

# The Evangel

St. Stephen's United Methodist Church  
July 22, 2016  
Volume 21, No. 15

**Sunday, July 24:**

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Contemporary Worship**  
8:30 am

**Sunday School**  
9:40 am

**Traditional Worship**  
11:00 am

**Sunday, July 31:**

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

**Contemporary Worship**  
8:30 am

**Sunday School**  
9:40 am

**Traditional Worship**  
11:00 am

**Sunday, August 7:**

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost  
Communion Sunday

**Contemporary Worship**  
8:30 am

**Sunday School**  
9:40 am

**Traditional Worship**  
11:00 am

**Sunday, August 14:**

Thirteenth Sunday after  
Pentecost  
Food Pantry Sunday

**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**

**Extending the Table**



Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

(Matthew 9:35-38)

Recently, during lunch at the Gathering Place (our monthly ministry for people with memory loss) several of us talked about ongoing ministry to folks in our church family who are no longer able to leave their homes because of health reasons.

Now, my ears perk up whenever people ask about our homebound members (Friends at Home) because I know that we have so many of them located all over the city who need and want our love, support, and prayers. Therefore, I quickly talked up our monthly Homebound Visitation Ministry that Florence Bowman leads. And I talked about how we need many more volunteers to help visit our members who are unwillingly absent (hospitalized, in therapy, without a car, etc.) from our church community. You see, typically ten to fifteen people show up to go out in pairs at 10:15 am on that second Wednesday of each month to visit and pray with our friends at home all over the western half of Houston. These visitors take flowers, devotional booklets, and artwork created by our Sunday School and JMS children.

However, there is one more thing that I would love for our church to take to our Friends at Home. Why don't we "extend the table" on Communion Sundays whereby church members carry consecrated bread and juice from the altar table to our Friends at Home after services? To that end, I have arranged with our communion stewards to place at least five portable communion kits (each complete with a *short* prayer liturgy) on the altar table each Communion Sunday so that they may be consecrated during the service. Volunteers may then sign up with one of our communion stewards after the service to take a portable kit to one or more of our Friends at Home, thus, *extending the table!* I hope that you will prayerfully consider it.

Yours in Christ,

*Kevin*

**All American Apple Pie Winners**



Congratulations to the winner of our homemade apple pie competition, Carolyn Teague, whose pie is the last one on the right in the photo above. Other entrants who baked yummy pies for the competition, which took place at the All American Fellowship Lunch on Sunday, July 10, were Christie Fisher, Mamie Niederhofer and Allyne Pollard.

**2 Attendance and Contributions at St. Stephen's:**

	8:30 am	11:00 am	Sunday School	Operating	Building	Missions/ Communion	Other	Repairs
July 10	47	155	116	\$6,826.00	\$445.00	\$205.00	\$6,457.07	—
July 17	47	165	118	\$6,467.20	\$270.00	\$60.00	\$76.40	—

**From the St. Stephen's Foundation Committee**



**Does Your Will Reflect Your Wishes?**

If you have no will or other estate plan in place, such as a testamentary trust, the state has one for you. This "generic" operation of law distributes a person's assets and possessions strictly on "next of kin" and gives no consideration for your specific wishes or charitable intentions. Since we are called to be good stewards of our possessions, we encourage you to spend some time thinking about the kind of charitable legacy you'd like to leave. An attorney can help you craft a will/estate plan that will carry out your wishes and charitable goals. For more information, contact Heartspring Methodist Foundation at 713-533-3780, 1-800-521-9617 or [office@heartspringmethodist.org](mailto:office@heartspringmethodist.org).

