

The Messenger

Saint Stephen's, Schenectady

October 2005

All Saint's Day

All Saint's Day is one of the seven principal feasts of the church. This day is a celebration of Christ in His whole mystical body. We are reminded that the saints still support us by their witness and example and surround us with their love and prayers. All Saint's Day is the one day set aside each year when our faithful departed are remembered. If you would like to have a particular person remembered by name, it is not too late. Please call the parish office as soon as you receive this newsletter. We will remember them on Sunday, October 30th at the 8 & 10:15 Eucharists. The later service will include first communion for some of our young people!

Blessing of the Animals and St. Francis of Assisi

On October 4th we celebrate the life and work of St. Francis. He is probably better known for preaching to birds than for the poverty he embraced in his passion to be like Christ. Yet, Francis' love of God's creation has given his statue a place in many church and home gardens.

No mere nature lover, Francis saw in nature's paradoxes and mysteries a revelation of the presence of God. He marveled at the simplicity and obedience of the birds, fishes, rabbits, doves, the falcon who wakened him for Matins, the famous wolf of Gubbio who gave his pledge of peace to Francis and kept it.

Because of St. Francis' connection to God's creation, and especially to animals, a tradition arose in England whereby the parish priest would bless the villagers' animals on St. Francis' Day. Since Oct. 4 falls on a Monday this year, the parish council thought that the next Saturday would be a good time for St. Stephen's to

continual our annual tradition. Here's how it will work:

On October 8th the congregation and any animals (on leashes!) will gather next to the church behind the parish hall. **WE WILL REMAIN OUTSIDE DURING THE ENTIRE SERVICE.** The rector will begin a brief worship service and then will bless each animal saying: "O God, who has made all things for yourself, bless, we pray you, this animal; that it may be a source of love and joy to those with whom it dwells."

It's quite a sight!



Father James blessing the animals

Communion Class

The prayerbook stresses that baptism is the beginning of full membership in the Church. Since all baptized Christians are welcome at the altar, discretion is left to parents as to when they want their child to begin receiving communion. Criteria for Confirmation involve the moment when a person is both old enough and prepared enough to know the implications of making a voluntary, public and personal acceptance of the vows made earlier at Baptism on his/her behalf.

Classes for parents and children who are planning to prepare for reception to the Holy Communion, and those who have already begun receiving but who want further preparation, will meet on two

Wednesdays: October 19 in the parish hall from 4:45 pm to 6:15 pm and October 26 in the church from 4:45 pm to 5:30 pm. Parents are needed to help on October 19th.

Those parents wishing their children to take communion for the first time could plan to do so on All Saints Sunday, October 30th at the 10:15 am Eucharist.

Keeping in Touch

Here's a summary of what the various church committees have been doing.

Parish Council

Service - food collected in the basket on Sunday morning will be taken up to the altar with the collection plates at the Offertory. In this way we will hold up to God more than just our money.

- has collected enough school materials for all the children in the six families to attend the first day of school with full backpacks.

Worship - examined the results from the parish survey.

- decided that we would use the 'traditional' Lord's prayer until Advent

- is busy revising the Advent-Epiphany worship booklet.

Evangelism – Will continue to submitted regular 'press releases' to local newspapers concerning activities at St. Stephen's.

- has worked to develop a picture directory, especially for new members.

Pastoral Care – has continued to supplement the rector's visits to those in hospitals, long-term care facilities, and at home. Two team members are on-call each week to check hospital admissions, inform the parish office of admissions and visit people in the hospital.

Fellowship – organized a successful picnic for the beginning of our church school year

- is working on small group meetings at Reid House this fall.

Vestry

Finance – is looking for ways to cut energy costs and is looking at energy budget estimates for the 2006 budget.

- is looking to lower insurance costs by switching to the Episcopal Insurance Co.

Endowment – has created the Stewart and Naomi Vanda Altar Guild Fund after receiving money from the Vanda estate.

Buildings – is having trouble getting bids for the painting of the exterior of the parish hall and the rectory, having contacted seven contractors and received only one bid.

- decided to hire John Casale to paint Reid House and the two garages.

- has replaced the lighting in the downstairs classrooms and in the choir room.

Grounds – is considering plans for snow and ice removal for this winter.

Stewardship – is making plans for the Every Member Canvas for October.

