

The Evangel

St. Stephen's United Methodist Church
August 19, 2016

Volume 21, No. 16

Sunday, August 21:

Fourteenth Sunday
after Pentecost
"Promotion Sunday"
"Teacher Appreciation Sunday"
"Blessing of the Backpacks"



Our Spiritual Legacy Informs our Future

Several weeks ago, I was in the middle of a phone conversation when we heard a buzz at the outside door. Cindy answered and welcomed a person who identified himself as Craig Lathrop, a former youth member back when Jack Shoultz was St. Stephen's pastor. Craig told them that he was in town on a business trip and wanted to drop by our church to look at some old directories and take a few photos. Sure enough, Craig quickly spotted the Lathrop family name --and Mark's-- in a directory from the 1960's.

When I finished my phone call, I went out to meet Craig who was sitting in Cindy's office while perusing the old directories. Craig told me that he and his family had joined St Stephen's back in 1967. And in 1971, soon after Craig was confirmed as a 12 year-old member, the Lathrops moved out of state.

Forty-five years later, Craig found himself back in Houston, and he wanted to re-visit the church that had helped form him spiritually so long ago, and of which he had such fond memories! I showed him our sanctuary and explained to him the recent renovations that we had commissioned to improve accessibility. I toured him around our education building and told him the story of how our original education building had burned down thirty years ago. Before leaving, he took a few photos of our sanctuary to show his elderly mother, and I invited him to join us for worship that coming Sunday. Alas and alack, his flight home was scheduled to depart that Saturday.

We never know the lasting impact that we have on folks when we meet them, welcome them, and teach them, and when we serve, share, pray, and worship with them. Therefore, I encourage you to "think about such things" each time we gather for worship, prayer study, and service so that we can be the church that God wants us to be in the time we have together!

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things. (Philippians 4:8)

Yours in Christ,

Kevin

New and Improved!



Making way for the new - our sign demolition crew: Christie & Steven Fisher, Alec Eads & Bryan McDaniel!

Behold, the stars who painted the stripes:
Ken Aldredge, Bryan McDaniel & Chris Barcus!



**OUR MISSION
is to know God and
make God known!**

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>
August 7	59	134	110	\$10,703.21	\$445.00	\$702.00	\$3,631.83	—
August 14	46	135	100	\$5,292.00	\$410.00	\$120.00	\$105.00	—

From the St. Stephen's Foundation Committee



Beat the Heat
With record-breaking temperatures the norm during summer months, most Texans truly appreciate the luxury of air conditioning. Consider contributing a little extra to the church's operating budget during the summer to help cover higher electricity costs. Or be more proactive and make a tax-deductible gift to establish an A/C Repair or Emergency Needs Fund to help to ensure the sanctuary remains cool and inviting. For more information, contact Heartspring Methodist Foundation at 713-533-3780 (800-521-9617) or office@heartspringmethodist.org.

Milestones



Welcome, New Preparatory Member!

Jennings Davis Otto, son of Kevin and Ginger Otto, was baptized Sunday, July 31, by Rev. Jim Turley.



In Memory

We extend our prayers and sympathy to the following families upon the recent loss of loved ones:

- Betty Krus and her family upon the death of her husband, **Bob Krus**, on July 24. Funeral services for Bob were held on July 28 at Woodlawn Funeral Home in Houston, Texas.
- Lindsay Smith and her family upon the death of her grandmother, **Betty Hicks**, on July 27. Funeral services were held for Betty on July 30 at First Baptist Church in Ardmore, Oklahoma.
- The family of **Betty Reilly**, who passed away July 27. Funeral services for Betty were held on July 29 at St. Stephen's United Methodist Church.
- Sarah McKinley and her family upon the death of her brother, **James Paul Fulmer**, on July 29. Funeral services for James were held on August 1 at Macedonia Baptist Church in Fayette, Alabama.
- The family of **Laura Mobley**, who passed away August 1. A memorial service was held for Laura at St. Stephen's on August 15.
- Gwen Boucher and her family upon the death of her husband, **Robert Boucher**, on August 4. No public service will be held.
- The Daniel and Snook families upon the death of **Betty Daniel**, Alex Snook's great-grandmother, who passed away August 6. Funeral services for Betty were held August 13 at Heights Funeral Home in Houston.
- The family of **Iva Taliaferro**, who passed away August 8. Funeral services were held for Iva on August 16 at St. Stephen's.



