

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World



The Evangel



ST. STEPHEN'S
united methodist church



We are all, without exception, beloved children of God

A Message From the Senior Pastor

Our Summer is in full swing here at St. Stephen's, and it is so wonderful to have a busy summer again! Thank you to everyone who has been so understanding of our continuously changing world; the old saying feels true, sometimes change is the only constant.

A few weeks ago we sang "Here I am Lord," one of my favorite worship songs. I'm always convicted by the line "Where you go Lord, I will follow/ I will keep your people in my heart." How often do we try and say to God, "where I go Lord, won't you take me there?" While God never abandons us, things are so much easier when we go where God is leading.

Restarting our ministries as we come ever closer to the end of the pandemic is an incredible opportunity to see where our Lord is leading us. If you're interested in helping us shape our future, I want to talk to you! I'm hoping to meet with folks all Summer long to help dream about and plan our fall ministries and next steps as a church. If you want to be a part of this conversation, let's find some time to get together. I've got a cool scheduler you can find here: <https://calendly.com/revnaye> or call the church office during the week and we'll get a time set up.

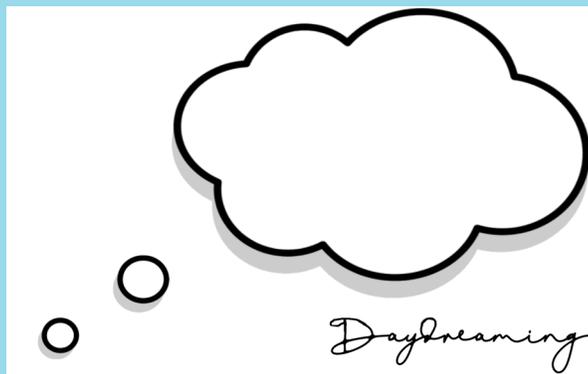
We are still collecting snacks and supplies for our U.M. ARMY trip to Bryan, we leave July 11 and as of this writing have 15 youth signed up to go with us! We're still in need of more supplies to help ensure we can afford to do as many repairs and community projects as possible. We need individually wrapped snacks, picnic silverware packs, and purple Gatorade. Feel free to drop stuff by the office anytime until we head out!

This month, we're starting the worship series that will carry us through the rest of the summer, called "Daydreamers." You're invited to join us in dreaming about what the church — and the world — might look like someday! As part of this series, I invite you to...daydream! Spend some time letting your mind wander. Here are some prompts to get you started on your daydreaming that tie into our weekly themes:

- What is a hope you've had that's always felt too big?
- What would real, meaningful peace look like?
- What is Biblical justice?
- What's something about myself I know is true?
- How can the church be a more loving place?
- What would it feel like to experience compassion more often?

Join us in being daydreamers! If you have any cool daydreams related to these questions or others, I would love to hear them!

**Paz,
Nathan**



Cover Photo: Summer Camp at Lakeview
Read about it on page 3.

Please submit dates, pictures and information for the August Evangel by July 26 to info@stsumc.org.

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The church does not belong to us

Youth and Family News

UMYF—Due to UM ARMY and VBS taking place in July (as well as Independence Day being the first Sunday) our UMYF group will meet just once this month on July 25th, from 5-7. We will begin to meet twice a month again starting in August.



VBS Volunteers—It's not too late to volunteer to help out at VBS. Whether you are free for the whole week (July 19-23) or just a single day, we have a role for you. We have a particular need for Shepherds and kitchen help. Shepherds are our chaperones who lead (in pairs) their group of children safely around the church campus. Our kitchen will only be providing pre-packaged snacks this year for volunteers only but is still a little shorthanded for this task. If you can sign up, please call the church office or visit www.stshtx.org/events Want to help but not as a shepherd or a kitchen assistant? Sign up anyway! Just because our other areas are better staffed does not mean we can't use a few more friendly faces.

UM ARMY—It's still not too late to sign your youth up to join our UM ARMY camp in Bryan. The camp will run from July 11-17 and costs \$275 (scholarships are available). What do we do at UM ARMY? We respond to the needs of our neighbors and provide an opportunity for youth and adults to experience Christian growth through service to others. Participants combine their strengths and resources to meet home repair and maintenance needs for low-income, elderly and disabled homeowners who are physically or financially unable to make needed repairs themselves. To register a child, they must have completed the 7th grade. College-aged and adult volunteers can also register. Go to <https://www.umarmy.net/Registration/Indv/3672/> to sign up today.