HOME COMMUNION

If you or someone you know is unable to attend church on either a long or short-term basis, please call the parish office if you would like to have communion brought to you.



Father James gives the Childrens Sermon

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

1935 The Plaza
Schenectady, New York 12309

Church Staff

The Rev. Dr. James R. Brooks-McDonald, Rector
The Rev. Patricia L. Jones, Deacon
The Rev. John H. Peatling, Rector Emeritus
Dr. Timothy Olsen, Director of Music
Ms Katherine Miller, Office Manager

Vestry

Warden: Shari MacIvor
Warden: Dave Carroll
Clerk:
Treasurer: Denise Crates
Chancellor: Rosemarie Jaquith

Class of 2005 Steve Ras
Sondra Grady
Vicki Hoshko

Class of 2006 Marilyn Dare
Budd Mazurek
Keith Nelson

Class of 2007 Dave Caruso
Paul de Kanel
Stacy DeBritz

THE CHURCH OFFICE, located at 1229 Baker Avenue, is open every weekday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

TELEPHONE/FAX: The office telephone number is 518/346-6241 and the office fax number is 518/346-6242. Please leave a message if no one answers and someone will get back to you as soon as possible. Our email address is ststeph@albany.net. The rector's email is jbrooksm@nycap.rr.com. Our website address is <http://www.albany.net/~ststeph/>

The Messenger is published 10 times a year, September through June.

Dear Friends,

A number of you have asked me to comment on what has happened in the Diocese of Albany and the Episcopal Church this past summer and what St. Stephen's response will be.

At the Diocesan Convention this past June, Bishop Herzog, who will be 65 years old next year, called for an election of a new bishop before June 2006. Bishop Bena moved that the search process for the new bishop be shortened greatly by handing the majority of the decision-making to the Standing Committee. This motion passed, so we will be electing a new bishop sometime in the spring of 2006 whose election will have to be approved at the General Convention in Columbus, OH in June, 2006.

Bishop Herzog continues to say that the Diocese of Albany will not leave the Episcopal Church, USA. However, the facts do not bear this out. He and Bp. Bena have excommunicated all the bishops who attended the consecration of Bp. Gene Robinson. That means that they will refuse to take Holy Communion from almost a third of the bishops in the Episcopal Church, including their own Presiding Bishop!

The bishops in the Diocese of Albany have refused to attend meetings of the House of Bishops, which are crucial for being a part of the life of the Episcopal Church.

Finally, the Diocese of Albany has paid very little of its fair share of the monetary assessment to the Episcopal Church, USA.

Meanwhile, the African bishops with whom Bps. Herzog and Bena claim to be in communion have formed their own Anglican Communion and have chosen one of their own as their leader. The leader, Archbishop Akinola of Nigeria has called for the excommunication of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Church of England!

So what does all of this have to do with the congregation of Saint Stephen's? Very little. We will continue to do the things a healthy parish

does: pray together, learn from one another, help one another and others in times of need and have fun together. We will continue to support the Episcopal Church, USA.

Also, since for the past three years the Diocese of Albany has paid only a fraction of what it pledged to the national church, our vestry has had a long discussion about their response and decided that St. Stephen's will pay the diocese that portion of the assessment in the same percentage as the diocese pays to the National Church.

We live in troubled times in the Episcopal Church, yet, according to the surveys our congregation took this past spring, our congregation is thriving. I ask your continued prayers for the national church, for our diocese, and for our congregation, that we may strive to be faithful to the gospel.

James+

Ask The Rector

The other day in church I received "looks" from a late-comer who sat in the pew directly across from me. It was as if I had sat in her pew. Why do we have pews in church, anyway? I can think of no other institution which makes the audience sit on such uncomfortable seats. And why would anyone think that they can 'claim' a certain one?

....Sore Back.

Dear Sore Back,

Like most things we grow up with, pews are a recent innovation (400 or 500 years ago). I have a print of a Breugl painting called "Lent and Carnival" in which the church goers can be seen leaving church, carrying their portable stools and hassocks. The mediaeval church was very free flowing, a lot of standing around (and wandering in and out, what with the prayers being in Latin). When the Protestants got serious about listening to the Scriptures and Sermon, they turned the nave into a lecture hall, with more permanent sort of benches. These replaced the portable stools, but were still privately owned or rented. Hence,

churches got "pewed up" with private pews, leaving no room for the poor.

