

The Evangel

St. Stephen's United Methodist Church
September 16, 2016 Volume 21, No. 18

Sunday, September 18:

Eighteenth Sunday
after Pentecost

Contemporary Worship

8:30 am

Sunday School

9:40 am

Traditional Worship

11:00 am

Sunday, September 25:

Nineteenth Sunday
after Pentecost

Contemporary Worship

8:30 am

Sunday School

9:40 am

Traditional Worship

11:00 am



OUR MISSION
is to know God and
make God known!

A Message from the Pastor

Gifts for Lay Leadership



Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:1-8)

These words of the Apostle Paul guide the thoughts and conversations of your Nominations (for Lay Leadership) Committee as we begin preparing a slate of leaders and team members who will refine, create, and lead St. Stephen's ministries in 2017!! That is, we know that members and visitors within our congregation have so many God-given talents and gifts to share in ministry with and for others – and so many of you are already doing that! However, we need your help in identifying the gifts, talents and interests that maybe you haven't had an opportunity to share . . . yet! Please pray about one or more of the following areas that God may be calling you to serve His church in 2017 and then let one of your Nominations Committee members know by note, phone, text, or email:

Stewardship, Education, Nominations, Trustees, Missions, Staff/Parish Relations, Worship, Radical Hospitality, Finance, or Church Council

Yours in Christ,
Kevin

In the Image Children's Musical



Musical Auditions - Sunday, September 11

Rehearsals for the children's musical, *In the Image*, by Mark Burrows, began this past Sunday. For children and youth interested in joining us for this production, we meet following the 11:00 a.m. service for lunch with the Youth Group before rehearsal, which begins after lunch. For more information, please contact Mary Gossett, Director of Student Ministries, or Rev. Lindsay Smith, Minister of Music.

2 Attendance and Contributions at St. Stephen's:

	<u>8:30 am</u>	<u>11:00 am</u>	<u>Sunday School</u>	<u>Operating</u>	<u>Building</u>	<u>Missions/ Communion</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Repairs</u>
September 4	50	135	107	\$12,856.00	\$2,325.00	\$1,060.00	\$81.00	—
September 11	55	167	130	\$11,810.00	\$595.00	\$200.00	\$88.08	—

From the St. Stephen's Foundation Committee



Remembering Your Church
A bequest, a gift of personal property given through your will or estate plan, is one of the easiest ways to support the church. As you prayerfully determine how to divide your estate after you're gone, consider leaving a bequest to the church to support a ministry close to your heart, or perhaps you want to tithe a percentage of your estate as part of your stewardship of God's gifts and graces. For more information on bequests or other ways to support the church, contact our financial partner, Heartspring Methodist Foundation, at 713-533-3780, 1-800-521-9617 or office@heartspringmethodist.org.

Milestones

Welcome, Little One!



Congratulations to Cory and Jamie (Taft) Johnson upon the birth of their son, **Landry Gray Johnson**, on August 6, 2016! Landry arrived weighing 6 pounds, 5 ounces, and measuring 19 inches long. We share their joy and thank God for the wonderful blessing of this precious new addition to their family!

Address Update

Elaine Rosenbaum made a move recently. Here is her new contact information so that you can stay in touch:

**3827 East Peach Hollow Circle
Pearland, Texas 77584
Home phone: 281-506-7117**



In Memory

We extend our prayers and sympathy to the following families who lost loved ones recently:



Emily Leffler and her mother, Mariann Barra, and their families, upon the death of Emily's father, **David Barra**, on Monday, September 5. A memorial service for David will be held on Thursday, September 22, at 1:00 p.m. in the sanctuary at Chapelwood United Methodist Church, 11140 Greenbay Street, Houston, Texas.

Katherine Danheim and her family upon the death of her father-in-law, **Alfred Edward Danheim, Jr.**, on September 6. Funeral services were held for Alfred on September 9 at A. Frank Smith United Methodist Church in Alto, Texas,

Stephanie Savoie and her family upon the death of her mother, **Joanna Psencik**, also a member of St. Stephen's, on September 9. Funeral arrangements are pending at this time.



Notes of Thanks

September 3, 2016

Our mother, Doris Birdsong, passed away August 27, 2016. Mother moved to Houston in 2003 from Meridian, Mississippi, and was so fortunate to meet a member of St. Stephen's United Methodist Church while getting an eye exam on 43rd Street. This new acquaintance told Mom about St. Stephen's UMC and she quickly visited and joined your congregation, and this gave her a feeling of immediate belonging, in a very personal way, in a city so large as Houston, Texas. Her membership gave her spirituality, friends and a feeling of home. Our mother was devoted, caring and ever so eager to help in any way needed, and this gave her great joy. She thrived in being part of many group activities and get-togethers. Always the volunteer, this gave her a sense of purpose and pure pleasure. I don't think a day goes by that my sister and I don't say to ourselves, "What would Mom do?" She was a true Southern lady with manners, grace, dignity and influence on her children and family that will continue.

