



# ST. STEPHEN'S SPIRIT

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

FEBRUARY 2023

[The Episcopal Church](#) has an easy to find summary of what we believe online. This is what we have published. I celebrate every word of this proclaimed public statement of our faith and who Episcopalian Christians all say we are.

**We Episcopalians believe in a loving, liberating, and life-giving God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As constituent members of the Anglican Communion in the United States, we are descendants of and partners with the Church of England and the Scottish Episcopal Church, and are part of the third largest group of Christians in the world. We believe in following the teachings of Jesus Christ, whose life, death, and resurrection saved the world. We have a legacy of inclusion, aspiring to tell and exemplify God's love for every human being; women and men serve as bishops, priests, and deacons in our church. Laypeople and clergy cooperate as leaders at all levels of our church. Leadership is a gift from God, and can be expressed by all people in our church, regardless of sexual identity or orientation.**

**We believe that God loves you - no exceptions.**

As we celebrate Black History month in the United States I think it's important to include our long tradition of welcoming congregants and ministers of every race. It's good that we remember that people of the span of outward appearance includes everyone. We are reminded that God made us who we are. Our sexual orientation, how we appear with our skin, hair or eye or the variety of our born abilities or disabilities are how God made us in this life at this moment of God's providence in history. This also includes the reality that we as a church family are called to welcome, help, embrace and encourage people to come to our country or elsewhere if their homeland is not safe for them and their family. We recognize that citizenship is another aspect of the diversity in our world and that everywhere nations have native born and naturalized citizens as well as migrants and refugees. As disciples of Jesus Christ in the Episcopal Church we celebrate the diversity in the world and in each other, made in the image and likeness of God who is the Holy Trinity. This divine revelation, beginning with the prophets and then fully in God the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ draws us to respond in a tangible way. We welcome with joy all people, regardless of age, race, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or special need. We celebrate that God has made us who we are. So as our life unfolds in this moment in God's plan, we as Episcopal Christians celebrate how each of us sees ourselves and who we become together. God calls us to strive to be a harmonious, kind, loving caring and welcoming family of faith embracing the uniqueness and diversity we reflect in ourselves, made in the image and likeness of God under one tabernacle, one tent, one roof, one Church. We know that diversity is a fact and that inclusion is a choice. I pray we make the choices necessary so that all feel included and loved equally.

-Father Chuck+

## Prayer for February

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

- Book of Common Prayer



## BIRTHDAYS

February 12 - Gregory Sprenkel

February 20 - Michael Hogan

February 28 - Father Chuck

**MORNING PRAYER WILL BE  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 1 AT 10:30 AM.**

## BISHOP'S VISIT

Please join us in welcoming Bishop Ketlen Solak to St. Stephen's on **February 26**. We will have a special coffee hour after the 10:30 a.m. service so you can greet her.

**WANT TO MAKE  
PEOPLE HAPPY?  
SIGN UP FOR  
COFFEE HOUR!  
FEBRUARY IS OPEN!**

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh provides several opportunities to get involved with the Beloved Community Initiative. On the first Wednesday of every month, you can join a zoom Bible Study; on the third Wednesday of the month you can participate in a zoom prayer and share. See the links below if you are interested in learning more.

**Reading the Bible through the Beloved Community Lens, 1st Wednesdays**

[Reading the Bible Through the Beloved Community Lens – Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh \(episcopalpgh.org\)](https://www.episcopalpgh.org/reading-the-bible-through-the-beloved-community-lens-1st-wednesdays)

**Prayer and Share, Third Wednesdays**

[Prayer & Share with the Beloved Community – Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh \(episcopalpgh.org\)](https://www.episcopalpgh.org/prayer-and-share-third-wednesdays)

## FOOD OF THE MONTH

**HOT CEREAL AND**

**BOXED DINNERS**



Weekly contribution envelopes for 2023 are now available. Those who don't pledge may request envelopes for their use. Please see Gerry Dalton. An annual giving statement can be received by using these envelopes for your contribution.

## Mission of the Month

### JEREMIAH'S PLACE

“Since our opening in 2014, Jeremiah's Place remains the only crisis nursery in our community providing emergency childcare for families in need throughout Pittsburgh and surrounding areas.

All services provided by Jeremiah's Place are available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, *and most importantly*, judgement free.

At Jeremiah's Place our vision is to provide families with support in caring for their young children when they need it most, we hope to create a community that is a safe and nurturing place for all children to thrive.

We offer emergency childcare for children ages 0 to 6. Children can stay with us for a few hours or a few days based on the needs of each individual family.”

You can write a check to Jeremiah's Place and place in the offering plate or

check out Jeremiah's Place website at

[Welcome! - Jeremiah's Place \(jeremiahsplace.org\)](http://jeremiahsplace.org)

**SACRED GROUND** is a film based dialogue about faith and race consisting of eight week sessions that meet once a week. There are sessions at Calvary and other churches that are held at different times and during different months. If you'd like to attend one, please contact the office or find it on the diocesan website. [Episcopalpgh.org](http://Episcopalpgh.org)

**Absalom Jones Celebration - Saturday, February 11,  
10:30 a.m., at Trinity Cathedral**

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH FOOD FOR  
THOUGHT**

“DARKNESS CANNOT DRIVE OUT DARKNESS:  
ONLY LIGHT CAN DO THAT. HATE CANNOT  
DRIVE OUT HATE: ONLY LOVE CAN DO THAT.”

-MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

“I HAVE DECIDED TO STICK WITH LOVE. HATE IS  
TOO GREAT A BURDEN TO BEAR.”

-MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

“WE ARE ALL ONE--AND IF WE DON'T KNOW IT,  
WE WILL LEARN IT THE HARD WAY.”

-BAYARD RUSTIN

“THE LOVE OF FAMILY, THE LOVE OF ONE PER-  
SON CAN HEAL. IT HEALS THE SCARS LEFT BY  
A LARGER SOCIETY.”

-MAYA ANGELOU



**SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE  
DINNER!**

**FEBRUARY 21, 2023**

**5-7 p.m. in the Parish Hall**

There will be Mardi Gras dec-  
orations and feasting upon  
pancakes, sausages, desserts!!!!

Please bring last year's palms  
and palm crosses so we can  
burn them for the Ash  
Wednesday Service which will  
be held on Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.

Sunday Worship 8AM & 10:30AM

Contact Us

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Parish Staff  
Rev. Chuck Esposito, Priest  
Soon Choi, Dir. of Music Ministry  
Melanie Sprenkel, Parish Ministry  
Coordinator  
Gerry Dalton, Financial Admin.  
Elise Morris, Archivist & Historian

**THERE'S A PRAYER  
CYCLE BOOKLET IN  
THE SANCTUARY!  
GRAB YOUR BLUE  
BOOKLET AND START  
PRAYING!**