**Milestones**

**Address Updates**

The following members made a move recently. Please note their new addresses and phone numbers, so that you can stay in touch:



**Betty Brashear**  
4602 Mangum  
Houston, Texas 77092  
281-787-1403

**Florence Epperson**  
1679 CR 248  
Cameron, Texas 76520  
979-821-7330

**Jean Parks**  
The Village of The Heights  
1407 Studewood St, Apt. 201  
Houston, Texas 77008  
713-899-7643

**Gracie Winkel**  
39 Justice Park Dr, Apt 806  
Houston, TX 77092  
713-304-3191

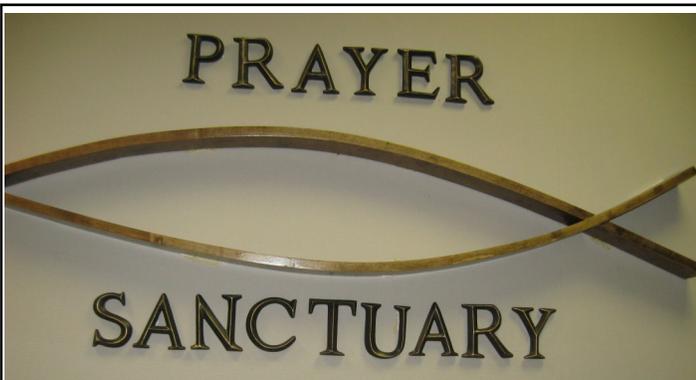
**In Memory**



We extend our prayers and sympathy to Sharon Hayes and her family upon the death of her mother, **Edith Armstrong**, on June 29. Visitation with the family will be held at 1:00 p.m. at St. Stephen's on Saturday, August 6, with a memorial service for Edith following visitation at 2:00 p.m. A reception will be held following the service in Room 101.

Our sympathy and prayers are also extended to Imogene Mitcham and her family upon the death of her husband, **Don Mitcham** on July 10. Don and Imogene were members of St. Stephen's from 1956 to 1988. A memorial service was held for Don on July 17 at Bradshaw-Carter Funeral Home in Houston. A military graveside service was held on July 18 at National Cemetery, also in Houston.

**Prayer Sanctuary**



Work on our new Prayer Sanctuary is now complete and the room is beautifully furnished with many items crafted by Tommy Bickel from wood removed from the main sanctuary during the remodeling last year. The room is available for all who wish to spend time in prayer on Sunday mornings and weekdays during regular office hours. On weekdays, please come to the church office for access to the room, which is #210 upstairs in the Educational Building, next to the elevator.

**Cutting Boards for a Cause**



Tommy Bickel also made a limited number of these one-of-a kind cutting boards from wood removed from the sanctuary. They are perfect for gift-giving and are available in the church office for a suggested donation of \$20 each, but hurry! They are going fast! All profits from the sale of the cutting boards will go towards the cost of materials and furnishings for the new Prayer Sanctuary.



**Evangel Deadlines**

This edition is a special 4-week edition of The Evangel. The next edition will be published Friday, August 19. The deadline to turn in articles for the next edition will be noon on Monday, August 15.

Send articles to [maryellen@stsumc.org](mailto:maryellen@stsumc.org) or call the church office.

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**Friday, July 22:****BIG HOUSE**

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

**Saturday, July 23:****BIG HOUSE**

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

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

**Sunday, July 24:****Tenth Sunday after Pentecost****Volunteers Return from BIG HOUSE Camp in Brenham, TX**

7:30 am—Sonrise (Contemporary Worship) Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

8:30 am—Contemporary Worship (Sanctuary)

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

11:00 am—Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)

5:00 pm—Fine Arts Camp (Fellowship Hall)

*Due to BIG HOUSE, the Youth Group will not meet today.***Monday, July 25:**

11:30 am—Fun4Seniors Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

11:40 am—Staff Prayer (Sanctuary)

5:00 pm—Fine Arts Camp (Fellowship Hall)

7:00 pm—Trustees Board Meeting (Church Library)

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

**Tuesday, July 26:**

9:15 am—Line Dancing Class (Fellowship Hall)

5:00 pm—Fine Arts Camp (Fellowship Hall)