Notes of Thanks

August 1, 2016

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the wonderful support I have received from many of you during my hospitalization. Your prayers, cards, notes and phone calls have surely contributed to my ongoing recovery. Thank you so much. I am now living in my own apartment and my address is:

**Manor Assisted Living, 2345 Manor Dr., Apt. #9
Bryan, Texas 77802**

Sincerely,
Florence Epperson



August 8, 2016

Many thanks to those who have offered their prayers and condolences during this difficult time following the loss of my husband, Robert. I don't know how I could make it without the wonderful friends at St. Stephen's.

Gwen Boucher



August 15, 2016

I would like to thank everyone for the cards, phone calls, and most of all, the prayers before, during and after my surgery. It has meant more to me than you will ever know and I am very grateful to have experienced so much love from St. Stephen's church family.

God bless you all!

Mary Ellen King



Evangel Deadlines

Publication Date

September 2

September 16

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

News Deadline

Noon, Monday, August 29

Noon, Monday, September 12

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Friday, August 19:

6:00 am—Men's Prayer Breakfast (Denny's @ 34th & 290)
10:30 am—Bus leaves church for VIPs Trip to Chain of Lakes Area
6:30 pm—Family Fun Night (Fellowship Hall)

Saturday, August 20:

7:00 am—Garden Angels Dirt Diggers Workday (Work on flowerbeds.)
8:00 pm—Narcotics Anonymous Support Group (Scout House)

Sunday, August 21:

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

"Promotion and Teacher Appreciation Sunday"

"Blessing of the Backpacks"

7:30 am—Sonrise (Contemporary Worship) Choir Practice (Sanctuary)
8:30 am—Contemporary Worship (Sanctuary)
9:40 am—Sunday School for Children, Youth & Adults (Education Bldg)
9:45 am—Teacher Appreciation Brunch (Fellowship Hall)
11:00 am—Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
1:00 pm—Jr. & Sr. High Youth Group Meeting (Youth Room 205)
4:00 pm—Prayer & Communion Service (Brookdale Place Heights)

Monday, August 22:

1st Day of Classes for HISD & CFISD Students

11:40 am—Staff Prayer (Sanctuary)
7:00 pm—Boy Scouts Troop 604 Meeting (Scout House)

Tuesday, August 23:

9:15 am—Line Dancing Class (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, August 24:

6:00 am—Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)
9:30 am—Senior Games (Fellowship Hall/Bring a sack lunch.)

Thursday, August 25:

6:15 pm—Handbell Choir Practice (Room 101)
7:30 pm—Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)



Family Fun Night



Join us this Friday night, August 19, at 6:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall for Back-to-School Banana Splits! We've got lots of fun planned, so bring the entire family for an evening of celebration before school starts this Monday, August 22. Everyone is welcome!



Promotion Sunday and Blessing of the Backpacks

This Sunday, August 21, is Promotion Sunday for our Children's Sunday School Department. Students who will be going into the 3rd grade this year will receive their Bibles. Parents and grandparents, if you have children and grandchildren in the 3rd grade and above who have not yet received a Bible, please contact the church office.



Students of all ages, as well as educators, are welcome to bring their backpacks, book bags and briefcases to the 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. worship services to receive a special blessing before the beginning of the new school year.



Teacher Appreciation Brunch

In honor of all teachers, especially our wonderful teachers here at St. Stephen's, this Sunday has also been designated as Teacher Appreciation Sunday. All teachers are invited to a Teacher Appreciation Brunch, hosted by our Education Ministry Team, to be held at 9:45 a.m. in the fellowship hall.

Friday, August 26:

6:00 am—Men's Prayer Breakfast (Denny's @ 34th St & Hwy 290)
11:30 am—Solitaires Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

Saturday, August 27:

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

Sunday, August 28:

Fifteenth 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 & Adults (Education Bldg)
11:00 am—Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
5:00 pm—Student Ministries Planning Potluck (Fellowship Hall)

Monday, August 29:

11:40 am—Staff Prayer (Sanctuary)
12:00 pm—Deadline to turn in articles for September 2 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, August 30:

9:15 am—Line Dancing Class (Fellowship Hall)
6:30 pm—GriefShare Grief Support Group Meeting (Room 201)
7:30 pm—Sea Scouts Ship 24 Meeting (Scout House)

Wednesday, August 31:

World Methodist Conference

6:00 am—Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)
9:30 am—Senior Games (Fellowship Hall/Bring a sack lunch.)

