

# Opportunities to get involved at St. Stephen's

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## **ACOLYTES and ALTAR SERVERS**

Acolytes - also called altar servers - assist the priest or deacon when celebrating a church service. They serve a variety of functions, including:

- Carrying torches or a cross (Crucifer)
- Holding the Altar Book open before the presider at the Eucharist
- Bearing the Gospel Book in procession and at the proclamation
- Carrying vessels to the Lord's Table Washing the celebrant's hands (lavabo)
- Bringing additional vessels to the altar after the consecration of the bread and wine
- Clearing the altar after Communion

Typically, when we are not observing COVID precautions, volunteers are asked to serve no more than once every 4 to 6 weeks. There is generally a great deal of flexibility in scheduling. Acolytes can serve as long as they find participation rewarding. Many acolytes have served St. Stephen's for several years; some for long uninterrupted stretches others with breaks in service. The current Acolyte Coordinator has been an acolyte since he was ten years old!

The most important quality needed for an acolyte is the desire to serve. Training is provided by caring, experienced leaders, doesn't take long and is tailored for individual needs.

The best parts of this ministry: Acolyting is participatory, intergenerational, flexible, leadership, builds relationships and allows kids to play (safely) with fire.

Sounds like fun!?!

For more information, please contact Dave Turner: 413-442-1065, [davewt65@gmail.com](mailto:davewt65@gmail.com)

## **ALTAR FLOWER MINISTRY**

This ministry provides opportunities for those with either creative or organizing gifts or both!

### ***Creating:***

- Flower Arrangers either create an arrangement or purchase one from a local florist. The church provides the vase and sets the budget. Color and flower selection may be determined by the donor, arranger or season. Arrangers are reimbursed.

- Arrangers bring the flowers to the church on Saturday so they are ready for Sunday. After the Sunday service, the donor may take the flowers home or the arranger may disassemble and distribute.
- Frequency of service depends on number of team members and flower donations.
- You may work with a partner and there are team members to guide you.

### **Organizing:**

- The Altar Flower Coordinator schedules flowers for Sundays throughout the church year based on donor's wishes and the church calendar. There are no flowers during Advent and Lent.
- In creating the schedule, the Altar Flower Coordinator contacts past donors to see if they would like to donate again. Occasional notices are also placed in the weekly bulletin, email and monthly newsletter reminding members that flowers can be donated to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries, memorialize loved ones or simply to glorify God.
- After donors have been scheduled, the Coordinator contacts the Parish Administrator who contacts the Flower Arrangers.
- This job could be shared by 2 people if you and a friend would like to partner.

For more information, please contact Joan Kurber:413-499-3799, [joankurber@gmail.com](mailto:joankurber@gmail.com) or the church office: 413-448-8276.

### **ALTAR GUILD**

The Altar Guild prepares the altar table for our worship services. They also prepare and set up for weddings, funerals and holidays. This includes caring for the altar, vestments and altar linens. They setup and clean up the vessels and implements used for communion. The Altar Guild also maintains the oil candles throughout the sanctuary and chapel.

Volunteers, men and women, work in teams. Pre-COVID, there were 6 teams of 3 serving for 2 consecutive weeks once every 6 weeks. At Christmas, there is a sign-up sheet for coverage.

Shadowing is offered and there's a training manual complete with pictures for reference. Your time, talent and willingness to learn are the only requirements.

The best parts of this ministry are the friends you make, the knowledge you gain and the love that brings us all together at God's table.

For more information, please contact: Marie Sutton 413-443-5417, [suttonmr44@gmail.com](mailto:suttonmr44@gmail.com)

## **COFFEE HOUR and LEMONADE ON THE LAWN**

This ministry provides hospitality to new members and old friends alike and can be shared with a partner.

- The Coffee Hour host(s) arrives about a half hour before the Sunday morning service begins to make coffee or lemonade and set up for the fellowship time that occurs after the service.
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- The church provides the coffee, tea, milk, and sugar along with juice for children and paper goods. The host may provide a snack but it is not required. During the warmer months, the host provides the lemonade.
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- Assignments are made on an ongoing rotation. The frequency of your service depends on the number of members on the team. Pre-COVID, members served once every 9 weeks.
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- Training is provided; don't worry if you have never used the church's coffee maker.
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At this time, we are observing COVID protocols and limiting service to pre-poured drinks.