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

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

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

**Wednesday, July 27:**

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

5:00 pm—Fine Arts Camp (Fellowship Hall)

9:30 am—Senior Games (Fellowship Hall/Bring a sack lunch.)**Thursday, July 28:**

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

5:00 pm—Fine Arts Camp (Fellowship Hall)

**Friday, July 29:**

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

11:30 am—Solitaires Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

**Saturday, July 30:**

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

**Sunday, July 31:****Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost**

7:30 am—Sonrise (Contemporary Worship) Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

8:30 am—Contemporary Worship (Sanctuary)

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

11:00 am—Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)

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

6:30 pm—Boy Scouts Troop 604 Court of Honor (Fellowship Hall)

**Monday, August 1:**

10:00 am—Senior Adult Council Meeting (Room 201)

11:40 am—Staff Prayer (Sanctuary)

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

**Tuesday, August 2:**

9:15 am—Line Dancing Class (Fellowship Hall)

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

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

**Wednesday, August 3:**

6:30 am—Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)

9:30 am—Senior Activities Day Games &amp; Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

**Thursday, August 4:**

10:00 am—Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting (Room 112)

10:30 am—Star Wars &amp; Faith Day (Fellowship Hall)

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

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

**Friday, August 5:**

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

**Saturday, August 6:**

7:00 am—Garden Angels Dirt Diggers Workday

1:00 pm—Visitation with the family of Edith Armstrong (Sanctuary)

2:00 pm—Memorial Service for Edith Armstrong (Sanctuary)

**Saturday, August 6 (cont):**

3:00 pm—Memorial Reception (Room 101)

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

**Sunday, August 7:****Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost****Comunion Sunday**

7:30 am—Sonrise (Contemporary Worship) Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

8:30 am—Contemporary Worship (Sanctuary)

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

11:00 am—Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)

11:00 am—Children's Worship Service (Room 101)

12:00 pm—Radical Hospitality Ministry Team Meeting (Church Library)

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

**Monday, August 8:**

10:00 am—The Gathering Place (Fellowship Hall)

11:40 am—Staff Prayer (Sanctuary)

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

**Tuesday, August 9:**

9:15 am—Line Dancing Class (Fellowship Hall)

11:00 am—Family Movie Day (Studio Movie Grill)

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

7:00 pm—Finance Ministry Team Meeting (Room 101)

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

**Wednesday, August 10:**

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

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

10:15 am—Homebound Visitation (Room 101)

7:00 pm—Missions Ministry Team Meeting (Church Library)

**Thursday, August 11:**

10:00 am—VIPs Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

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

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

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

**Friday, August 12:**

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

**Saturday, August 13:**

11:30 am—Red Hats Luncheon (Location TBD)

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

**Sunday, August 14:****Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost****Food Pantry Sunday**

7:30 am—Sonrise (Contemporary Worship) Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

8:30 am—Contemporary Worship (Sanctuary)

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

11:00 am—Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)

12:00 pm—United Methodist Women Meeting (Fellowship Hall)

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

**Monday, August 15:**

11:40 am—Staff Prayer (Sanctuary)

12:00 pm—Deadline to turn in articles for August 19 *Evangel*

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

**Tuesday, August 16:**

9:15 am—Line Dancing Class (Fellowship Hall)

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

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

**Wednesday, August 17:**

6:30 am—Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)

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

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

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

**Thursday, August 18:**

10:00 am—Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting (Room 112)

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

6:30 pm—SEAL Security Meeting (Church Library)

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

**Friday, August 19:**

6:00 pm—Men's Prayer Breakfast (Denny's @ 34th &amp; 390)

10:30 am—Bus leaves church for VIPS Trip to Chain of Lakes Area

6:30 pm—Family Fun Night (Fellowship Hall)

### Communion Offering for August



Our Communion Offering for August will go to **Lulu M. Stevens Elementary School**, located in Oak Forest at 1910 Lamonte Lane. Since 1992, the generosity of St. Stephen's members has enabled Stevens Elementary to provide uniforms and school supplies to children whose families could not, and to provide supplies to teachers beyond their regular budgets. St. Stephen's also provides volunteers to the school to tutor the children in reading. Please continue to support Stevens Elementary with your prayers and generous contributions.