Thursday, September 1:

World Methodist Conference

10:00 am—Prayer Shawl Ministry (Room 112)
6:15 pm—Handbell Choir Practice (Room 101)
7:30 pm—Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)

Friday, September 2:

World Methodist Conference

6:00 am—Men's Prayer Breakfast (Denny's @ West 34th & 290)
9:30 am—Bus leaves St. Stephen's for Solitaires trip to Baytown

New GriefShare Group

The Griefshare Grief Support Group will begin a new 13-week cycle this Tuesday, August 23. The group meets weekly on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in Room 201. GriefShare is a nationally recognized program of support for persons who are grieving the death of someone close. Each session is self-contained and includes a Christian-based video teaching on grief recovery followed by small group discussion. You may begin at any time and are welcome to repeat any sessions you desire in future cycles. The nursery is available by reservation. RSVP to the church office no later than the Friday before each Tuesday session to reserve the nursery.



Summer Reading Program

Now is the time to finish those books! Our Summer Reading Program ends on Labor Day, September 5. A reception for all participants will be held on Sunday, September 25, between Sunday School and the 11:00 a.m. service.

Defensive Driving

St. Stephen's will host a Defensive Driving Course, sponsored by AARP, from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Thursday, September 29, in the fellowship hall. The fee 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 an auto insurance discount. Please RSVP to Florence Bowman at 713-682-4513.





Join us as we assemble meals for needy preschool kids in Houston! Kids' Meals is a local non-profit that delivers approximately 2,500 healthy meals to Houston's hungriest preschool-aged children each weekday. We have been struggling to find a date that maximizes attendance from our St. Stephen's volunteer family. Most schools will be back in session the fourth week of August, so the charity won't be experiencing the influx of school groups it usually gets in the summer. We will meet at 9:00 a.m. in the west side parking lot at St. Stephen's to carpool to Kids' Meals at 330 Garden Oaks Blvd. We should be done by noon, so meet us there directly if you will be late or need to leave early. Please RSVP by Monday, August 22, to Ginny McDavid at 832-922-0362 or ginnysmcdavid@yahoo.com.

Kids' Meals

Communion Offering for September



September's Communion offering is designated to UMCOR, the United Methodist Committee on Relief. UMCOR is a ministry of The United Methodist Church through the General Board of Global Ministries. It is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization dedicated to alleviating human suffering around the globe. UMCOR's goal is to assist the most vulnerable persons affected by crisis or chronic need. UMCOR's work reaches people in 80+ countries, including the United States, providing humanitarian relief when war, conflict or natural disaster disrupt life to such an extent that communities are unable to recover on their own.

UMCOR's work includes programs and projects in disaster response, relief supplies, health, sustainable agriculture, food security and more. UMCOR provides survivors not only temporary relief but long-term education, training and support. UMCOR's most important partners are the people they serve. UMCOR spends 100% of designated donations on the projects our donors specify. When UMCOR donors give their money, time and supplies, they join UMCOR as the hands and feet of Christ. —*Elizabeth Jackson*, St. Stephen's Missions Ministry Team

♪ Notes from the Minister of Music ♪



I want to thank you all for the many beautiful cards and the countless prayers that you have offered on behalf of me and my family during the passing of my sweet Granny. I have felt overwhelmed by the outpouring of love from this congregation. It is such a blessing to know that you all are lifting us up in prayer. I am grateful to God for your faithful love and your kindness.

When I think of my Granny, this is the scripture that comes to mind:

"Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who will receive good things from my Father. Inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world began. I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.'

"Then those who are righteous will reply to him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we see you as a stranger and welcome you, or naked and give you clothes to wear?' ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?"

"Then the king will reply to them, 'I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.' " (Matthew 25:34-40)

My Granny was a woman of deep and abiding faith in Jesus Christ, and her faith was manifest in her actions. She always had food for unexpected visitors. She had clothes for those in need. She offered compassion and love to all who met her. As a child, I saw her faith in Jesus in these deeds and in daily study of God's word with my Granddad. She was an incredible woman, and I am blessed to have had her as an example of faith in my life. These last few years had been difficult for her as she battled with dementia and failing health, but her spirit remained full of joy. She never lost the kindness, humility, and grace that came from her faith in Jesus. I rest assured that she is in the arms of our Savior, and though I miss her greatly now, I will see her again. I rejoice that she was my Granny. God blessed me with four grandparents, one of which is still living, that each exemplify what it means to be a Christian, and it is my prayer that the legacy that they passed to me will continue in the lives of my children and one day, my grandchildren.