Lakeview Recap—Our St. Stephen's group had an incredible time being a part of the first summer camp session at Lakeview for 22 months! They took part in worship, devotionals, and small groups and in their spare time kayaked, did archery, and adhered to the 5 Ds of dodgeball in the all-new blacklight dodgeball. All our students are worthy of commendation and did themselves proud. A special mention however to Olivia Lowe who was named the Camper of the Week (COW - you can moo at her. It's a whole thing.) for the entire middle school group! Our campers were: Blaine Kime, Elizabeth Palomo, Flynn Peterson, Ian Tackett, Finley Tackett, Julianna Cardner, Paige Cardner, Olivia Lowe, Violet Lowe, and big kid Steven Fisher.



July 2021 Highlights

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Worship Times Sunday School— Sunday, 9:40 am, Education Bldg Traditional Service— Sunday, 11:00 am, Sanctuary Virtual Service—11:00 am, on Facebook and YouTube			For a more detailed calendar or to learn more about our church visit stshtx.org or call the church office. <u>For a list of recurring events, please see the next page.</u> *Register for events at stshtx.org FH=Fellowship Hall Sanc=Sanctuary			
 			1 10am—Prayer Shawl Ministry-112 		2	3
4 Communion Sunday Independence Day 9:30am—Sunday School 11am—Worship	5 Church Office Closed in Observance of Independence Day 	6 9:30am—Line Dancing Class-FH 	7 9am—McKinley Visitation 10am—Service (please see pg 7) 9:30am, 12pm—Senior Games-Café & 112	8 10am—Prayer Shawl Ministry-112 5-8pm—Ebelt Visitation (pg 7) 	9 10am—Ebelt Funeral Mass (Please see pg 7 for location & more information.)	10 11:30 am—Red Hats Luncheon-Tony's Mexican Restaurant 
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
UM ARMY- Bryan, Texas						
9:30am—Sunday School 11am—Worship		9:30am—Line Dancing Class-FH 	9:30am—Senior Games-Café 12pm—Senior Games-112	10am—Prayer Shawl Ministry 		Our Youth return from UM ARMY. 
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Vacation Bible School						
9:30am—Sunday School 11am—Worship 5pm—Great Heights Bible Study-938 Wakefield Dr	8:30am-12pm—VBS	8:30am-12pm—VBS	8:30am-12pm—VBS	8:30am-12pm—VBS	8:30am-12pm—VBS	
25 9:30am—Sunday School 11am—Worship 5pm—UMYF-205 	26 August Newsletter Deadline 	27 9:30am—Line Dancing Class-FH 	28 9:30am—Senior Games-Café 12pm—Senior Games-112 	29 10am—Prayer Shawl Ministry-112 	30	31



God is in our neighborhood and not just in our building

Get Involved



Line Dancing is Back at St. Stephens - Tuesday mornings from 9:30-10:30. Step out of the summer heat and step inside the fellowship hall for a fun way to stay fit. Please wear comfortable shoes (preferably not tennis shoes) and clothing. All are welcome! For more information, please contact Shirley Hammonds at 713-682-7804 or shirlhammonds@aol.com.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry - meets Thursdays at 10am in Room 112. The group knits and crochets shawls, blankets and other items that receive a special blessing before being given to the sick and grieving. All are welcome to come and share fellowship as we create these gifts of love for others. If you would like more information about this ministry, please contact Julia Edwards at edwardsjulia@att.net or 713-254-2820.



Senior Games Return - Wednesdays at 9:30am in the café, and at 12pm in Room 112. Seniors are invited to come for fellowship and domino games. You are welcome to bring snacks or a sack lunch.

Red Hats Luncheon - The Rambling Reds of St. Stephen's welcome women of all ages to join us for our monthly luncheon, held on the first or second Saturday. We seek to support and encourage women in their pursuit of fun, friendship, freedom, fulfillment and fitness. Our next luncheon will be Saturday, July 10, at 11:30 am at Tony's Mexican Restaurant, 2222 Ella Blvd. RSVP to Gwen Boucher at giboucher@comcast.net or 713-858-3717.

New Directory - Our directory project is well underway and if you've not updated your information and let us know you want to be included in our new directory, now is the time to do so! You can update your profile online at stsumc.churchcenter.com/directory or contact a member of our directory team if you need assistance:

- Colleen Green: 281-448-4269
- Barbara Lowe: 314-477-3194

Accounting Team Volunteer Needed - The church accounting team is still in need of a volunteer with Quickbooks experience to join into our work. If you have experience with Quickbooks and are interested in serving the church in this way, please email operations@stshtx.org.