For more information, please contact the church office: 413-448-8276, [smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org](mailto:smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org)

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Seven separate but linked activities fall under the Communications umbrella: The First Order, St. Stephen's monthly newsletter; the weekly email; the Sunday bulletin; the website; the service recording/live stream; the Facebook page and sending birthday and anniversary cards. What all these have in common is the goal of keeping our St. Stephen's community informed and engaged - especially important during the past year and a half.

Volunteers can help in a variety of ways:

- Do you like to take photographs? Photographs are needed for the website, monthly newsletter, weekly email and Facebook page.
- Are you an avid follower of local news? Mentions of St. Stephen's members' academic, sports or professional achievements should be recognized!
- Do your computer skills shine? Would you like to learn about website maintenance or WordPress? The webmaster welcomes assistance with weekly updating tasks, annual maintenance and design input.

The resident livestream expert can use a back-up or maybe a Sunday off.

- Do you enjoy social media? The weekly email and monthly newsletter are linked to the Facebook page and also found on the website, you may have a great idea about making things more engaging.
- Is writing a passion? The monthly newsletter editor would love help with feature articles.
- Do you enjoy making someone's day with a birthday or anniversary acknowledgement? Our intrepid card writer would be happy to share her lists.

Thousands of visitors view the parish website and Facebook page each year. This is an opportunity to shape the digital face of St. Stephen's!

A volunteer's commitment and schedule can vary with their personal interests and availability. Many of the tasks can be performed remotely. Training will be provided and you will enhance the experience of the whole St. Stephen's community.

For more information, please contact the office: 413-448-8276, [smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org](mailto:smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org)

## **COOKING AND BAKING**

The Cooking and Baking Ministry is a small but busy group assisting with funeral receptions held at the church, providing meals for the Habitat for Humanity workdays and ensuring that parish-wide events and meetings offer refreshments to all who attend. Currently on hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they look forward to returning to service and welcome new volunteers.

Volunteers are needed to shop for supplies, set-up and clean-up for events and, sometimes, actually bake. Scheduling is flexible and offers opportunities for those who need to plan well in advance as well as someone who can take a few hours out of their week with only a day or so of notice. Just as there is not a fixed number of events per year, volunteers are not asked to commit to a fixed term.

The most important quality needed for the cooking and baking team is a desire to provide hospitality. Volunteers generally work behind the scenes supporting all aspects of church life; they may serve a bereaved family or celebrate Mardi Gras with the congregation. Working with a team fosters friendships and members enjoy their ability to provide tangible evidence of the love St. Stephen's members have for their community.

For more information, please contact Joan Evans: 413-822-0889,  
[jmevans1033@yahoo.com](mailto:jmevans1033@yahoo.com)

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

St. Stephen's Finance committee works behind the scenes to ensure that church finances are in line with the budget they've created and financial resources are used responsibly.

Volunteers are asked to attend monthly meetings where the treasurer's report on the budget and parish finances is reviewed. Other financial matters that pop-up during the year are also addressed so the Finance Committee can provide advice to the Vestry. The annual budget is also prepared by the Finance Committee.

This is an ongoing ministry, volunteers can stay on the Finance Committee as long as they would like to and anyone is welcome to attend a meeting to "try out" the committee. A background in finance is not a requirement, in fact, fresh eyes can bring new insight. The reports are reviewed to aid your understanding.

The best parts of this ministry are gaining a clearer understanding about church finances, learning about proper practices and knowing you are helping steward St. Stephen's resources.

For more information, please contact Leah Luczynski: 413-464-9333,  
[leah@leahinteriors.com](mailto:leah@leahinteriors.com)

## **GREETERS**

St. Stephen's Greeters are the first people encountered at our church entrances. They are essential in welcoming all who walk through our doors for worship.