### The Gathering Place

The Gathering Place is a ministry for persons with memory loss and their caregivers which meets each month on the second Monday from 10:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Our volunteers, in partnership with CarePartners, lead our guests in fun, memory-stimulating activities and serve lunch. Caregivers can choose to stay and participate in the activities or use the time for a break. There is no charge to the carepartner or caregiver to attend. Our next "Gathering" will be **Monday, August 8**. We can always use a few more helping hands for this caring ministry. There are many areas in which to serve: music, crafts, games,, kitchen help and visiting with our guests, making them feel welcome. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Gwen Hunt at 713-686-1202.

### Homebound Visitation



Each month on the second Wednesday, St. Stephen's Homebound Visitation Team gathers at 10:15 a.m. for prayer and to assemble small flower arrangements before dividing into small groups to visit our homebound members. We welcome women *and* men of all ages who would like to join us. Our next visitation will be **Wednesday, August 10**. For more information about our ministry to the homebound, please contact Florence Bowman at 713-682-4513.

### Food Pantry Sunday



The second Sunday of the month, from January through October, is Food Pantry Sunday at St. Stephen's. **Sunday, August 14**, is our next Food Pantry Sunday. Please bring donations of non-perishable food to the basket in the Narthex (sanctuary foyer) marked MANNA (Ministry Assistance of the Near Northwest Alliance). The food will be delivered to the MANNA Food Pantry to be given to needy families in our area.

### United Methodist Women



The **UMCOR** (United Methodist Committee on Relief) **Church-Wide Project for 2016**, coordinated by the UMW, is layette kits. Please pick up a list of needed items for the kits in the Narthex and bring one or more items to the basket in the Narthex marked "UMCOR". Please do not bring items that are not on the list, as they cannot be used for this project. Donations will be collected through Sunday, August 14. Kits will be assembled at the August 17 meeting of the Hope Mission Group. Women of all ages are welcome to attend the meeting and help assemble the kits at 9:30 a.m. in Room 112.

**Kids' Meals**, assembling meals for low-income pre-school kids, is on summer hiatus until August. We are still looking for a date that works for a critical mass of volunteers from the church willing to help. We are taking an informal poll to see who would be willing to help assemble meals from 9-12 noon on the following days: 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday, or other weekday best for you. Please call Ginny McDavid at (832) 922-0362 with your reply so we can line up a crew to help a very worthy cause!



**Our next UMW meeting** at St. Stephen's will be Sunday, August 14, following the 11:00 a.m. worship service in the fellowship hall. Ladies of all ages are welcome to join us. Bring a brown bag lunch.



### Garden Angels Dirt Diggers

**The GADDs need a few more green thumbs!** If you love gardening and would like to help us keep the church flowerbeds looking their best every other Saturday from 7:00-9:00 a.m. (8:00-10:00 a.m. when daylight saving time ends), please contact Cindy St. Lawrence at 281-448-7772 or rps95@aol.com. Women *and* men of all ages are welcome!