What's on at St. Stephen's

WEEKLY EVENTS

- Sunday School**—Sun., 9:30am, Educational Bldg
- Worship**—Sun., 11am, Sanctuary & Online
- Line Dancing**—Tues., 9:30am, FH
- Senior Games**—Wed., 9:30am & 12 m, Café & 112
- Prayer Shawl Ministry**—Thurs., 10am

BI-MONTHLY EVENTS

UMYF (United Methodist Youth Fellowship) —Twice a month on Sunday, 5pm, 205
Next meeting: July 25

MONTHLY EVENTS

Red Hats Luncheon—1st or 2nd Saturday, 11:30 am, FH or a restaurant.
Next mtg: July 10 at Tony's Mexican Restaurant, 2222 Ella Blvd
RSVP to Gwen Boucher: 713-858-3717 or gjboucher@comcast.net

OTHER RECURRING EVENTS

Fun4Seniors Luncheon—on a Monday of every other month (varies), 11:30, FH (RSVP to Fun4Seniors at 713-274-4050.)
Next luncheon: September 20

FH=Fellowship Hall

For more information, visit stshtx.org.



**Communion Offering for July:
Kairos Outside**

**Sunday, August 1
8am-12:30pm
Fellowship Hall**



Register online at <https://bit.ly/3xhRAS4>
or call Mary Ellen at 713-686-8241.



The church office will be closed Monday, July 5th, in observance of Independence Day.



Worship connects us with God and with each other

Music Is a Gift from God

I don't know about you, but sometimes I really struggle with depression. When things look bad all around us it is really hard to hang onto the joy that God gives us. And there is always another hard thing coming. It's just part of this broken world that we live in. I have always been a music lover, and now as I look back, I can see how God has used music at times in my life to remind me that God is with me, and God loves me. One song that God has used in my life in the last year is called "Smile". It is by Sidewalk Prophets, a contemporary Christian Group. The lyrics of Smile, always lift me up and remind me that God gives us joy and no one can take it from us.

"Smile" by Sidewalk Prophets

Lost your way, lost your cool. Then you straight up lost your mind.
Tried so hard to stay ahead, but you keep falling behind.
Life is gonna pull you down, make it hard to see.
But a little change in your point of view could be just what you need.

There's always a reason to always choose joy.
There's something deeper that the world can't destroy.
Smile, when you think you can't smile, get up and dance.
Smile, there's a bigger plan. The storm only lasts for a while.
So smile

Happiness is wonderful, but it doesn't stick around.
Walkin' on sunshine then here come the clouds.
You can laugh or you can cry when it all falls apart.
But I believe the more you laugh, the more you heal the heart.

There's always a reason to always choose joy.
There's something deeper that the world can't destroy.
Smile, when you think you can't smile, get up and dance.
Smile, there's a bigger plan. The storm only lasts for a while.
So smile

Smile, when you think you can't
Smile, just clap your hands
Smile, there's a bigger plan
You've got a reason to smile

Even though things are rough, joy is still there and can be felt to override the negative things around us. There is a reason that Paul said that with Christ comes the peace that surpasses all understanding! In Christ we can find joy and peace in the midst of the swirling crazy world around us. "You've got a reason to smile!" Choose joy!

Blessings and smiles!
Pastor Heather

We Want Your Help With Worship!

We are looking for more people to be involved in helping to lead our worship services. Our new greeter team, our ushers, and our music and worship teams are all looking for new people! Follow the link below to fill out the form online, or call the church office if you need assistance and get more involved as a worship volunteer: <https://stsumc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/253646>

Great Heights Bible Study is Back!

Join Nathan Sunday, July 18, at 5 pm at Great Heights Brewing Company, 938 Wakefield, for Bible study and conversation about the current sermon in a casual setting. If you have questions, please contact Nathan at nathan@stshtx.org.

BIBLE STUDY
AND SERMON CONVERSATION

GREAT HEIGHTS
938 WAKEFIELD DR.





The stories of scripture transform our own stories

Welcome, New Member!

