning more general investment income in 2018 – 2020, in reality, we were actually taking money from our Endowment to offset our deficit. On the Expense Comparison graph, you will see that our expenses are well below the average of 2018-2020.