Lindsay Smith

Prayer Concerns

Ed and Claytie Abrahams, John Artz, Chappie Ashburn, Ruth Austin, Anita Bishop, Doris Birdsong, Ray & Sandy Bonnin, Gwen Boucher & family upon the death of her husband Robert Boucher; Paula Brady, Chappie Collins, Gloria 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; Elizabeth Huebner, Lee Hughs, Wanzel Jessie, Sr. & family; Thelma Jones, Mary Ellen King, Betty Krus & family upon the death of her husband, Bob Krus; Lee & LaNell Kruse, Jim & Dianne Latham & family; Angus & Virginia Lewis, Carol Luce, Peter Lucht, Lavon Mahon & family, Bonnie Maple, Frances Mayberry, Mary McClanahan, Ed Mills, the family of Laura Mobley, Mary Nelle Moore, Pastor Kevin Otto, Dian Parker, Jean Parks, Margie Perron, Jim Piersall, Gloria Powell, Milton & Noni Ray, Bill & Caroline Reaves, Gladys Reeve, the family of Betty Reilly, Betty Roberts, Rogers & Jane Roberts, Kathleen Saathoff, Betty Serio, Barbara Smith, Rev. Lindsay Smith & family upon the death of her grandmother, Betty Hicks; Lura Smith, Alex Snook, upon the death of her great-grandmother Betty Daniel; Vance & Jean Sorrells, Ruth Stone, Elizabeth Sutherland, Hazel Swearingen, the family of Iva Taliaferro, Danny Thomason, Hazel Thompson, Bitsy Vilven, George Wood, David Williamson, Charles Zimmermann

In Our Prayers

In the Military

In the Hospital

Dirk Ray Jr., Allen Troth

Colonial Oaks Westchase—Anna Ruth Putnam (hospice) Memorial Hermann Greater Heights—JoAnn Spivey
Park Manor Woodlands—Virginia Head



Fine Arts Camp

We had a great first Fine Arts Camp! We had 20 students sign up for our first camp, and each night we fed the children, their families, and the volunteers. They learned about world cultures through dance, music, art, and drama. They designed their own t-shirts with tie dye, and on Thursday night, they presented to their parents and visitors the dances, songs, and drama they had learned. If you missed out on the program, you can find a video of it on our Facebook page. Thank you so much to all of our volunteers who helped in the kitchen to feed all of our participants. Your help made this camp great!

Blessing of the Backpacks and Bible Presentation

On Sunday, August 21, we are blessing backpacks at both services and presenting three Bibles to upcoming third graders. Please bring your backpacks or briefcases to church this Sunday so we can say a prayer over you at the start of school. If you have a child or grandchild that is in the 3rd grade or above who has not yet received a Bible, please let the office know.

Breakfast for Teachers

On Sunday, August 21, starting at 9:45am, we are inviting all teachers, especially Sunday school teachers, to enjoy a brunch in the Fellowship Hall. Parents of school age children are encouraged to bring a breakfast item to share. This event will replace Sunday school for children, and they will be invited to pack goody bags for teachers for their start to school. Come by and write a blessing for the local elementary schools on poster board.

Potluck and Planning

Student Ministries, all youth, children, and their parents, are encouraged to attend a planning event on Sunday, August 28, starting at 5pm. Please bring your favorite dish to the event as we look forward to the coming year and envision ways that we can invite and include more in our ministries.

Star Wars and Other Events

We had a Star Wars children's event in August that was well attended. We cooked hotdogs together, made pool noodle lightsabers, and had lots of fun together. We had a discussion on sin and redemption before we went home. The children and families also went to see the movie Home at the Studio Movie Grill in August. The youth had a pool party at Juli Graham's house that was great fun.

Mary Gossett



FINE ARTS

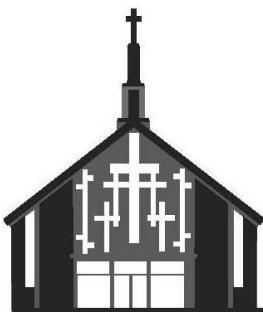


CAMP



**STAR
AND
FAITH
DAY**





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**Anita Cabrera, Lydia Soto,
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PERIODICAL
PAID
HOUSTON, TX

Sign Up for New Fall Studies

It's time to sign up for fall Bible studies! We have several options in the works:

- 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)
- 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.
- A possible Sunday morning Disciple Fast Track (24-week) or Short Course (8-week) Study introducing the Old and New Testaments
- Dan Barcus will lead the study, Pilgrimage into the Last Third of Life - 7 Gateways to Spiritual Growth, on Wednesday afternoons (tentatively) starting mid-October.

Stop by the church library on Sunday mornings for more information and to sign up.



Beautiful Already

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.

Empowered to Connect Parent Training

Empowered to Connect Parent Training is an interactive learning experience designed specifically for adoptive and foster parents. ETC 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.



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.