The Lorna Doone church in the Westcountry preserves an interesting arrangement from the 18th. C.: pews in pairs, facing one another, with shoulder high partitions around them, like railway compartments; you can see the (very high) pulpit over the top of the partition, and keep a stern eye on the kids, while no one can see you reprimanding them when they get out of line! It was quite a revolution in the 19th. C., when some people started insisting on building churches with public pews, available to all people. Those people who glare at you when you sit in "their" pew have a considerable history! Yet, you will see no name plates on pews at Saint Stephen's.

The Rector

P.S. There is no reason why you cannot take a cushion with you on Sunday mornings. I hope your back is better.

Anniversaries to Keep in Mind

October Birthdays

Katharine Lowe	10/3
Alex Rizzo	10/3
Barbara Strangfeld	10/4
Eugene Whitney	10/5
Susan Liberis	10/7
Grant Jaquith	10/8
Herbert Gretz	10/11
Janet Schlansker	10/11
Donald Molino	10/12
Diana Belardo	10/14
Cameron Pierce	10/14
Polly Mathews	10/15
Susan Feyrer	10/15
Rosemarie Jaquith	10/16
Norma Flora	10/19
Katherine Casale	10/20
Suzanne Wolff	10/20
Thomas Miller	10/21
Dante Anthony	10/21
Karen Holcombe	10/22
Alice Petter	10/23

Peter Nelson	10/23
Michael DeBritz	10/24
Larene Jaquith	10/24
Allie Strong	10/25
Colton Jaquith	10/26
Eunice Chouffi	10/28
Samuel Holcombe	10/30
Matthew Canavan	10/30
Christopher Morin	10/31

October Wedding Anniversaries

Jesse & Elizabeth Diple	10/9
Robert & Bonita Bailey	10/9
Edward & Margaret Walther	10/10
Herbert & Shirley Gretz	10/19

* If your (or anyone in your family) birthdate or anniversary is missing or incorrect, please contact the office (346-6241).

Becoming A Member of St. Stephen's

On Sunday, October 2nd the rector will begin a series of four Inquirers' classes. Participants would not be making a commitment of any sort by attending the classes. They are intended to give you an overview of how Episcopalians fit into the complex of protestant and catholic churches. I will be talking about the National Episcopal Church, our own Diocese of Albany, our own parish of St. Stephen's and the relationship among all three.

Fr. James takes the decision to join a church very seriously. Therefore it is incumbent upon him to let you know the truth: both what he thinks are wonderful things about our church, and also some not-so-wonderful things. There is always candid and open discussion.

The classes will be held in an informal atmosphere. It is required for all adults who wish to be confirmed or received into the church, but is open to all members of the Parish Family. We will meet on Sunday mornings between Noon and 1:00 p.m. from October 3rd through October 23rd. Participants will meet in the parish office, the

aluminum sided house on Baker Avenue. There is limited parking in the office driveway.

Most people who attended the classes have enjoyed them, even if they did not decide to take the important step into formal membership into the congregation.

Confirmation or Reception?

When a new person comes to Saint Stephen's and decides to become a member, s/he usually attends a series of four inquirers' classes. The purpose of these classes is to talk about what the Episcopal Church in general and Saint Stephen's congregation in particular is like and how it compares to other churches.

After attending the classes the person has a choice to join the church, or to remain an active supporter. If the person had been confirmed in another non-Episcopal church, s/he would be 'received' by the Bishop with a laying-on of hands and a prayer. If the person has never been confirmed in any church, then s/he would be 'confirmed' by a Bishop with a laying-on of hands and a slightly different prayer. Either way, the person now is considered a member in the Episcopal Church and of Saint Stephen's congregation. If s/he wishes to change membership to another Episcopal church, a letter will be sent from Saint Stephen's to the other church and the person now would be considered a member of that church. No confirmation or reception is necessary.

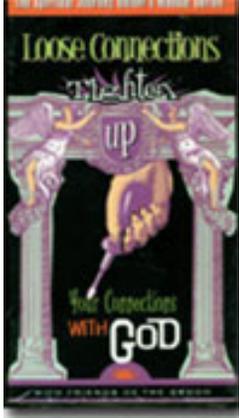


Acolytes lead the procession

Join Us at the (soon to be) Famous Reid House Theater!

“Loose Connections... Tighten up your
Connection with God”

Fun & Food for Thought, Literally!