Greeters are asked to arrive about 1/2 hour before the start of church. They pick up a supply of bulletins and go to their assigned entry, East St. or Allen St., ready to help with opening the door, offering a bulletin with a smile and answering questions. Greeters also remind all visitors to sign-in per COVID protocol. When full communion is being served, the East St. greeters also serve as oblation bearers. Greeter may also invite visitors to coffee hour and introduce them to other parishioners.

An annual schedule is prepared by the team coordinator. Normally, volunteers serve once every two months. Length of commitment is at the discretion of the volunteer. The only requirement is a desire to be

welcoming. Instructions and guidance are given as needed.

The best parts of this ministry are being able to meet everyone who walks through the door, sharing information about St. Stephen's and establishing new friendships.

For more information, please contact Paula Morey: 413-212-2119,  
[PJM3448@gmail.com](mailto:PJM3448@gmail.com)

### **HABITAT for HUMANITY**

The purpose of the Habitat for Humanity ministry is to team with other volunteers to provide families with decent affordable housing.

Volunteers always work under the watchful eye of a Habitat construction supervisor. Safety videos are viewed before arriving on the job site so you are prepared for your shift. Knowledge of power tools is not a prerequisite; training is provided. There are 2 workdays per year, usually a Saturday in April and October. The work day is 8AM to 3PM with lunch provided.

Knowing that your contribution will help a family have a home and a path to new opportunity is one of the many benefits of this ministry. There is a sense of comradery on the jobsite and you may even work along side the future home owner.

For more information, please contact the office: 413-448-8276,  
[smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org](mailto:smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org)

### **LECTOR**

This ministry reads the weekly lessons and prayers of the people at our worship services.

Lectors connect with the congregation and the weekly lessons through reading.

- Training is provided before you are asked to stand at the lectern.
- Readings are provided in advance so you have time to practice.
- The lector schedule is created quarterly (sometimes bi-annually) so you have time to switch if there's a conflict.
- Frequency of service depends on the number of team members and the structure of worship.
- Members of this ministry find their contribution to worship very satisfying.

For more information, please contact Bill Frazier:  
413-442-0716, [wfrazier413@gmail.com](mailto:wfrazier413@gmail.com)

### **PARISH LIBRARY**

St. Stephen's library is located at the south end of the Guild Room. If you are someone who enjoys organizing, this might be a place for you to serve. There are card catalog cards to fill out and file, old cards to be pulled and new books to be processed. Anyone is welcome to try out a task including middle and high schoolers.

The library uses the Dewey Decimal System and processing books is just a matter of neatly preparing them for circulation. Most of the volunteer opportunities involve a short amount of training and can be done as the volunteer's schedule allows. Putting books on the shelves is the only physically demanding activity as a step stool might be required to reach the higher shelves.

The best part of this ministry is learning about the wonderful resources St. Stephen's has for deepening your faith. There are classic deeply theological books and laugh out loud stories. We also have a special Children's Library.

For more information, please contact Sara Garinther: 413-499-9778,  
[sara.garinther@twc.com](mailto:sara.garinther@twc.com)

### **LIVING GREEN**

The mission of Living Green is to bring awareness to the people of St. Stephen's of the ways in which we, communally and individually, can practice environmental stewardship.

Volunteers cut cardboard boxes down to recyclable size, bring the cardboard home for recycling and assist in making sure the recycling totes get put out on Allen St. for pickup. You chose which job best suits and the schedule depends on the number of volunteers

Anyone can offer ideas on furthering St. Stephen's "green" work or educating the parish on energy conservation and other environmental stewardship topics.

The best part of this ministry is knowing you are contributing to St. Stephen's mission and stewardship of the environment. It is absolutely worthwhile!

For more information, please contact  
Paula Morey  
413-212-2119, [pjm3448@gmail.com](mailto:pjm3448@gmail.com)

### **PASTORAL CARE**

On a weekly basis, a dedicated parishioner takes responsibility for visiting any parishioner who is hospitalized.

- The best part of this ministry is sharing time with a fellow parishioner.
- The Pastoral Care visitor completes a training course with the priest before undertaking this position; job shadowing is possible.
- Assignments are made on an ongoing rotation. The frequency of your service depends on the number of members on the team.
- Hospital regulations must be observed and confidentiality is required.