We thank St. Stephen's United Methodist and the many members, who I could not list all, for everything you did for my mom for these past 13 years.

Christy Reichert, Dale Sartin and Richard Colston (1945-2014)

September, 2016

We, the family of Betty Braun Daniel, would like to say thank you for your help and guidance with her passing.

Thank you,
Sherry and Alex Snook



Evangel Deadlines

Publication Date
September 30

News Deadline

Noon, Monday, September 26

October 14

Noon, Monday, October 10

Send articles to maryellen@stsumc.org or call the church office.

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Friday, September 16:

6:00 am—Men's Prayer Breakfast (Denny's @ 34th & 290)

Saturday, September 17:

7:00 am—Garden Angels Dirt Diggers Workday (Work on flowerbeds.)

8:00 pm—Narcotics Anonymous Support Group (Scout House)

Sunday, September 18:

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

7:30 am—Sonrise (Celebration Service) Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

8:30 am—Celebration Worship Service (Sanctuary)

9:40 am—Sunday School for Children, Youth & Adults (Education Bldg)

11:00 am—Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm—Jr. & Sr. High Youth Group Meeting (Youth Room 205)

12:15 pm—*In the Image* Musical Practice (Room 101)

Monday, September 19:

11:40 am—Staff Prayer (Sanctuary)

7:00 pm—Boy Scouts Troop 604 Meeting (Scout House)

Tuesday, September 20:

9:00 am—Johnson Memorial School Classes (Education Building)

9:30 am—Line Dancing Class (Fellowship Hall)

6:30 pm—GriefShare Grief Support Group Meeting (Room 201)

7:00 pm—Church Council/Stewardship Meeting (Room 101)

7:30 pm—Sea Scouts Ship 24 Meeting (Scout House)

Wednesday, September 21:

6:00 am—Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)

9:00 am—Johnson Memorial School Classes (Education Building)

9:30 am—Hope Mission Group Meeting (Room 112)

9:30 am—Senior Games (Fellowship Hall/Bring a sack lunch.)

10:00 am—Beautiful Already Women's Bible Study (Room 201)

1:00 pm—Johnson School Stay-N-Play (Church Library)

7:00 pm—Education Ministry Team Meeting (Room 112)

Thursday, September 22:

First Day of Fall

Johnson Memorial School Vision & Hearing Screenings

9:00 am—Johnson Memorial School Classes (Education Building)

1:00 pm—Memorial Service for David Barra (Chapelwood UMC)

6:15 pm—Handbell Choir Practice (Room 101)

6:30 pm—Empowered to Connect Parent Training Class (Room 201)

7:30 pm—Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)

Friday, September 23:

6:00 am—Men's Prayer Breakfast (Denny's @ 34th St & Hwy 290)

Saturday, September 24:

8:00 pm—Narcotics Anonymous Support Group (Scout House)

Beautiful Already Women's Bible Study

 In a society that values outward appearance beyond inward character, we can easily become prey to a wordly view of beauty and create what Barbara Roose calls our "ugly struggle with beauty". This struggle negatively affects not only our self-image but also our relationships with God and others. What's the answer? We desperately need to regain God's perspective on beauty! In this six-week study, Barb guides us in exploring God's truth about beauty throughout the Scriptures and helps us move away from unrealistic expectations and perceived flaws toward God's view of our hearts, minds, bodies and souls. Get ready to overcome discontent and comparison and learn to live fully as the beautifully unique creation God designed you to be!

We will begin our journey on Wednesday, September 21, from 10:00-11:00 a.m. in Room 201. The nursery will be available upon request. Cost of the book is \$11. Women of all ages are welcome! For more information, or to reserve a place in the study, contact Rev. Lindsay Smith at 713-686-8241 or Lindsay_jane04@hotmail.com.

Sunday, September 25:

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

7:30 am—Sonrise (Celebration Service) Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

8:30 am—Celebration Worship Service (Sanctuary)

9:40 am—Sunday School for Children, Youth & Adults (Education Bldg)

10:30 am—Summer Reading Program Reception (Church Library)

11:00 am—Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)

12:15 pm—Jr. & Sr. High Youth Group Meeting (Youth Room 205)

12:15 pm—*In the Image* Musical Practice (Room 101)

Monday, September 26:

11:30 am—Fun4Seniors Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

11:40 am—Staff Prayer (Sanctuary)

12:00 pm—Deadline to turn in articles for September 30 *Evangel*
(Send to maryellen@stsumc.org or call the church office.)

