

The WITNESS

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Troy, Michigan 48098

March 2010

The Rambling Rector



Economic recovery is on everyone's mind these days, especially here in Michigan. For Christians, recovery is a process that pre-dates our present crises by more than 2000 years. At St. Stephen's we seek to support one another in recovering from recession, depression, division, denial, disenchantment, and all other manifestations of sin and death. We do this by singing out, laughing often, crying together, reaching out beyond our own walls, and learning what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in our own time and place. Join us in celebrating "tradition with humanity and humor."

Where is God?

Where is God in the rubble of an earth quake-devastated landscape? When good people perish in freak accidents? When systems fail and power is abused and children suffer?

The Psalms abound with such questions. Psalm 77:9 has this:

"Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has God, in anger, withheld compassion?"

Many people, I suspect, think of God as a benign but distant power, bestowing blessings from afar, inspiring good actions and rewarding them. In verse 14 Psalm 77 seems to be reminding God that

"You are the God who works wonders, and have declared your power among the peoples."

One might almost expect subsequent verses to say something like "Get cracking, God! Live up to your exalted reputation! Soften the violent shaking of the earth's cracked crust. Melt the treacherous ice under your people's feet. Right the wrongs committed against innocent children."



The Psalms present an unfinished story, a cry in the dark. On one page they brag and strut about the greatness of Israel and its God, and call down brutal vengeance upon its enemies; on another, they cry out in despair to an absent God.

Oftentimes the only God we meet does not

seem powerful at all, but is the one who weeps among the devastated families, or lies buried under the rubble of ruined cities, or speaks through the mouths of powerless children. Oftentimes the only God we meet is crucified.



Lent calls us to companionship with such a God. It invites us to learn God's enigmatic ways in small increments, and symbolic steps. Lent takes us by the hand, and uses our own fingers to trace the outlines of God's face in the anguish of psalmists, the desperation of earthquake-victims, and the vulnerability of our own children and grandchildren.

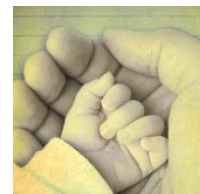
In a way, Lent is like Christ, introducing us to what is most real and most true, and doing so gently enough so as not to crush us with too much awareness. In the Gospel of John Jesus says to his disciples, "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now."

He was right about that. There is only so much we can handle, and many of us feel as if we passed that threshold some time back. And we aren't in an earthquake zone!

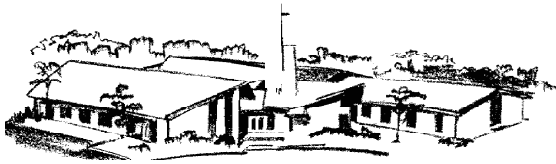
Psalm 77:19 says to God,

"Your way was in the sea, and your paths in the great waters, yet your footsteps were not seen."

Yet we have seen the love, and beheld the grace, and touched the faces. Perhaps these are the footsteps of God.



Love
Jonathan



Holy Week Schedule

March

Lectionary

March 7 - Lent 3

Ex 3: 1-15
 Psalm 63: 1-8
 1 Cor 10: 1-13
 Luke 13: 1-9

March 14 - Lent 4

Joshua 5: 9-12
 Psalm 32
 2 Cor 5: 16-21
 Luke 15: 1-3, 11b - 31

March 21 - Lent 5

Is: 43: 16-21
 Psalm 126
 Phil 3: 4b - 14
 John 12: 1-8

March 28 - Palm Sunday

The Liturgy of the Palms
 Luke 19: 28-40
 Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29

The Liturgy of the Word

Is 50: 4 - 9a
 Psalm 31: 9-16
 Phil 2: 5 - 11
 Luke 22: 14-23:56
 or
 Luke 23: 1-49

A Special Thanks

A special thank you to Sharon Eck, Colin Davis, Nancy Papet and Miranda Spates who have worked so hard at updating our chairs in the Bishop Emrich room! Bless you for your diligence. We now have beautiful, comfortable chairs because of their efforts.

7 - 9 pm

Dekalog
 Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday nights; March 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. Led by *Ronny Karlsson*. Watch and discuss movies about the Ten Commandments. Bring your own popcorn!