### Prayer Concerns

#### In Our Prayers

Ed and Claytie Abrahams, John Artz, Chappie Ashburn, Ruth Austin, Anita Bishop, Doris Birdsong, Ray & Sandy Bonnin, Gwen & Robert Boucher, Paula Brady, Chappie Collins, Gloira Collins, Lonnie Coursey, Dorothy Cox, 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, Sharon Hayes & family upon the death of her mother, Edith Armstrong; Betty Hicks (Rev. Lindsay Smith's grandmother) and family, Elizabeth Huebner, Lee Hughs, Wanzel Jessie, Sr. & family; Thelma Jones, Lee & LaNell Kruse, Jim & Dianne Latham & family; Angus & Virginia Lewis, Jose Lewis, Carol Luce, Peter Lucht, Lavon Mahon & family, Bonnie Maple, Frances Mayberry, Mary McClanahan, Ed Mills, the family of Don Mitcham, Laura Mobley, Mary Nelle Moore, Pastor Kevin Otto, Dian Parker, Jean Parks, Margie Perron, Jim Piersall, Gloria Powell, Milton & Noni Ray, Bill & Caroline Reaves, Betty Reilly, Betty Roberts, Rogers & Jane Roberts, Kathleen Saathoff, Betty Serio, Barbara Smith, Lura Smith, Vance & Jean Sorrells, Billy Stephens, Ruth Stone, Elizabeth Sutherland, Hazel Swearingen, Danny Thomason, Hazel Thompson, Bitsy Vilven, George Wood, Charles Warren, David Williamson, Charles Zimmermann, victims of Texas floods

#### In the Military

Dirk Ray Jr., Allen Troth

#### In the Hospital

Colonial Oaks Westchase—Anna Ruth Putnam (hospice)  
Park Manor Woodlands—Virginia Head

Houston Northwest Medical Center—Carolyn Williamson



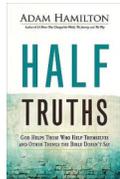
Next week we will have our first annual Fine Arts Camp, July 24-28<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-7:30. Our theme this year is “Art around the World” and this camp is open to those entering kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Brenda Paulk and I will be leading music with the children, where they will play bells, drums, and sing. They will be learning songs from South Africa, the Caribbean, Japan, across Europe, and the United States. We are excited to sing with them and teach them truths about Jesus through these songs. Teaching music to children is a sacred privilege because these songs will stick with them throughout their lives and the children learn who God is through this music. The older children will be participating in drama, while the younger children have creative movement. All of the children will have both music and visual arts. This will be a week full of fun and learning for us all. Please pray for the children attending and the volunteers and teachers!

We want these children to leave this camp knowing more about the arts, but we especially want them to leave knowing more about Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

*Lindsay Smith*

**(Note: It's not too late to register your child.** The cost is \$100 for the first child, \$75 for the second, with a family cap of \$250. You may register in the church office or contact Mary Gossett or Lindsay Smith.)

### Asbury Class Welcomes All to New Study



The Asbury Sunday School Class has begun a study of **Adam Hamilton's book "Half Truths"**, which examines some commonly held beliefs that he feels deserve closer scrutiny. It is not the author's desire to deny or to change these beliefs, but to have the reader consider the implications in today's society. For example, consider "Every thing happens for a reason..." or does it? Please join us at 9:40 a.m. Sundays in Room 209 for this timely and informative study. We look forward to seeing you!

### Empowered to Connect Parent Training



Empowered to Connect Parent Training is an interactive learning experience designed specifically for adoptive and foster parents. The ETC Parent Training was developed by Michael and Amy Monroe and relies heavily on the Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) model developed by Dr. Karin Purvis and her colleagues at the TCU Institute of Child Development. ETC Parent Training equips parents with a holistic understanding of their child's needs and development while empowering them with the tools and strategies to effectively meet those needs, build trust, and help their child heal and grow. The training is taught from a Christian perspective and focuses on a wide range of topics and issues relevant to adoptive and foster parents, including helping parents understand the impact of their child's history, what they themselves bring to the parent-child relationship, the fundamentals of attachment, the impact of fear, and the importance of meeting their child's sensory processing, nutritional and other physiological needs.

Trained Empowered to Connect (ETC) leaders, Amy and Stephen Bezecny, are committed to sharing the ETC insights and skills that have been an essential part of understanding and parenting their own child, adopted at 2 years of age. They believe that the ETC materials allowed them to have a deeper connected relationship with their child. Amy spoke to the Hope Mission Group at their April meeting earlier this year about the current state of the foster care system in Harris County and growing needs of these children. She helps faith-based congregations establish adoption ministries.