7:00 pm—Trustees Meeting (Church Library)

7:00 pm—Boy Scouts Troop 604 Meeting (Scout House)

Tuesday, September 27:

9:00 am—Johnson Memorial School Classes (Education Building)

9:30 am—Line Dancing Class (Fellowship Hall)

1:00 pm—Johnson School Staff Meeting (Church Library)

6:30 pm—GriefShare Grief Support Group Meeting (Room 201)

7:00 pm—Oak Forest HOA Town Hall Security Meeting (Fellowship Hall)

7:00 pm—Oak Forest Citizen Patrol Meeting (Room 209)

7:30 pm—Sea Scouts Ship 24 Meeting (Scout House)

Wednesday, September 28:

6:00 am—Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)

9:00 am—Johnson School Classes (Education Building)

9:30 am—Senior Games (Fellowship Hall/Bring a sack lunch.)

10:00 am—Beautiful Already Women's Bible Study (Room 201)

11:00 am—Johnson School Chapel Service (Sanctuary)

1:00 pm—Johnson School Stay-N-Play (Church Library)

Thursday, September 29:

9:00 am—Johnson School Classes (Education Building)

9:00 am—Defensive Driving Class (Fellowship Hall)

1:15 pm—Office/Program Staff Meeting (Room 101)

6:15 pm—Handbell Choir Practice (Room 101)

6:30 pm—Empowered to Connect Parent Training Class (Room 201)

7:30 pm—Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)

Friday, September 16:

6:00 am—Men's Prayer Breakfast (Denny's @ West 34th & 290)

11:30 am—Solitaires Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)



Summer Reading Program Reception

Everyone who participated in our Summer Reading Program, from read-to-me through adult, is invited to a reception in the church library on Sunday, September 25, between Sunday School and the 11:00 a.m. worship service.



Empowered to Connect Parent Training

Empowered to Connect Parent Training is an interactive learning experience, taught from a Christian perspective, designed specifically for adoptive and foster parents. The Empowered to Connect 8-Week Connect course will be offered at St. Stephen's Thursdays from September 22 through November 10, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in Room 201. There is no cost for the course, but there are reading assignments from five books available for purchase or on a loan basis. For more information, and to register for the course, please contact Amy Bezechny (who will lead the course with her husband, Stephen) at abezechny@hopeandhealingcenter.org or 713-542-8986. Contact the church office to reserve the nursery for your child.





If you would be interested in a 5-night mission trip to Sager Brown in Baldwin, Louisiana, to volunteer in the warehouse or other related activities, we are organizing a trip between mid-October and early December. Volunteers are needed at Sager Brown on one of the following weeks: October 16-21, October 23-28, November 13-18, or November 27-December 2. Volunteers would depart after early (8:30 a.m.) church service on Sunday to carpool for the 4 1/2-hour drive, to arrive by 3:30 p.m. (tentative); returning to Houston on Friday after lunch.

Recently, I was asked to organize a trip after a few church members shared that St. Stephen's UMC previously was active with mission trips to Sager Brown, but not in recent years. As an UMCOR certified TACCOR ERT, as well as a member of the Missions Ministry Team, I look forward to serving as team lead for this trip to Sager Brown. Once we have a core group committed to a specific week, I will notify everyone. Feel free to call me with questions, suggestions, or to let me know that you want to participate: 281-788-6924 (mobile) or email: et.jackson@yahoo.com. God bless, *Elizabeth Jackson*

Nursery Volunteers Needed

We are in need of volunteers to be in the nursery with our little ones on Wednesday mornings from 10:00-11:00 a.m.; Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings; and Sunday mornings. If you would like to volunteer in our nursery, or if you know someone who might be interested in joining our weekly paid nursery staff, please contact Mary Gossett at 713-686-8241 or youth@stsumc.org.



Christmas Basket Project



Christmas basket time is here
Time to volunteer is near.
Needed is your time and money
To make this holiday bright and sunny.

When doing God's work nothing's too small
He rewards us lovingly one and all.
So join in the fun of Christmas giving
And reap a reward of heavenly living.

Gladys Reeve
Project Coordinator
(Details to follow.)