4:30 pm

Saturday, March 27
 Blessing of Palms & Eucharist for All Ages

8 - 9 am
 10 - 11:15 am

Palm Sunday, March 28
 Blessing of Palms & Eucharist (no music)
 Blessing of Palms, Procession & Eucharist with Choir, Sunday School, and Child Care

12 noon

Wednesday, March 31
 Informal Lenten Eucharist

6 pm
 7 pm

Maundy Thursday, April 1
 Soup & Salad Supper in Parish Hall *sign up in Gathering Area*
 Liturgy of the Lord's Supper,
 Ritual of Foot Washing, Stripping of the Altar

12 - 3 pm
 12 - 1 pm

Good Friday, April 2
 Three-Hour Service
 Come and go as you are able throughout the Three Hours
 Good Friday Liturgy
 Dramatic Reading, Solemn Prayers, Service of the Cross,
 Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament
 Meditations on the Cross, Spoken and musical
 Stations of the Cross

1 - 2:40 pm
 2:40 - 3 pm

8 pm

Easter Saturday, April 3
 Easter Vigil Service
 Blessing of the New Fire, Dramatic Readings from the Hebrew Scriptures, Holy Baptism, First Eucharist of Easter, Eclectic Music, Easter celebration refreshments after the Vigil

8 am
 9:30 - 9:45 am
 10 am

Easter Sunday, April 4
 Easter Eucharist with Easter music
 Easter Egg Hunt
 Holy Festival Eucharist for All Ages with choirs
 Nursery only

Lent at St. Stephen's, 2010

Services

Saturdays at 4:30 pm, Eucharist for All Ages, informal worship with simple music
8 & 10 am Holy Eucharist Rite One (Traditional Language)

Wednesdays

12 Noon, Informal Eucharist

Sunday Bible Study

February 21 - March 28, 9 - 9:45 am
Study the readings for the day with Deacon Liz.

The Book of Romans

Tuesdays, February 23 - March 23
7 - 9 pm Video Series, led by pastor Manisha & Scott Armstrong

Sunday Adult Forum

February 21 - March 28 - 11:30 am to 12:15 pm
Video Series, led by Sharon Eck
"Serious Answers to Hard Questions"
A recipe for Lent

Becoming the Household of God

Saturday, March 20
8:00 am - 3:00 pm, at St. John's in Royal Oak,
featuring The Rev. Mpho A. Tutu, daughter of world - famous Archbishop Desmond Tutu.
Sponsored by the Diocese of Michigan.
Body, Mind and Spirit: Health for Holy People
The Rev. Mpho Tutu, founder and Executive Director of the Tutu Institute for Prayer
and Pilgrimage, will help us explore how stewardship is not only about time, treasure
and talent, but is a creedal statement that we make with the whole of our being.
Cost - \$35 (scholarships available)
Visit www.whitakerschool.org and click "Becoming the Household of God"

*Call/e-mail the church office to register. For more information, call/
email Father Jonathan, Pastor Manisha, or Ronny Karlsson.*

A Recipe for Lent

Ingredients: Take one **ADULT** and add One ounce of **FAITH** to savor a **BYTE** of "Serious
Answers to Hard Questions."

Directions: Mix well one cup coffee, one doughnut, a 15 minute video clip,
and 30 minutes of energetic and reflective discussion. Season to personal
taste to experience and savor your second baptismal vow "Will you persevere
in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?"

Join us in the Bishop Emrich Lounge every Sunday from Feb 21 to Mar 28 at 11:30AM-12:15PM
and enjoy the fruits of this recipe to satiate your palate, mind, and heart.

Led by Sharon Eck.



COME SING WITH
US!
Adult Choir
Wednesdays at 7:15
p.m

A Note of Thanks

Thank you to Joe and
Jan Hopper for
installing drawer pulls
and cabinet knobs in
the sacristy - they
worked all afternoon
very hard on this and
it looks very nice and
was a much needed
improvement.

Cathy Hoffman

Knitting Ministry

Can you join us in our
knitting ministry?
We'll be making
Incubator blankets for
premies at local
hospitals and scarves
and hats for the
residents of Turning
Point. Scarves and
hats can be adult size
or child size - gloves
and mittens are also a
good thing!

Deacon Liz



Liz Sinkovich is the Storyteller. Call, write or email her with your stories:

story@ststephenstroy.org

Stories are the vehicles that God uses to tell of His work in our community. It is how we connect and know one another.

Just when you think times are tough, and there isn't anything more to give....the J2A Auction happens. And what happened there is worth telling!

What we do matters!



