

St Stephen's Announcements Sept 30 – Oct 6 2021

- **Sunday Worship time will change Nov 7th to 11am start time.**
- **St. Stephen's and Sierra Lutheran (ELCA) to begin joined ministry with St. Raphael's Benson** – Starting in November, St. Stephen's along with Sierra Lutheran Church will assist with worship and other ministries at St. Raphael's in the Valley, Benson. St. Raphael's is a combined Lutheran and Episcopal congregation and as their current Vicar leaves for new ministry opportunities, Bishop Reddall and Bishop Hutterer (ELCA) have asked for our two churches to minister together with St. Raphael's. Rev. Allison will lead worship alternatingly with the Sierra Lutheran church on Sundays, and she will have office hours in Benson on Tuesdays. Rev. Allison's office hours at St. Stephen's will be Wed, Thurs, Friday. This arrangement will be for a year and then we will assess how it is going.
- **We need a new church treasurer!** STILL! Please help.
- **Our Groceries 4U program depends on donations from you, our congregation.** We provide grocery gift cards to people in our community in need of a little assistance to buy groceries. If you can, please put a donation in the plate to allow us to buy more cards. Thank you.
- **Coffee Hour helpers wanted.** Our coffee hour is moving back to the porch and will be simplified. We would appreciate folks helping with the set up of the coffee hour and clean up after on Sundays. There is a sign-up sheet on the snack table at church. Please sign up for a weekend or two.
- **Our Adult Forum on Jesus and the Buddha resumes Oct 2-3.**
- **Newcomer Welcome for some of our new folks who have been worshipping with us will be on Oct 2-3.** Get to know our new folks and introduce yourselves.
- **October 10th, Sunday, at 5pm St. Stephen's will hold a service of welcome and acceptance in observation of the National Coming Out Day for LGBTQ persons** to celebrate the amazing persons that God created them to be and to allow anyone who feels ready to do so to tell God, their family and friends, and themselves that they are part of the LGBTQ community.
- **Diocesan Convention Oct 9th and Oct 15-16** – St. Stephen's leadership will be representing you online and in person. See the diocesan webpage for convention information: <https://azdiocese.org/meetings/diocesan-convention.html>
- **October 31st: All Saints/All Souls** – Remembering those we lost during the past 20 months of Covid shutdown. We will gather to have a combined remembrance of those who died during the past year and half.
- **November 6th – LGBTQ Pride in Phoenix!** St. Stephen's has entered to have one car and several walkers at the parade on Saturday Nov. 6th. We can carry signs, flags, and banners to show there are welcoming and inviting churches for LGBTQ. Please see Rev. Allison to carpool up and back to Phoenix that day.
- **We are Re-using the Bulletins again.** Please leave your gently use bulletin on the back table. Thanks 😊!

Newcomer Celebration Liturgy

Rector: Paul in his letter to the Philippians wrote: "Greetings to each one of God's people who belong to Christ Jesus. The believers here with me send you their greetings."

Today we wish to formally extend our greetings to you who are newer to our congregation and welcome you into our community of faith, the beloved community of Christ of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

(To the congregation): These persons have been exploring and discovering our church for weeks or months or due to Covid for over a year.

(To the newcomers:) Please tell us your name(s) and when you started coming to St. Stephen's?

(Newcomers share their name and when they began attending St. Stephen's)

Rector to the Newcomers: Dear new friends, we are glad to have you with us to continue our journeys of faith and growing in the knowledge and love of God together. Our church has as its goal and purpose: "to accept everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith, and share God's love through service to others." We believe that God has called us to love and serve. Do you wish to join us in this goal and purpose?

New Members: Yes, that is my wish.

Rector to the congregation: People of St. Stephen's, will you continue to welcome and help our newcomers to better appreciate the shared life and faith of our church as a beloved community?

Congregation: We will.

Rector: Let us pray:

Everyone: Loving God, send your Holy Spirit to be among us, knitting us one to another. Help us to grow with each other, to love each other, to support each other. That by our common life in this community we may come to know and serve you and all our sisters and brothers, in Jesus name, we pray. Amen

Rector: As Rector of this parish, and speaking for the entire congregation, we welcome each of you to the beloved community of St. Stephen's. May the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and always. **AMEN**

Please accept this St. Stephen's Prayer Card as a token of our welcome to you.