“Consumed by a hectic lifestyle and unresolved feelings about church expectations, Jocelyn drifts away from her faith. An unexpected conversation with an auto mechanic named Jesus helps Jocelyn ...”

We will be scheduling “show times” for small groups to gather and share dessert & “coffee” (translate: tea, coffee, hot chocolate, juice, etc.!), this fun 15-minute video, and the thought provoking conversation we know will follow.

Childcare will be provided!

Sign-up for an October date in Church on Sunday Morning.

School Kits for Katrina Kids

Church World Service (CWS) is trying to respond to the needs of school children displaced by Katrina. Area churches and community groups to assemble school kits. Our congregation has been collecting supplies that will be used to assemble school kits. We will provide to the Union College Kinney Center, which has agreed to collect these kits and ship them to the CWS distribution center in Baltimore, where they will then be sent to the children who survived Katrina and were relocated to Texas. Each kit will contain:

- 8 1/2 x 11 notebook of ruled paper (150 to 200 sheets)
- 12 sheets colored construction paper
- 6 pencils with erasers
- 1 large eraser
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 1 12-inch ruler

- 1 box of 24 crayons
- 1 pair blunt scissors

Supplies are needed by October 9th. Please call Viki Brooks-McDonald at 388-6618 if you have any questions.

Foyer Groups

Sign-up forms for "Foyers - Fall '05 were available at the Parish Faire on September 11th. There is still time for you to sign up to participate in the tenth year of Foyers! The Foyer program at St. Stephen's emerged as part of our mission discernment and involves eight to ten people meeting monthly for dinner and conversation in each others homes. If you have any questions, please call the parish office.

Schenectady Inner City Ministry

Food Pantry Story Telling Fundraiser, October 2, First Reformed Church Scotia, 6:30 p.m., \$10 suggested donation at the door. Call Gail or Ruth at 346-4445 if you can donate a dessert.

David Coplon's Retirement Reception, October 6, Glen Sanders Mansion, 5:00 p.m., \$20 per person. Call SICM to reserve your place, 374-2683.

SAFE Inc. 20th Anniversary, October 20, River Stone Manor, 5:30 p.m., \$75 per ticket. Call 374-0166 for more information. SICM began Project SAFE which later spun off as SAFE Inc. and SAFE House shelter.

Volunteers Needed

Food Program

Pantry: variety of positions open
(Gail Van Valkenburgh, 346-4445)

Damien Center

Prepare/Host Meal: Mon., Wed. or Thurs. evenings, Tues. lunch.

Hospitality: Mon., Wed. or Thurs. evenings, or Tues. 11a.m.-2 p.m.

(Glenn Read, 210-4210 or Vjuana Anderson, 374-0848)

JOBS etc.

Job Coach or Data Entry
(Annalene Antonio, 347-2562)

Episcopal Relief and Development

Hurricane Katrina: A message from the Presiding Bishop

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

I am sending this message by email to our bishops, clergy and congregations -- insofar as is possible -- so that it might be shared and that we might be a community united in prayer and service during this time.

During these past days I have been contacting bishops in the areas affected by hurricane Katrina and have spoken to the bishops of Alabama, the Central Gulf Coast, Louisiana and Mississippi. As you would imagine, they are ministering to their communities the very best they can under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. Communication is tenuous, and in some cases impossible. As hour by hour the almost unimaginable ravages of the hurricane become more fully known we are continuing to learn of further losses of life, houses, churches, and other familiar points of reference, including the destruction of whole communities.

At this time let us be exceedingly mindful that bearing one another's burdens and sharing one another's suffering is integral to being members of Christ's body. I call upon every member of our church to reach out in prayer and tangible support to our brothers and sisters as they live through these overwhelming days of loss and begin to face the difficult challenges of the future.

Episcopal Relief and Development has been in contact with all the dioceses in the Gulf Coast area touched by the hurricane and will be working with them long after the television cameras have left. Funds have already been sent to the dioceses of Central Gulf Coast, Mississippi and Louisiana. I ask you to donate funds to the work of ERD such that our brothers and sisters in Christ will have the resources needed for the monumental task of reconstruction and rebuilding. Donations to ERD can be made as follows with an indication that they are designated for hurricane relief: via ERD's website at www.er-d.org 24 hours a day;

by calling ERD at 800/334-7626, extension 5129 Monday - Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Standard time; by sending a check payable to Episcopal Relief and Development, Box 12043, Newark, New Jersey 07101-5043.