Easter Flowers

The Altar Guild provides flowers and greenery to decorate the church for Easter. Gifts from the congregation may be given as memorials, thank offerings or anonymously. A form is available to complete. Due by March 28!

Storytellers: story@ststephenstroy.org

J2A Auction Results

On February 7, St Stephens held our 4th Annual Live Auction. This is the main fundraising event for the J2A pilgrimage. Given the economy, we had some concerns about our ability to raise funds. This year, all 8 J2Aers will make their pilgrimage to San Francisco during the summer made possible by over \$6,750 that was raised at the auction! Thank you all for your generosity and support.

The auction is an event that truly engaged the St. Stephen's family, culminating in a flurry of activity on the day of and a wonderful party the night of the auction. Preparations began in early January. Parishioners were asked to scour their basements and closets for treasures to contribute.

Oh the treasures that came forth – jewelry, stem ware, candles, toys, musical instruments, furniture, games, unused or gently used appliances, bicycles and much more. People were so very gener-



ous not only with “stuff” but also giving a weekend at a cottage, tickets to sporting events, concerts and plays, and gift cards to local restaurants. Others contributed their talent.

One parishioner contributed an authentic Italian dinner for up to 8 cooked in your own home, another contributed 2 special occasion decorated cakes, another made a Christmas afghan, another made a silver necklace and earrings and so many more wonderful items from our truly gifted family.

The week before the event, donations to date were listed in the Sunday bulletin and “teaser” pictures were sent out via e mail to encourage everyone to attend.

On auction day the J2Aers, their leaders and Pastor Manisha gathered at church at

noon. We began with a prayer asking for God's blessing on our journey and activities through the day. Then, we began in earnest – making auction paddles, setting up tables, preparing food, displaying auction items.

There were a couple of glitches around getting the program printed and handling last minute donations, but everyone demonstrated a lot of grace and flexibility and we got through it together with love and care for each other. Before we knew it, it was 6 pm and people were streaming through the doors with their potluck dishes.

More than 80 people attended the event. In this broad attendance, there was a real sense that we were all sharing in the journey of our youth – upholding our vow to support them that taken at their baptism.

Guests had time to eat and look over silent auction items before the live auction began. The first item in the live auction was a lovely basket of Made in Michigan items – who knew so many things were made here in our own state! Bidding was intense. It got even more intense when auctioneer Ken Fuhr opened the bidding for 2 tickets to the MSU football game against Illinois.

One of the highlights of the live auction was a nativity set from Haiti that was donated by a parishioner. This was an exquisite clay nativity



“village” with a manger made from a coconut. It reminded us all of our connection to our brothers and

sisters in Haiti. The winning bid was matched by an anonymous donation to the Episcopal Relief & Development Fund to support relief efforts in Haiti.

The youth contributed their time for yardwork, babysitting and golf lessons. These were especially hot auction items and an opportunity for us all to celebrate the gift of our young people.

Under the Dogwood



On February 6, Deane Blythe and I, along with about 70 other Detroit-Metro Episcopalians, attended one of the "Visioning Events" convened around the Diocese of Michigan. These events are intended to provide data for new diocesan goals, objectives, expected results, staff assignments, and budget priorities. If you want to learn more about this promising process, refer to www.edomi.org (the new & very impressive Diocese of Michigan website), where you click on the RSVP icon. It even has a short video!

Deane and I were both interested to note that the priorities identified by this group of 70 were very similar to the ones our Vestry had focused upon at our Planning Retreat in January: a compelling need for a "Mission Orientation," as opposed to an "Edifice Complex;" (hah hah) a high priority on ministry with youth & young adults; and a great longing for inspired worship and informed discipleship.

We were also aware of how greatly blessed we are to be at St. Stephen's, where we have been blessed by God with resources that most other congregations do not have. Many of the participants in the "Visioning Event" were from urban churches with aging congregations. Many lacked regular clergy leadership. These were gracious people with strong attachments to the Episcopal Church, and Deane and I were blessed to have shared a Saturday hearing each others stories, struggles, and dreams.

Whatever else comes out of RSVP, I hope

March 2010						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Please check the website for the most up-to-date calendar of events
www.ststephenstroy.org

that it opens ways to provide encouragement, resources, affirmation, and other forms of Good News for these brothers and sisters of ours in the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan.

Watch for future developments.

