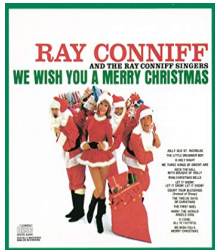




ST. STEPHEN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

2750 East Cardinal Drive
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635
(520) 458-4432

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Newsletter December 2018



*To the Community
of St. Stephen's from
The Reverend
Allison Cornell*



Dear Friends,

I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and spent some time thinking about all the blessings we have had in our last year and giving thanks to God for those good things. I know that I will continue that remembering and thanking as we move into the season of Advent.

When I was a child, my parent's favorite Christmas Album was The Ray Conniff Singers 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas.' Starting the first weekend of December, Mom would put this along with several other Christmas Albums on the stereo turntable and play those albums over and over again throughout the Advent and Christmas weeks. Often, I would just sit and look at the Christmas tree and listen to those songs. The one that I particularly loved was "Counting our Blessings." The lyrics repeat the refrain, "And when we're worried and we can't sleep, we'll count our blessings instead of sheep, and we'll fall asleep counting our blessings." This song has deep connections for me with family and faith as I think about my family and how we hold as precious the time we have to be together and that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus experienced that same family love and time together. May you pause this Advent and Christmas to count your blessings and hold in your heart your loved ones as Mary pondered in her heart her baby boy and the start of her family. Peace on Earth, Good Will to All,
Rev. Allison+

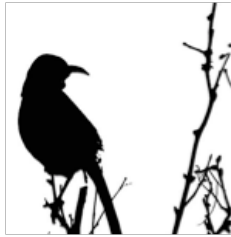
Benediction for Advent and Christmas

from Rev. Allison

**May you be filled with the wonder of
Mary, the obedience of Joseph,
the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the
shepherds,
the determination of the magi,
and the peace of the Christ child.
Almighty God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
bless you now and forever.**



**A NOTE
FROM THE
EDITOR:**



**OUR
NEWSLETTER**

Dear St. Stephen's Parishioners,

Thank you to all who submitted contributions to this issue of the St. Stephen's Newsletter. Articles, reflections, stories, poems, photos and drawings are always welcome and may be sent (as an attachment) to the newsletter editor, cstocek@gmail.com, or submissions can be mailed to the church in c/o Newsletter Editor. If possible, please use Times New Roman, 12 point with one space between sentences.

The deadline for submissions is the 25th of each month, but will be extended to the 28th for Dec. Mark, our administrator, takes care of posting the newsletter on our website and mailing it to those without computer or internet access. His help is greatly appreciated. Please contact him if you would like to receive the newsletter by mail.

Sincerely,
Charlotte H. Stoczek
Editor

A Letter to the Editor

**St. Stephen's
Vestry**

Carol Dockter,
Rector's Warden
Bill Brunell,
People's Warden
Sandra Calhoun,
Treasurer
Sherry Simon,
Clerk

Thomas Bennett
Peggy Brown
Gloria Brunell
Sharon Douglas
Jill Holsonback
Valla Miller
Nancy Rea
Charlotte Stoczek

Dear Editor,

I just attended my first Evensong. It was marvelous, a very nice way to end the middle of the week. Our little choir does a wonderful job. It is too bad I was the only one in attendance. I really hope other people will participate in this service the 4th Wednesday of every month at 7:00 PM in the Sanctuary.

A Loyal Reader

Bible Study
Education Building
Wednesdays
at 10 a.m.

Contact:
Rosemary Snapp
520-378-9351
or email
rosemarywsnapp@gmail.com



St. Stephen's Men's Group
by Bruce Dockter

The informal, unorganized men of St. Stephen's will gather in the Parish Hall on Dec. 9 at 12:30 PM. We will have prayer, fellowship, and help Junior Warden Bill Brunell finish some small maintenance and repair tasks to get the church ready for the holidays.

In January we will be meeting on Saturday, Jan. 12 at 8:00 AM at the Country House restaurant for prayer and breakfast. All men are invited to join us as this is informal and unorganized.

Helping Hands Ministry

Some of the men of St. Stephen's are starting a Helping Hands Ministry to help members of the Parish with small home repairs and maintenance. More info and sign up sheets for members wanting help and members wanting to assist will be available online or on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall.



Bylas Food Pack Crew by Dottie Gutwein

San Carlos Apache Reservation, Bylas, AZ

UPDATE: On Nov. 13, Priscilla Burrows and I drove to All Saint's, Safford and met with Mindy Weisser-Lee. As coordinator of the food and blanket drive, she had obtained names of 20 families in need of blankets. The three of us then took the 20 Plus blankets and hats /shawls/gloves and distributed all to the 20 families.