Julia Edwards joined St. Stephen's by transfer of membership from Chapelwood United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas, on Sunday, June 13. Many of you know Julia, as she is the coordinator of the Poston Prayer Shawl Ministry at St. Stephen's, and has been involved in several other ministries and activities here. Her parents, Richmond and Lyndel Poston, were members of St. Stephen's for many years. Here is Julia's contact information so that you can welcome her personally:

5602 Acorn Street, Houston, TX 77092
713-254-2820 • edwardsjulia@att.net



Address Update

Dot Lockhart has moved to Eagle's Trace Senior Living. If you would like to send her a card or note, here is her address:

14703 Eagle Vista Dr. #1105
Houston, Texas 77077

In Memory

We extend our prayers and sympathy to Donna Ebelt-Wilson and her family at the passing of her father, Walter A. Ebelt, Sr. on June 22, 2021. A visitation will be held from 5:00p.m.-8:00 p.m., Thursday, July 8th, at Earthman Resthaven Funeral Home, 13102 North Freeway, Houston, Texas. A funeral mass will be held at 10:00 a.m., Friday, July 9th, at St. Edward's Catholic Church, 2601 Spring Stuebner Rd., Spring, Texas 77389, followed by a luncheon at 11:00 a.m. at St. Edward's. A graveside service will be held at 1:30 p.m. at Earthman Resthaven.

Our prayers and sympathy are also extended to Sara McKinley and her family upon the passing of her husband, **Henry McKinley**, on June 27, 2021. Henry and Sara joined St. Stephen's in 1959 and were active members until Henry's health made a move to assisted living necessary a few years ago. Visitation with Henry's family will be held Wednesday, July 7, at 9 am, followed by his funeral service at 10am at Klein Funeral Home-Champions, 16131 Champion Forest Dr., Klein, Texas. All who are able are welcome to meet for lunch at 11 am at Valley Ranch Grill and Barbeque, 22548 Texas 249 Access Rd (Spring-Cypress and 249), Houston, Texas. A private burial, with Henry's family only in attendance, will take place following lunch at Houston National Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family is asking that donations be made to Shriners Children's Hospital. Please contact Klein Funeral Home at 281-320-2674 for details on how to donate.

Prayer Concerns

Douglas Albert, Dwight Allen, Pat Anderson & family, Sherri Anderson, John & Dorothy Artz, Kathy Ballard, Anita Bishop and daughters, Jeanie & Janya; Hilda Bluett (Steven Fisher's grandmother), Rhonda Boehm, Florence Bowman, Mary Brennan, Rev. Suzi Byrd, Arlene Caler, Mark Cass, Delight Clary, Charles Cobler, Chappie & Gloria Collins, Martha Collum, Patricia Creed, Janet Cummins, Charles Davenport, David Derr (home hospice), Ed & Pam Dickson, Andrew Drapkin, Angela Earl, Allen Ebelt, Kayla Ebelt, Maurice Ebelt, Donna Ebelt-Wilson & family, Megan Eyre, Robert Faltisek, Blaine Fernandez, Christie Fisher, Rod Fisher, Michael Guadagnoli, Kathy Gunter, Charm Hensley and son, Daniel; Lola Hensley, Elizabeth Hickerson, Harlis & Curtis Hicks, Dorrie Jackson, Dot Lockhart, Penny Loy, Barbara Luikens, Frances Mayberry, Ann McIntire, Sarah McKinley & family, Bill Niederhofer, Mamie Niederhofer, Dian Parker, the Patton family, Brenda Paulk, Bob Pickering, Milton & Noni Ray, Gladys Reeve, Rande Richnow, Rogers & Jane Roberts, Terry & Sandra Russell, Flora Sandt, Margie Shirley, Sherleen Skates, Barbara Smith, Meranda Soto, Pam Steward & family, Tim & Lee Strouse, Carol Stone, Hazel Swearingen, Preston Taylor, Paul Wieting, Dale Wilson, Todd Wilson, the Yarbough family, Carol Yip Choy, Bill Young, Judy Zanelli

Social Justice Prayers: The sin of racism and its effects on all of us; Members of the CITGO6: Tomeu Vadell, Gustavo Cardenas, Jorge Toledo, Alirio Zambrano, Jose Luis Zambrano, Jose Angel Pereira; and all who are imprisoned or persecuted unjustly

In the Military Allen Clutter



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Fun Fact

St. Stephen's is taking 6 adults, 13 youth and 1 college student to U.M. ARMY in Bryan this month!

Our Vision

- We are all, without exception, beloved children of God
- The church does not belong to us
- God is in our neighborhood and not just in our building
- Worship connects us with God and with each other
- The stories of scripture transform our own stories

Readings

If you'd like to read along with the Scriptures we'll use in worship during the month of July, follow this reading guide!

- 7/4: Mark 6:1-13**
- 7/11: Ephesians 1:3-14**
- 7/18: Ephesians 2:11-22**
- 7/25: Ephesians 3:14-21**