Jonathan

An Invitation from Liturgical Publications

Extended to any parishioner who would like to advertise their business on a monthly basis in *The Witness*, Liturgical Publications, Inc. (who will publish *The Witness and The Core* beginning in April) is seeking a prospective advertisers list. Please contact the Church office or directly contact Larry Schroeder, Advertising Consultant, LPi, 586-979-4241, ext. 322, or lschroeder@4LPi.com. Printing our monthly newsletter with Liturgical Publications will save St. Stephen's significant printing and paper costs.

Cathy Hoffman

J2A Auction cont.

The evening concluded at around 9 pm. As winning bidders stood in line to "check out", one person commented: "Everyone seems so happy to be writing their checks." Another said: "This was a great party. I can't wait until next year."

The J2Aers helped get everything cleaned up and then persuaded Pastor Manisha to do their confirmation class and have a lock in that night.

Talk about enthusiasm! What a privilege to share their journey!

Frances Hammond

Job Leads

Please notify the church office with new employment opportunities for interested parishioners.
office@ststephenstroy.org.
Or call 248-641-8080.

Hablo Español?

Isabel Church, a member of our congregation who is fluent in Spanish, would like to teach you! She is offer a free Spanish class from 3-4 pm on the second and fourth Saturdays from February through May in the Bishop Emrich Room. All are welcome! Please e-mail her at isachurch1212@yahoo.com or call 248-273-4251 if you are interested, or come to class!



March Birthdays

David Fielder	2
Verna Barr	3
Cheryl Walter	5
Patrick Roberts	5
Elizabeth Roberts	6
Peyton El-Zoghby	6
Richard Lowery	8
Harvey Pennington	9
Margaret Brandon	9
Judy McQuiston	9
Bryan El-Zoghby	9
Gayle Williams	12
Marne Prouty	12
Michelle Pickering	13
Patrick Wojas	14
Renee Hatt	14
Justin Beal	14
Alexandra Morley	16
Patricia Collins	16
Mary Boldt	18
Ed DeCiantis	18
Jane Frank	19
William Wolf	19
Kimberly Mann	19
Georgiana Badalow	20
Alice Brandon	21
Cynthia Bailey	22
Alicia Johnson	22
Nancy Konas	24
Genevieve Latkowski	24
William Martin	25
Ray Miller	26
Lucas Allen	26
Matthew Redfield	26
Gwendolyn Kirby	27
Mary Bishop	27
Diana Karlsson	27
Jackie Ingersoll	29
Tobin Smith	29
Caroline Gratsch	29
Barry Davenport	30
Amanda Morello	30
Lynn Nunn	31
Martha Szott	31
Suzanne O'Hara	31
Andrew Pierce	31
Jacob Pincura	31
Jesse Pincura	31

Reaching Out

Fellowship Hour

Although the most important time after the 10:00 service is that spent in Fellowship, to do so with a cup of tea or coffee and perhaps a bite of cookie or bagel adds to the enjoyment. (hence how this time was named!)

We sincerely appreciate each of you who willingly participate in the ministry of Hospitality by hosting Fellowship Hour. Elaine Church mails a confirmation letter with instructions the week prior to you hosting this time, and another set of instructions are posted in the kitchen. You simply make coffee and tea and use some of the goodies in the freezer, or you may bring goodies to share. You may certainly team with another person or 2, or have a friend bake some cookies. The time is yours to plan as is most comfortable for you to do. And I'd like to challenge a couple of men to host a Sunday or two — this does not have to be “women’s work!!!”

In addition to the Hospitality Committee for the Welcome Back Breakfast (ummm, delicious!) and another Fellowship Hour in December, we say, “Thanks so much” to others who were hosts the last 3 months of 2009:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Michelle Pickering, Frances Hammond & Jim Trask (twice!) | |
| SWAT breakfast (Steve Fragnoli & the SWAT Team) | |
| Verna Barr & Sharon Eck | Jerry & Kathy Sebrowski |
| Karol Sprague & Jim Carnagie | Geoff & Kristen Benes |
| Elizabeth & Pat Roberts | The Ward family |
| Bonnie Gross & Claire Grutta | TheDeCiantis family |
| Miranda Spates | Jim & Mardi Maxwell |
| Scott Armstrong | Norma Ross & Susan Russell |
| Robert & Isabel Church | Jill & David Stein |
| Elaine, Ed & Amy Church | The “Singles GEM Group” |

The sign-up sheet is on the back of the kitchen door — conveniently accessible as you go to the Parish Hall to speak with others and enjoy a “cuppa” during Fellowship Hour. Won't you take a turn?