**The Empowered to Connect (ETC) 8-week Connect course will be offered at St. Stephen's United Methodist Church** 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 5 books that participants may choose to purchase. The books will also be available on a loan basis during the course.

For more information or questions about this course, and to register, please contact Amy Bezecny at [abezecny@hopeandhealingcenter.org](mailto:abezecny@hopeandhealingcenter.org) or 713-542-8986. To reserve childcare for the class, please contact the church office at 713-686-8241. You may also contact Pastor Kevin if you have questions.

### Red Hats Luncheon



The Ramblin' Reds of St. Stephen's welcome ladies of all ages to join us for our monthly meeting and luncheon at 11:30 a.m. **Saturday, August 13.** We will be meeting at a restaurant. The location will be announced at a later date. If you are not already on a call list, please call Cindy Tindol in the church office at 713-686-8241 for location and details.

### Line Dancing Class to Continue at St. Stephen's



The Line Dancing Class, sponsored by the Foster Family YMCA, which has been meeting this summer in the fellowship hall on Tuesday mornings will now be meeting regularly throughout the year at St. Stephen's. The Y has opened the class to St. Stephen's members at no charge. Please note that after Labor Day, **the class will begin 15 minutes later at 9:30 a.m.** to allow time for the parking lot to clear after the drop-off of Johnson Memorial School students.

### Defensive Driving



St. Stephen's will once again host a Defensive Driving Course in our fellowship hall on **Thursday, September 29**, from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. The course is sponsored by AARP and is open to all men and women age 50 and older. The cost is \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-AARP members. Please note that this course does not qualify for traffic ticket dismissal, but in most cases will qualify for a discount on your auto insurance. Reservations are required. Please RSVP to Florence Bowman at 713-682-4513.

June 22, 2016

To the Members of St. Stephen's:

Last week I served as head kitchen for the UM ARMY Group that was fortunate enough to be at your church. I have been doing "army" for about ten years, and have been in many churches during that time. In addition I am on staff at my own church, so I think I have a unique perspective of church work, and church workers. We at Clear Lake UMC have always been committed to ministry and missions, and like you, we are also more than willing to host any group that requests a place to stay.

For many years. I have heard the term "Radical Hospitality", but it was not until last week that I saw it in action. We were all overwhelmed by the generosity of your church and its members, and while the UM ARMY camps I've worked tend to run together, yours will stand out. We all came back with a renewed spirit of hospitality, saying that the next time we host a group at our church we want to be just like St. Stephen's. So, in addition to being grateful to you, we are inspired by you. So many things appeared anonymously, and we met so many people last week, we may never know who dropped things off, or remember the names of everyone we met. However, we will remember the spirit in which they were given.

God's Blessings,  
Linda Brackeen, Event Coordinator



July 11, 2016

Dear Pastor Otto,

Thank you for your generous donation to Books Between Kids through your March Communion. We were founded in 2012 to serve Houston's at-risk children between the ages of 3 and 11 by collecting gently used books and distributing them to these children so they can build their own home libraries.

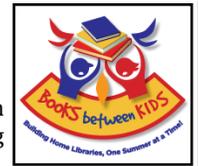
Each May, we partner with Houston ISD schools all across the city to hold Book Celebrations, where every child in the school has the opportunity to browse and individually select 6 books of their own, to keep and take home. **At the celebrations this past May, more than 35,000 children at 59 elementary schools received over 250,000 books.** As one second grader, Zievir, told us:

*"Thank you, thank you! I love the books. It's like you are my life saver. I needed the books a lot."*

Research has shown that children growing up in homes without books, where books are considered a luxury, are less likely to complete a basic education than their peers who do have books available at home. Research also shows that in middle-income neighborhoods, there are approximately 13 books for every child. But tragically, in low-income neighborhoods, this number changes to 1 book for every 300 children. **Thank you for helping us change those ratios and bring books into the hands of children who need it the most.**

For more information, or if you would like to get involved with us in other ways, please visit our website at [www.booksbetweenkids.org](http://www.booksbetweenkids.org) or contact me at 832-831-1402. I would love the chance to talk with you more about our work!

