



ST. STEPHEN'S SPIRIT

The Newsletter of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Wilkinsburg PA

DECEMBER 2020

This month of December is the darkest month of the year. It's also the time when we inaugurate a new liturgical year with the Holy Season of Advent. A theme of our Scripture lessons for the Advent and Christmas Seasons is that Jesus Christ is the Light of the World. All that we are and our destiny in Eternal Life is given life by God with our new covenant in Christ. Advent reminds us that we have been made children of the light by our baptism into Jesus Christ. We face the darkness of the winter solstice in December by lighting another candle of the Advent wreath, defying any discouraging signs that the darkness could ever prevail. We are called to show others our love for one another as a way Jesus teaches to lead others to the Light of Christ. Last Sunday, on the feast of Christ the King, Jesus reminds us that we are called to be concerned about the needs of others and reach out with generosity to help them in times of hunger and other needs, so that they encounter our love for them-our response to God's love for us.

What are you hoping for in this new liturgical year? What have you recognized as unhelpful in the world around us and in your community of family, neighbors, co-workers or within the Saint Stephen parish family that you want to change by bearing the light of Christ? Let our intention to be bearers of the light of Christ be fulfilled.

This past week we installed and dedicated our "Saint Stephen's Blessing Box" to make our intention to help our neighbors just a little clearer for them and a little easier for us. I hope you notice it in its new home on Pitt Street near our Parish House entrance. I hope you enjoy the convenience of being able to make an offering by placing it in the box, or, if it's full enough, to leave it at the back in church so we can have it ready to stock later in the week.

Blessings, Father Chuck



"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." — Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness." — Desmond Tutu

Mission of the Month: Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank

1 in 3 families struggle to afford diapers for their children, and most government programs do not specifically fund or provide diapers. The Diaper Bank distributes diapers to families of low income or poverty level.

If you'd like to donate, you can write a check to "Western PA Diaper Bank" and place it in the offering plate on Sundays.



THANK YOU TO THE MADERA FAMILY FOR DESIGNING AND BUILDING THIS BEAUTIFUL BLESSING BOX FOR ST. STEPHEN'S AND THE WILKINSBURG COMMUNITY. IT IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF MARTY AND CAROL MADERA. FEEL FREE TO ADD FOOD ITEMS TO SHARE WITH THE COMMUNITY.

FOOD OF THE MONTH

DECEMBER

Did you know that 25% of Wilkinsburg residents are food insecure? Let's help our neighbors by contributing to the Wilkinsburg Community Ministry holiday meal bags.

Boxes of stuffing mix

Cans of green beans

Cans of corn

Cans of cranberry sauce

Cans of sweet potatoes

Boxes of corn bread mix

Boxes of dessert mix

Giant Eagle gift cards



Please put donations in the boxes in the back of the church. Thank you!!

Lenten Calendar

There is a Lenten Calendar on purple paper in the back of the church. Feel free to take it to use as a Lenten discipline.

Get the latest news from the Episcopal news service at; episcopalnewsservice.org

Please remember to bring your pledge up to date if possible



DECEMBER

Birthdays: Dec. 4 Nancy Tragard, Dec. 9 Joanne Rau, Dec. 16 RayOnna Thompson, Dec. 25 Chris Sovich

How do we as Episcopalians live out our faith as Christians? Join our Zoom meeting!

Thursday Discipleship 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Contact Father Chuck or Melanie Sprenkel with questions

TAX CREDIT

Many of you choose to use your contributions to St. Stephen's as a tax credit when doing your Federal Income Tax. This is a reminder: if you wish contributions to be included on your 2020 statement, then we must receive them no later than December 30 so they can be deposited by December 31. Payments deposited in January 2021 will show up on your contribution statements for 2021 as non-pledged contributions. So please plan ahead.

PS: If you have not returned your 2021 "Estimate of Giving" card and plan to do so, it would be most helpful if we received it before December 4 so we can complete the 2021 budget.

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

December 25 Christmas. December 31 New Year's Eve

Pittsburgh Snow Angels

Do you need help shoveling snow in the winter or can you help an elderly or disabled person by shoveling their walk this winter? Call Snow Angels at 412-255-0846 or visit pittsburghpa.gov/snowangels



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PURCHASE A CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA AS A DEDICATION TO A LOVED ONE, PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL THE OFFICE, OR USE THE ORDER FORMS IN THE BACK OF THE CHURCH.

A SMALL POINSETTIA COSTS \$7.95, MEDIUM IS \$17.50, AND LARGE IS \$28.50. THIS YEAR WE WILL ONLY BE PURCHASING RED POINSETTIAS.

Contact Us

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Sunday Worship 8AM & 10:30AM
Office Hours: Mon - Thurs 9:00-1:00
600 Pitt Street
Wilkinsburg, PA 15221
412.243.6100 (phone)
412.243.6105 (fax)
ststephenswilk@verizon.net (email)

www.ststephenswilkinsburg.org

Parish Staff

Rev. Chuck Esposito Priest in charge
Soon Choi, Dir of Music Ministry
Melanie Sprengel, Parish Ministry Coordinator
Gerry Dalton, Financial Admin
Tim Brucker, Sexton
Gary Glasser, Archivist & Historian

Thanks to Cathy Wilkie for creating the 2020-21 prayer cycle books. Please join us in praying for the members and committees of St. Stephens. You can pick up a copy of the 2020-2021 book at the main door and chapel door.