For more information, please contact Bill Frazier:  
413-442-0716, [wfrazier413@gmail.com](mailto:wfrazier413@gmail.com)

### **PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

The Property Committee keeps our building and grounds maintained. Their responsibilities range from planning and supervising large projects like the new lighting in the sanctuary, organizing and staffing church workdays to changing light bulbs.

Volunteers, men and women, share their skills and knowledge to handle minor repairs as they arise and keep track of annual and long term maintenance projects. Pre-COVID, there were 2 workdays per year and regular meetings to keep track of maintenance needs.

There isn't really a need for training, just a willingness to roll up your sleeves and jump in. This ministry is wonderful for those who like to work behind the scenes.

One of the best parts of this ministry is knowing you are maintaining our place of worship and a building that has been at the center of Pittsfield for over 131 years. Plus, it is a wonderful way to build friendships.

For more information, please contact John Garinther 413-499-9778,  
[john.garinther@twc.com](mailto:john.garinther@twc.com)

## **ST. STEPHEN'S TABLE**

St. Stephen's Table feeds people dinner on Thursdays and Fridays throughout the year. Before COVID, guests were served meals in the dining room. At this time, take-out meals are being served.

Volunteers are involved with receiving and storing food, preparing meals and ensuring sanitation. Volunteers also serve people.

Schedules and length of commitment vary with the individual. Participating during a few meals before committing to a schedule is highly recommended. The schedule can be tailored to the individual's needs and strengths; you can shop, prep, cook, serve or clean up.

Training is provided and it helps if you are compassionate and work well with people. There are times when things may be hectic or stressful but this is a highly rewarding ministry.

The best parts of this ministry is the opportunity to interact with a part of our community that is often not acknowledged and frequently judged.

For more information, please contact Dan Moon: 413-464-6355, [dmoon@pittsfield.net](mailto:dmoon@pittsfield.net)

## **USHER**

Ushers are essential in welcoming worshippers to St. Stephen's and ensuring a safe and smooth running service. The usher's responsibilities have changed somewhat since COVID-19. They maintain our contact tracing system by checking people in, remind everyone to wear a nametag so we can recognize one another while wearing masks and make sure everyone is seated at an appropriate distance.

Other duties include monitoring the sound system and making sure the offering plates are visible. Ushers fill in as greeters and assist the sexton as needed.

The ushering schedule is created annually and, pre-COVID, team members served once every 10 weeks. No special skills are needed other than a desire to serve in a friendly and welcoming way. Training will be provided and the team is always happy to have new members.

The best part of this ministry is meeting new people, making friends and being one of the first faces that parishioners see as they enter the sanctuary.

For more information, please contact Roy Sutton: 413-443-5417,  
[sutton44@gmail.com](mailto:sutton44@gmail.com)

### **YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP**

Young People's Fellowship (YPF) is an interfaith group for middle and high school students in Pittsfield Area. YPF holds events in 3 areas: Service, Spiritual Exploration and Fellowship. It is moderated by adult volunteers trained in Safe Church practices and based out of St. Stephen's Church. Volunteers can help in different ways: Facilitate or lead a specific event, chaperone a trip, communicate with families and members, help keep the schedule or help recruit members and extend ties to area churches.

A volunteer's schedule and length of commitment can vary from one time support of an event to a long term commitment to shaping the program.

Skills or gifts needed: An interest in working with youth, willingness to listen to youth initiatives and empower them to bring their ideas into reality. Safe Church training and a CORI check are required if volunteering directly with kids. This can be arranged through St. Stephen's office and the Diocese of Western Mass.

The best parts of the YPF ministry are witnessing the growth and brilliance of our wonderful youth, maintaining and strengthening ties between families in the parish, building the present and strengthening the future of our faith community and delighting in the unexpected - fun and fellowship!

For more information, please contact Matt Behnke: 413-579-4005,  
[matthewbehnke@yahoo.com](mailto:matthewbehnke@yahoo.com)