Diane Kenefic

Confirmation Dinner Help Wanted

To all those wonderful chefs and hospitable people,

I am looking for help for our Confirmation Dinner on Fri, May 14. I expect to have about a dozen young people who are going to profess their faith in Jesus Christ, and their families for a Celebratory dinner (for a total of 50 people). Is there anyone who would be interested in preparing the meal for us in the Fellowship Hall? The cost is covered in our youth ministries budget! I am also looking for folks who could set up, serve and clean up. **HELP!**

Pastor Marisha



Irish Night

You and your family are invited to Irish Night at St. Stephens! Potluck Dinner and Entertainment featuring The Celtic Knot Band Saturday, March 20th 5:30 pm Sign up in the Gathering Area. See you there!

We Ask Your Prayers for...

Members

Mary Lou Bryson	Albertine Mosier
Seung Cho	Jack & Judy Mulcahy
Harol Golding	Charles Saylor
Steve Kirby	Martha Szott
Barb Lehti	Taylor Ward
Pat Look	Joy James Williams

Family & Friends

Timothy Bennett	Steve Johnston
Gloria Bober	Carter Kentner
Jacob Boldt	Lucille Makarov
Michael Carroll	Patty McKibben
Anne Coffman	MJ Ogden
Nancy Dickens	Jeanine Pumphrey
Jack Dillon	Robin Raybould
Cathlynn Duncan	Liz Sage
Betty Feighner	Don Saylor
John Good	Pat Schlicher
Dillan Heybour	Meg Schwedler
Claudine Hoppen	Chris Slezak
Robert James	John Spates
Lyle Jarvis	Nick Taylor
Cynthia Johnston	Ron Merton

Those in the Armed Services

Rachel Barton - Granddaughter of Jane & Harry Frank
 Kyle Hoffman- Known to Joe & Jan Hopper
 Nathan Madak - Cousin of Diane Kenefic & David Eldon
 David Mentier - Cousin of Diane Kenefic & David Eldon
 Brian Papet - Son of Bruce & Nancy Papet
 Joshua Spates - Son of John & Miranda Spates
 Taylor Ward - Son of Kevin & Carol Ward

Born

Nopa James Kameya
Son of John & Rebecca Kameya
Grandson of Dennis & Mary Bishop

These Parish Families

3/7 Susie O'Hara, John & Matt Glover
 Mike, Ami, Quinn, Margaret, Pema,
 Norah, Lachlan & Kassidy O'Neill

3/14 Ben, Chibuzo, Chinwenwa, Uzoma,
 Chikezie & Chinedu Okeagu
 Jean & Trevor Otoo

3/21 Betty Padilla
 John Palmer

3/28 Bruce, Nancy & Elizabeth Papet
 Jeff, Renee, Samuel & Jacquelyn
 Parent

4/4 Louis, Melissa, Parker & Carson Pavloff
 Jay Pennington

The Departed

Carol Schmidt
Sister of Dave Stein

Brian Beirmacher
Co-worker of Dave Stein

Geri Merton
Friend of Dave & Jill Stein

Chuck Weston
Friend of Mike O'Neill

Mark Reedy
Friend of the Wards

Howard Zinn
Mentor of Mike O'Neill

Ruth Lukens
Sister of Jane Frank

Roger Blackwood
Member of St. Stephen's

March Aniversaries

John & Judy
 Mulcahy 7

Joe & Jan
 Hopper 9

John & Karen
 Morley 21

Bruce & Jamie
 Spivey 28

Tom & Marilyn
 Boroski 30

John & Debbie
 Pincura 31

How to Contact Us

Church Office: (Open 9:30-1:30 weekdays)

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deacon@ststephenstroy.org

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sexton@ststephenstroy.org

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(password: coffeehour)

The Witness, Liz Sinkovich, Editor

witness@ststephenstroy.org

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Weekly Services:

Sat. 4:30 p.m.

Eucharist for All Ages

Sun., 8 a.m.

Early Eucharist

.....
Sun, 10 a.m.

Eucharist, with music, Nursery

If you have e-mail, you can receive our newsletter faster! Please send your e-mail address to office@ststephenstroy.org. Thank you in advance for helping us with our continued effort to.....THINK GREEN!

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

5500 North Adams Road

Troy, MI 48098

Please remember St. Stephen's in your will

Change Service Requested

Dated Material

MARCH 2010