Sincerely,  
Jamie Grissom, Executive Director

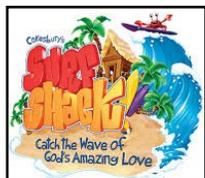


July 17, 2016

A great big thank you to all the Bible Village workers for making this year such a success! You caught the wave of God's amazing love and shared with all who visited the Village! Thank you, Jim Varnell, Dan Barcus, Parker Robertson, Brendan Kelly, Ginger Garwood, Kate Robertson, Elena Carlsson, Patricia Anderson, Steven Fisher, Madison Schlageter, Mia Hietpas, John Harlow, Rev. Charles Greene, Camdyn Schwab, Kelly Garwood, Christie Fisher, Reece Grochett, Debbie Harlow, Eleanor Larato, Emmet Hagen, Marylee Spears, Barbara Windmeyer, Mariah Lane, Betty Patterson, Johnathan Evanicky, Dominic Lane, Owen Walker, Julie Evanicky, Diane Johnson, Susan Barcus, Cole Brown, Elizabeth Jackson, Elaine Rosenbaum, Allison Ollenburg, Barbara Johnson, Patricia Bilderback, Hanna Carlsson, Rhonda Boehm, Grace Pennington, Matthew Goeddeke, Virginia Martin, Goh-Lang Eng, Linda Hart-Southward, Vicki Brandt, Luke Bilderback, Mary Krippner, Max Martinez, Dorothy Artz, Carol Luce, and Lily Cooper.

Also, many thanks to our set-up helpers: Sandy Bonnin, Richard Wren, Angela Eads, Nick Eads, Alec Eads, Peggy Bickel, Carolyn Belk, Denya Guntur and Chris Barcus who helped set up and coordinated the clean up!

Patricia Anderson and Susan Barcus  
Coordinators of the Bible Village





**From the Director of Student Ministries**

**District Camp**

We had a great time at Lakeview, July 11-15. The youth and children played games, ate at the snack shack, swam, slid down the wet willy into the lake, went canoeing and played in paddle boats, did archery, fished, participated in a talent show, worshipped together, and fellowshiped together. We had a great week where we learned how we walked by faith and not by sight.



Next year, the format for camp at Lakeview will be a little different. We will no longer be going by districts, instead each church will get to pick the weeks based on their schedule. I am hoping we can go June 11-16. Next year, camp will begin on Sunday for everyone, end on Friday, and those going into the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade will be able to go to camp. Please make a note of this if you currently have a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade student in your family.

**Lunch and Legos**

We had a fun little program on July 6 called Lunch and Legos. We brought sack lunches, ate together, read a Bible story, and played with Legos. At the end, we learned the story of the Tower of Babel, built a tall tower, and knocked it over.



**Big House Junior High Mission Trip**

This Thursday, we send off our youth and adults on our junior high mission trip: Big House. We are going to Brenham, TX, and our camp will have a total of 130 people! Please pray for: Camdyn, Avery, Madison, Jessie, Alec, Justin, Mary, Bryan, Peggy, and Robert!

**Pokemon Hunt**

Since Pokemon is all the rage right now, a group will be gathering at the church on Wednesday, July 20, at 6pm to start on a Pokemon hunt. After our hunt, we will enjoy ice cream and talk about how Jesus calls us to be fishers of people.

**Fine Arts Camp**

Our Fine Arts Camp is right around the corner, July 24-28, from 5-7:30pm, and the children will be learning about art and culture around the world. They will sing, dance, do art, and even participate in drama. Space is still open, so please encourage your children or grandchildren to attend.