2016 Outstanding Mature and Young Adult

Each year, St. Stephen's elects a mature adult (age 50+) and a young adult (age 18-49) as a way to recognize outstanding service to the church by an individual or couple. Nominations are open to all members. Nomination forms are available in the Narthex (sanctuary foyer). Please place completed forms in the baskets in the Narthex **no later than Sunday, October 1**. The recipients of this year's awards will be recognized at a reception Sunday, October 9, following the 11:00 a.m. worship service in Room 101.



♪ Notes from the Minister of Music ♪



On Sunday Sept. 18th, my daughter Adelynn will be baptized AND Thomas Tackett will be baptized! During the service, we will sing "Wash O God Our Sons and Daughters" which is a newer hymn text set to a familiar tune. Ruth Duck does a beautiful job illuminating the beautiful promises given through our baptism. We celebrate God's prevenient grace in this act of infant baptism: before we can even articulate anything about God, God is pursuing us, providing for us, and nurturing us. God is fostering a relationship with each of us long before we realize it! What a beautiful gift this is! As parents of these children, we are promising to faithfully love them into relationship with Christ as well. Also, in the act of baptism, the congregation promises to nurture these children. I encourage you to take these baptismal vows seriously and build relationships with our young people. They need mentors and friends. In fact, we all need mentors and friends on our journey with Christ! God didn't intend for us to be on this journey alone! I hope that you will take the opportunity each time we have a baptism to remember your own baptism and God's grace freely offered and received in that act by water and the Spirit. If you have never been baptized and believe that God is calling you into His family, please speak with Pastor Kevin!

Prayer Concerns

Ed and Claytie Abrahams, Dianne Alexander, John Artz, Chappie Ashburn, Ruth Austin, Anita Bishop, Ray & Sandy Bonnin, Paula Brady, the family of JoAnn Bryant, Patrick Burns, Chappie Collins, Earl & Gloria Collins, Lonnie Coursey, Dorothy Cox, Shereka Curtis & family, Elizabeth Dennard, Charlotte Dorton, Gerald Dupree, Stephen & Brenda Edrozo, Cameron Elliott, Florence Epperson, Jack Ford, Penny Gadmer, Bill & Mildred Gandin, Maria Garcia, Lindy Garrett, Alma Green, Rev. Dr. Charles & Phyllis Greene, John Greene, Daniel Griffith, Beverly Harlow, Dorothy Haschke, the family of Virginia Head, Elizabeth Huebner, Lee Hughs, Nancy Hunt, Wanzel Jessie, Sr. & family; Thelma Jones, Lee & LaNell Kruse, Jim & Dianne Latham & family; the Leffler & Barra families upon the death of Emily's father, David Barra; Angus & Virginia Lewis, Penny & Steve Loy, Carol Luce, Peter Lucht, Lavon Mahon & family, Bonnie Maple, Frances Mayberry, Mary McClanahan, Ed Mills, Mary Nelle Moore, Pastor Kevin Otto, Gary & Dian Parker, Jean Parks, Margie Perron, Gloria Powell, the family of Joanna Psencik, Milton Ray, Bill & Caroline Reaves, Betty Roberts, Rogers & Jane Roberts, Kathleen Saathoff, Betty Serio, Barbara Smith, Lura Smith, Vance & Jean Sorrells, JoAnn Spivey, Cindy St. Lawrence, Ruth Stone, Elizabeth Sutherland, Hazel Swearingen, Danny Thomason, Hazel Thompson, Bitsy Vilven, George Wood, Gay Woods, David & Carolyn Williamson, Charles Zimmermann

In Our Prayers

In the Military

In the Hospital

Dirk Ray Jr., Allen Troth

Colonial Oaks Westchase—Anna Ruth Putnam (hospice)

Kindred-Town and Country—Noni Ray



From the Director of Student Ministries

Lunches for Youth and Children

We are so excited to announce that we are having a fall musical for children and youth. Play practice will follow the late service starting on September 11, concluding with the play on November 12 & 13. Because this time coincides with youth, we are looking for volunteers that can provide lunch for around 20 children, youth, and volunteers. You can sign up for a week or more. Thank you for investing in our young people by providing this service. Please contact Mary Gossett or see the sign up in the Narthex.

Children's Musical

The musical is off to a great success! We had 12 children in attendance at our first rehearsal. Any children, or youth, who wish to participate in the musical can still do so. Rehearsals are after the late service each week, and the performance will be November 12 & 13.

Children's Mission Sundays

Thank you to all who pulled off items to donate to help the children make flood buckets for UMCOR on Sunday, September 25. Please bring back the items this coming Sunday or to the office before the 25th (in case we have to buy extras).