The Rt. Rev. George Packard, Suffragan Bishop for Chaplaincies, has been in contact with bishops in the Gulf Coast area. Bishop Packard is working such that a network of chaplains -- police, fire, civil defense and military chaplains -- is providing information to the bishops about what is happening in areas of their dioceses they have not been able to reach. The next stage of his work will be setting up training for clergy and others in dealing with the trauma so many have experienced.

Episcopal Migration Ministries is also responding and Richard Parkins, the Director of EMM, is investigating the possibilities of resettlement for people who are temporarily homeless.

Life affords us very few securities and yet deep within us, often revealed in the midst of profound vulnerability and loss, springs up a hope that contradicts the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Such hope emerges from the depths of despair as pure and unexpected gift. This is the way in which Christ accompanies us and seeks to share our burdens. May Christ so be with those of us who are enduring the effects of the hurricane, and may each one of us be a minister of hope to others in these dark and tragic days.

May we together pray: God of mercy and compassion, be in our midst and bind us together in your Spirit as a community of love and service to bear one another's burdens in these days as we face the ravages of storm and sea. This we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord from whom alone comes our hope. Amen.

The Most Rev. Frank T. Griswold
Presiding Bishop and Primate
The Episcopal Church, USA

OCTOBER SCHEDULE

	October 9	October 16	October 23	October 30
CHALICE BEARERS AND LECTOR				
8:00 Service				
Chalice	V. Hoshko	M. Causey	D. Carroll	P. Holmes
1st Lesson	S. Woodcock	T. Miller	L. Stevens	M. Bishop
2nd Lesson	S. Ras	B. Stratton	C. Jones	M. Causey
10:15 Service				
Chalice	A. DeKanel	O. Luczka	D. Trawick	N. Hoffmann
1st Lesson	G. Woodzell	D. Manor	B. Frank	S. Grady
2nd Lesson	N. Hoffmann	L. Practico	D. Crates	T. Ormsbee
COUNTERS	M. Causey, D. Crates, A. Spang	P. Northop, L. Peacke, K. Small	D. May, R. May, B. Strangfeld	M. Gittinger, D. Molino, S. Grady
KEEPERS OF "THE BOOK"	S. Goldthwaite	N & C Hoffmann	Rosemarie Jaquith	Kathy Miller
FLOWERS	Available	In memory of Naomi Vanda given by Stewart Vanda	Available	Available
LEM and Care Givers	S. & C. Trant	P. Holmes & M. Bishop	M. Alexander & J. Russell	G. & S. Woodcock
ALTAR GUILD	10/8-10/14: Morin, Russell, Wisnom, Woodcock	10/15-10/21: Casale, Jones, Lowe	10/22-10/28: Hoffmann, Northrop, Versocki	10/29-11/4: Morin, Russell, Wisnom, Woodcock

saint stephen's episcopal church

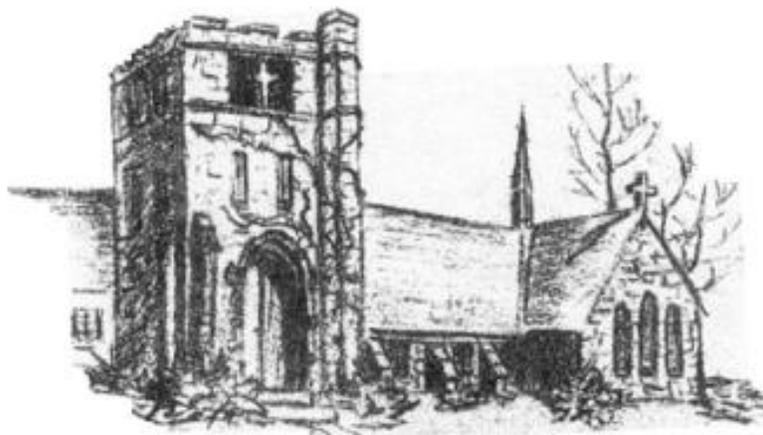
*progressive,
catholic, reformed*

Holy Communion, Sunday 8 am,
10:15 am and 7 pm
Education Hour for all Ages 9 am

1935 The Plaza
Schenectady

www.albany.net/~ststeph

346-6241



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

1935 The Plaza
Schenectady, New York 12309

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