**Upcoming Events**

Youth who participated in either mission trip are invited to share their experiences on July 31. The youth are having a pool party on July 31. On August 4, we are having a Star Wars and Faith Day in the fellowship hall for children and families starting at 10:30am. We will have lots of fun and learns how God loves us no matter what. On August 9, we will meet at Studio Movie Grill in City Center at 11am to go see the movie Mega Mind. The tickets are \$1 plus the cost of any food there.



**Lunch and Legos**



**District Camp**

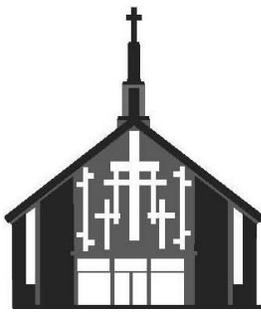
**The Choir Teaches Sunday School**

**Johnson Memorial School**

**Johnson Memorial School Registration Open**



**Registration is still open** for the Johnson Memorial School at St. Stephen's for the 2016-2017 school year. Classes are available for children who will be 3 years old and potty-trained as of September 1, 2016, and those who are 4 years old. For more information, or to schedule a tour of our wonderful preschool, please contact Candice Croker, JMS Director, at 713-859-7764.



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**Fun4Seniors Luncheon**



**St. Stephen's will host a Fun4Seniors "Hooray for the USA" Luncheon**, sponsored by Harris County Precinct 4's Senior Adult Program, Monday, July 25, at 11:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Adults age 50+ are welcome to attend and enjoy live musical entertainment with Heath Spencer Phillip, who performs music influenced by Frank Sinatra, Jackie Wilson and Elvis. Ben's Chuck Wagon will cater the meal featuring meatloaf, mashed potatoes, green beans, rolls and dessert. The cost is \$10 per person. RSVP to Precinct 4 at 281-893-3726. Checks should be made payable to Fun4Seniors and mailed to 1731 Hugh Rd, Houston, Texas, 77067.

**Solitaires**

The Solitaires, a **support and fellowship group for widows and widowers**, will meet Friday, July 29, at 11:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall at St. Stephen's. A catered lunch will be served at a cost of \$7 per person. RSVP to Barbara Johnson at 713-686-6116. Please join us! We look forward to getting to know you!

**A day trip to Baytown** is planned for Friday, September 2. We will take the Precinct bus to visit the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center. From there we will go to the Teapot Depot in Highlands, Texas, for lunch and a tour of their gardens and gift shop. Please RSVP to Betty Patterson at 713-688-3681.



**Senior Activities Day**



Adults age 50+ are welcome to join us for Senior Activities Day, **Wednesday, August 3**, in the fellowship hall. Games begin at 9:30 a.m. followed by a soup and sandwich lunch at 11:45 a.m. Love offerings are encouraged to help cover the cost of lunch.

Seniors gather for games in the fellowship hall each Wednesday at 9:30 a.m., but lunch is only served on the first Wednesday of the month. On all other weeks, you are welcome to bring a sack lunch.

**VIPs**



**The VIPs invite all men and women age 50 and better** to our monthly meeting on Thursday, August 11. Entertainment by Gregory Daniels, the Sax Man, will follow a short business meeting beginning at 11:00 a.m. You are welcome to come earlier for fellowship. A catered lunch will be served at noon. The cost is \$10 per person. Please RSVP to Barbara Johnson at 713-686-6116 no later than Monday, August 8.

**The VIPs will travel to the Chain of Lakes area** Friday, August 19, for a seafood buffet lunch at Hilltop Lakes Restaurant. From there, we will head to Coldspring for a tour of one of the oldest Methodist churches in Texas, an 1880's jail museum and shopping at Old Town Heritage Center. The cost is \$30 per person. Please RSVP to Brenda Paulk at 713-686-8000 or joelpaulk@att.net. The deadline to sign up is Sunday, July 31.