Grandparents Day Brunch

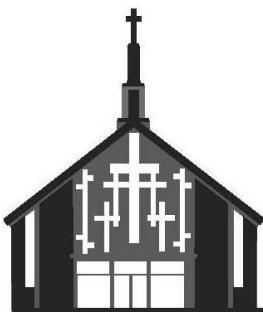
We had a fantastic Grandparents Day Brunch on Sunday, September 11. The Education Ministry Team made a breakfast of biscuits, sausages, gravy, granola, fruit, and yogurt! Thank you to everyone that came and enjoyed this event, especially those that invited their family from outside the church to join at this fun event.

New Youth Study

The youth are studying "Jesus and Stress" since it's back to school time, filled with all kinds of new stressors. Join us to learn how Jesus wants to help you manage stress.

Mary Gossett





St. Stephen's United Methodist Church

2003 West 43rd Street
Houston, Texas 77018
(713) 686-8241

www.stsumc.org



Rev. Kevin Otto
Senior Pastor
kevin@stsumc.org

Program Staff



Rev. Lindsay Smith
Minister of Music
music@stsumc.org



Mary Gossett
*Director of Student
Ministries*
youth@stsumc.org



Juyeon Kim
Organist



Candice Croker
*Director,
Johnson Memorial School*
jms@stsumc.org



Melissa Soto
Nursery Coordinator

**Anita Cabrera, Lydia Soto,
Jo Ann Spivey**
Nursery Staff

Administrative Staff



Mary Jessie
Accounting Manager
mary@stsumc.org



Mary Ellen King
Executive Secretary
maryellen@stsumc.org



Cindy Tindol
Receptionist
cindy@stsumc.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PERIODICAL
PAID
HOUSTON, TX

Fun4Seniors "Something to Crow About" Luncheon



Everyone age 50 and better is welcome to attend a Fun4Seniors Luncheon, sponsored by Harris County Precinct 4, on **Monday, September 26**, at 11:30 a.m. in St. Stephen's fellowship hall. We'll be celebrating the change of seasons as accomplished vocalist, Donna "B", entertains us with some all-time favorite country melodies. Ben's Chuck Wagon will cater the lunch which will include chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes, green beans, rolls and dessert. Make your reservation by calling Precinct 4 at 281-893-3726. A \$10 donation, made payable to Fun4Seniors, is requested and should be mailed within one week of your reservation to: Precinct 4's Senior Adult Program, 1731 Hugh Rd, Houston, Texas, 77067.

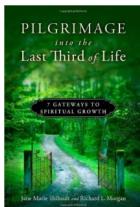
Sign Up for New Fall Bible Studies

There's still time to sign up for new fall studies to begin soon. Stop by the library this Sunday:

- **Disciple II, Into the Word, Into the World** - the study of Genesis, Exodus, Luke and Acts (A 32-week study on the beginning of the world and the beginning of the church - held on Sunday afternoons)
- **Covenant** - a 24-week in-depth group Bible study in which participants read and discuss the Bible together, learning how to love God, and each other, better. (Held on Sunday afternoons beginning October 9)
- **Introduction to the Old Testament** - a Short Course (8-week) Disciple Bible Study (Held during the Sunday School hour in the church library)



Pilgrimage Into the Last Third of Life



Are you well into or just entering the last third of life (defined as 60-90+) and wondering and/or worrying about what is left and what the future has in store for you? Do you wonder: Does God still have a purpose for my life? What if my health fails? What if I have to move? Please join us for an 8-week small group discussion of this study by Richard Morgan and Jane Marie Thibault, as we seek together God's answers to the questions of the last third of life. The study will take place Wednesdays, from 1:00-2:30 p.m., October 19 and 26; November 2, 9 and 30; and December 7, 14 and 21. Contact Dan Barcus at 281-387-7571, 713-937-9087 or dbarcus1@comcast.net; or sign up in the library. **The deadline to sign up is October 9.**

VIPs on the Move Again

The VIPs will travel to **West Columbia**, the sight of Texas' first Capitol, on Friday, October 7. The bus will leave St. Stephen's at 9:00 a.m. to visit the Columbia Historical Museum, the Rosenwald School (one of the first schools for African-American children) and 1 or 2 other historical buildings in town. We'll have lunch at the Smoking 'R Barbeque in West Columbia. All adults age 50+ are welcome to join us. The cost is \$5 for the tours, plus the cost of your lunch, which will be ordered and paid for individually. We should return to the church at approximately 4:30-5:00 p.m. To sign up for the trip, please contact Brenda Paulk at 713-686-8000.