November 28, 2018

To Our Companions in Lay Ministry,

God willing and the people consenting, we shall soon gather to celebrate the consecration of our new bishop, and she will begin her work as our shepherd and guide. Each of us knows the joy of receiving gifts of welcome upon entering a new job or role in life. Those mementos that surround us upon graduation, marriage, the birth of a child, and other significant life events that we carry with us throughout this life. For deacons, priests, and bishops, ordinations are such a time. It is often perplexing, however, to know what type of gift might be appropriate.

There are many special vestments and other items that Bishops require as they take up their work in the greater church and the world. It is the hope that the laity of the Diocese of Arizona, can provide our Bishop-Elect a gift to ensure she can meet, and surpass, all such expectations. You can contribute to this gift at [this secure website](#) or send a check payable to the The Diocese of Arizona with the notation "Consecration Gift" noted on the memo line. Any additional funds gathered by us will be used for the discretionary fund of the new bishop as she begins her ministry with us.

Thank you for ensuring that our Bishop-Elect will be overwhelmed with the generosity and love of our Diocese.

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of
Arizona



The Beatitudes

Matthew 5:3-10, paraphrased by Rev. John W. Perry

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the ones not filled with certainty, not filled with strength, not filled with overweening confidence; for they know how much they need God.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the ones who do not resign themselves to the world as it presently is – the ones who instead lament: lament wars, hunger, injustice, loneliness, affliction; for they share in the heart of God.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are the ones who have little power in this world, and the ones who choose not to exert power; for through their humility, they leave room in which God can work.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the ones who so long to know and to do the will of God; for they already accomplish God's will more than they realize, and are closer to God than they can imagine.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the ones who know themselves to be bound up with God's other children, and who live accordingly; for so also is God bound up with them.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the ones who long to have their thoughts and feelings attuned to God; for God is in their eyes, and with their eyes they already do see God, all around.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are the ones who work toward whatever is needed for meaningful life, offering hope where there is deprivation or despair; for they build peace, one life at a time, for God's children, as God's children.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are we, when we do these things. Or, when we strive to do these things, with God's help. And we do not stop to count the cost. For it is then that we live, alongside God, in the Kingdom. Not only as something that will be given us in the future, as a reward. But also as a thing that we live. In the present time. Here. And now.

AND WE DO NOT HAVE
MUCH TIME TO
GLADDEN
THE HEARTS
OF THOSE WHO
TRAVEL WITH US
SO BE SWIFT TO LOVE
MAKE HASTE TO BE KIND
AND GO IN PEACE
TO LOVE AND SERVE
THE LORD

ALAN - FREDERIC AMIEL

Announcements

Operation Child Boxes: Dottie Gutwein thanks all who donated to the Operation Christmas Child boxes. A total of 13 boxes were delivered to the donation point on Nov. 12. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS: It is time to order the poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary for Christmas. On the entry porch, there are cards to fill out with name of those for whom you are giving Thanksgiving or Remembering. Please include your name and the amount of your donation. The checks should be noted for Christmas poinsettias so the tellers will know where to credit it properly. They all need to be received by December 16 so Mark can print out the list of donors for the Dec. 24 bulletin. For more information contact Dottie Gutwein.

Dec. 13 Delivery to Safford: Dottie Gutwein will travel to Safford again with the remaining blankets and hats/scarves/shawls to be delivered with food boxes to a different group of families in Bylas. If anyone wishes to contribute towards this next trip, please leave your donated blankets on the side pews to be blessed at church on Dec. 9. The cost of a food box of turkey and staples usually runs \$75.00. Donations may be made in any amount. For information, call Dottie at 249-1311.



News from the Senior Warden

Carol Dockter

A grateful shout-out goes to Alverita for her creative decorating of the parish hall and all around help in making the THANKSGIVING PARTY a success. It was a good time to be thankful for our Parish and celebrate our 60 years as a church in Sierra Vista.

We have completed the concerted effort of STEWARDSHIP for 2019. Now the results are being tabulated and a Ministry Support Plan (Budget) is being developed. The plan will be considered for approval at the Dec. 16th Vestry meeting and presented to the congregation at the annual meeting in January. Thank you faithful supporters for your willingness to give your time and talent while supporting the church financially. Stewardship is year round so there isn't a rigid deadline on stepping in and/or stepping up. God bless us all as we look forward to a wonderful year together.

“Cultivate the habit of being grateful for everything that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson



April Romo Nativity

April Romo De Vivar
is a well-known
Native American
Artist. She works with
clay. She has a nativity
scene on display in
the permanent art
collection of the
National Cathedral in
Washington, D.C.
This Mother and
Child is made to sit
on a shelf. It is 8” tall.