



ST. STEPHEN'S SPIRIT

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

AUGUST 2025

St. Stephen's is loaded with unexplored treasures. Each of you is a treasure, and we've got to get to know each other better! At coffee hour this past Sunday, [Jotham Parsons](#) graciously allowed me to pummel him with questions about his life. I'll fill you in on what I learned, and you can continue to unearth more the next time you see him at coffee hour.

His genetic roots are global: Italy, England, Brazil, and Nova Scotia. His mother grew up in Brazil, the daughter of a Brazilian socialite and an English father who was a pilot who flew the Pan Am Clipper between NYC and Brazil. Jotham was born in England and was given the name Jotham in honor of his Puritan ancestors. His family immigrated to the United States when he was 9 months old (coincidentally, he and Judy Wootten immigrated to the U.S. in the same year), and he grew up in the Morningside Heights neighborhood of New York City.

When it was time for college, Jotham left the big city for Cambridge, Massachusetts where he studied history at Harvard; then it was on to Johns Hopkins to get his doctorate. His dissertation covered religion and politics in early modern France. I'm sure he could teach us a thing or two! And he's written two books: "Church and Magistrate in Early Modern France" and "Making Money in Sixteenth Century France." Now he uses all those brains and knowledge to teach Duquesne students. He's been at Duquesne for 22 years, and he enjoys the students who he says are good people.

Jotham lives in a 125 year old house in Edgewood and is taking delight (most of the time) in restoring it. He lives there with his wife Denise who is a crossing guard near Edgewood Elementary (look for her if you're passing by), and his children are Nathaniel who is a music major at Duquesne. He plays the double bass, and I'm guessing he tries to avoid taking his father's classes! Jotham's daughter Charlie is working in a chemistry lab in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She went to Bryn Mawr and graduated 101 years after her great grandmother graduated from the same school!

Jotham was baptized in the Episcopal Church but grew up Catholic. Since then he has wended his way through the Lutheran and now Episcopal churches. Sounds like he finds God everywhere.

I'm sure there is much more to learn about Jotham, so the next time you see him at coffee hour....

-Melanie Sprengel



Morning Prayer happens the first Wednesday of each month at 10:30 a.m. See you on August 6!

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

August 4-Tim Degrosky

August 11-Elise Morris

August 21-Kathy Yeo

ANNIVERSARIES

August 13-Don and Mary Block



NO AUGUST VESTRY MEETING!

Vestry will meet again on September 8.

From Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe:

"We are now being faced with a series of choices between the demands of the federal government and the teachings of Jesus, and that is no choice at all."

Prayer for August

To our Lord, I offer this prayer. This body and soul are your property and you are our mother and father; we are your children. There are many joys in your grace-nobody knows your limits.

-Prayer from India

FOOD OF THE MONTH

Pancakes and Syrup



SUNDAY ATTENDANCE IS USUALLY LOWER IN THE SUMMER SO PLEDGES COME IN MORE SLOWLY. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT WE STILL HAVE TO PAY THE BILLS! YOU CAN MAIL YOUR PLEDGE TO THE OFFICE.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 600 Pitt Street, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

OR YOU CAN PAY THROUGH OUR DONOR BOX LINK

<https://donorbox.org/sssec-wilkinsburg>

THANK YOU!

Bishop Sean Rowe delineates some ways that we in The Episcopal Church can respond to the crisis in **Gaza**:

As Christians committed to peace and reconciliation, we can stand with our siblings in Christ in the Holy Land as they continue their ministry of presence and resilience in the midst of inhumane conditions. We join Archbishop Hosam in his call for the Israeli military to end the bombing of hospitals and the siege of Gaza; for the restoration of humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza under United Nations supervision; and for Israel and Hamas to release all unjustly detained people and hostages.

Conditions in the West Bank are also deteriorating, and we join the Council of Patriarchs and Heads of Churches of Jerusalem in expressing grief and outrage at the recent attack on Taybeh, the last all-Christian village in the West Bank. Extremist Israeli settlers destroyed crops and olive groves, damaged historic buildings and water systems, and attempted to burn its ancient Byzantine cemetery and fifth-century Church of St. George.

Archbishop Hosam and the Diocese of Jerusalem are committed not only to providing Christian hope in the midst of the current hopelessness, but also to creating conditions that will bring about a lasting peace between the Israeli and Palestinian people. Because U.S. policy plays an outsized role in this conflict, we Episcopalians in the United States have a particular responsibility to support this work by advocating to our government to support a permanent ceasefire and a solution that provides a just and enduring peace. Most of all, we must decry in the strongest possible terms any U.S. or Israeli proposal for ethnic cleansing or the removal of Palestinians from Gaza or the West Bank. For steps we might take, see the link below:

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/publicaffairs/letter-from-presiding-bishop-sean-rowe-on-crisis-in-gaza/>

Would you like to know what is happening in the other Episcopal Churches in the diocese? Check out the link below to sign up!

<https://www.episcopalpgh.org/resources/grace-happens/>

**LOOK AT THESE BEAUTIFUL
JULY BABIES!!**



**Are you an outdoorsy person?
Check out the HOLY HIKES!**

<https://www.episcopalpgh.org/holy-hikes-southwest-pennsylvania-2025-schedule/>

Kathy Mulligan is attending the Saturday, August 16 Nature Hike at the Johnstown Flood National Memorial. Let Kathy know if you want to attend it with her!
krmulligan718@gmail.com

Saturday, August 16, 2025 - 10:00 am (9 if the weather is extremely hot)
Johnstown Flood National Memorial

WE ARE THANKFUL TO GARY MARZOLF AND DAVE SWATZLER FOR SHOPPING FOR AND TENDING TO THE BLESSING BOX! AND FOR THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN OF PITTSBURGH WHO GAVE US THE \$3000 GRANT TO PURCHASE FOOD STUFFS FOR IT!

**KICK OFF SUNDAY
IS
SEPTEMBER 7!**

MISSION OF THE MONTH

GWEN'S GIRLS

Gwen's Girls offers a safe space where girls and young women in Allegheny County can form relationships, build self-esteem, and develop resilience.

At Gwen's Girls, we recognize, honor, and nurture the inner strength of our girls and their families. This facilitates their physical, emotional, and spiritual development, fosters strong family units and community bonds, and ultimately builds stable and productive lives.

Our services are driven by the needs of our girls and families, addressing societal barriers of race, class, and gender. We celebrate the uniqueness of the female spirit while advocating for positive changes in girls, families, and communities. Embracing diversity of culture, perspective, and experience enriches and vitalizes our approach.

Through our educational opportunities and enrichment experiences, we aim to foster economic self-sufficiency, improve quality of life, and enhance overall well-being.

Please check out our website and give!

<https://gwensgirls.org/who-we-are/why-girls/>

100% of Gwen's Girls graduated to the next grade.

100% of Gwen's Girls did not become re-involved with the juvenile justice system.

Sunday Worship 8AM & 10:30AM

Contact Us

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Soon Choi, Dir. of Music Ministry
Melanie Sprenkel, Parish Ministry Coordinator
Gerry Dalton, Financial Admin.
Elise Morris, Archivist & Historian
Greg Gent, Caretaker

