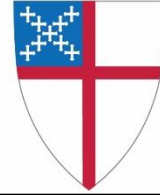




St. Stephen's Episcopal Church



March 2023

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From our Rector:



A Holy Lent to you all,

As I write this note, we have just begun our Lenten season with Ash Wednesday this last week of February. As I mentioned in my homily on Wednesday, "An unexamined life is not worth living." This is a quote attributed to Socrates, a Greek philosopher. We don't often set time aside to deliberately examine our lives. The season of Lent is an opportunity to do just that. The church following the Jewish model has made this season part of the church calendar to allow us to intentionally set some time aside to reflect on how we are living our lives, how have we grown and matured in wisdom or faith or in any of the fruits of the spirit (Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control)? Are there places where we have lingering regrets or resentments (grudges) that we need to work through?

People who participate in 12-step groups do this same self-examination in steps 4-7:

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

These steps (and the rest of the 12) were established over a few years and with the help of an Episcopal Priest, Rev. Sam Shoemaker. Bill Wilson one of the founders of AA wrote of Rev. Shoemaker: "The early A.A. got its ideas of self-examination, acknowledgment of character defects, restitution for harm done, and working with others straight from the Oxford Groups and directly from Sam Shoemaker, their former leader in America, and from nowhere else."

In the Episcopal Church, we have informal and formal ways of helping anyone who is stuck in getting through such a self-examination and acknowledgement of character defects. It is called confession in the Roman Catholic Church and the Rite of Reconciliation in the Episcopal Church. Each time we worship and say the General Confession we have an opportunity to surrender to God our wrongs and defects. That is the informal way. If that seems to work, that is great. If you still feel stuck and need to talk it out with a trusted person, you can ask to meet with me, your priest, and everything will be held in strict confidence.

Across the church and across time, we have come to see that self-examination is an important part of our growth in spirituality and faith. Admitting our errors, mistakes, wrongs and working to improve ourselves to meet future challenges and temptations is healthy and healing and enables us to grow in the love of God. May we each take time this Lent to examine our lives, making them ever more worth living.

With peace and love,

Rev. Allison

Lent IS A TIME TO
GROW CLOSER TO JESUS

Senior Warden



Fellow Parishioners

As we are now entering the season of Lent, let's remember the importance of this time of year. As we prepare for Jesus' death, resurrection, and why he died for us on the cross.

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
March 24th**

Sunday's service will be In Person and Live Stream.

Saturday Evening Worshippers:

Please recycle your bulletins for Sunday worshippers if you are not taking them home with you.

Coffee Hour helpers needed!

As we return to having a time of fellowship with each other after worship on Sundays, we can use some helpers to set up the coffee and snacks before and clean up after the coffee hour. Please sign up on the sheet on the snacks table.

Photos Wanted – Please send Mark any photos of events or happenings around our church to Mark for him to have in refreshing our photo library. Can be photos of various activities around the church or decorations or even flowers/trees on our property.

We need more Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, and Alter Guild personnel.

If you are interest in any of these positions, please contact Robin StClair at rscinca@gmail.com

Duplicate Bridge Club to begin meeting at St. Stephen's in Ed Bldg on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 12 noon to 4pm. Classes for new players offered. Any interested please contact Bob Walton at publius92@yahoo.com or phone 520-249-6635.

Friday Film Night March 3rd at 5pm – We will watch "Oh God" with George Burns and John Denver, seeing how an ordinary guy grows in faith through meeting God and carrying his message. Light supper of soup is offered. Bring your own beverage. All are welcome! Bring a friend!

Second Saturday St. Stephen's Supper group will meet Saturday March 11th 6:30pm – We are going to Denny's, 2397 Fry Blvd, across from Safeway shopping center. We won't be able to all sit at the same table, but we can try to sit near each other. All are welcome, invite your friends.

From our Administrator Mark

Please notify the church office when you move or change phone or emails. If you change your email, please update your sign-on with our website prior to shutting down the old email.

Our office hours have really changed, but with Covid-19 impacts, they have been very flexible.

Standard hours are:

Tuesday and Thursday 9:00am to 2:00pm
Wednesday 11:00am to 2:00pm.

New Program for giving in Sierra Vista –

Better Bucks: The vestry voted Tuesday to shift our Groceries 4U program to using the Better Bucks booklets to give to those who need some assistance with food, clothing, and other necessities. Please donate to the church to buy the booklets or donate booklets for us to use. Cannot be used for alcohol or tobacco. website: <https://betterbuckssierravista.org/>

Are you curious about what the 12-steps used in various support groups are all about?

Come and learn how the 12-steps have a Christian and specifically Episcopal history in their formation and how they can be used for anyone in any situation. They are not confined to those in recovery from addiction. The 12 steps are helpful for everyday life. Join us on Wednesday evenings in the Parish Hall at 5pm til 6pm as we explore these 12 steps through our Christian perspective. Open to everyone.

Junior Warden:



This time of year can be a very somber one as we prepare for Jesus' death on the cross. Let us all remember why he died for us and keep everybody close to our hearts as we come to worship during this significant time of year.



Bible Study

Every Tuesday at 5pm join in Zoom for an in-depth review of the Psalms. We use several interpretations for a lively discussion. The zoom link is: 811-888-8197.

Birthdays

31 Mar: Diane Vogle-Yancey



Covid and other viruses are active in the community – You are encouraged to wear a mask indoors at church especially if you feel vulnerable to the Covid/Flu/RSV viruses. If you feel it is necessary also, please social distance yourself from others along the back and sides of the church.

The new flooring and parking lot will be a sizable investment in the future of our church. We have received anonymous donations for part of this work, we have savings in the building maintenance fund for part of the work. We would also like your donations to offset the cost and allow us to keep a reasonable reserve for emergency needs in building maintenance. Please give online, check, or cash with the notation that it is for facilities upgrades.

John Denver's Greatest Hits Singalong

Session – Friday March 24th Email Rev. Allison (revallison@ststephensaz.org) with your favorites and we will put them on the list. Join us and bring a friend for the singalong night!

Teller Volunteers are needed to help count & deposit funds from weekly collections. Computer knowledge will be helpful, but not necessary. Training will be provided. You will be scheduled once a month for about a hour. Please consider lending a hand! Contact Nancy Rea 520-227-3827 for more info.

Re-starting our outreach ministry team, "Community Connections". Looking for those who would like to be part of the team to identify community needs that our church may be able to help meet. Please add your name to our signup sheet if you are interested in helping out!

Christian Ed Forum – Study of the Book of Revelation continues Sat 4 pm. Sunday Adult Forum is reading "How to Read the Bible & Still Be a Christian: Struggling with Divine Violence from Genesis through Revelation" by John Dominic Crossan. Copies of the book are \$12.00/ea from Rev. Allison.

Lay Ministry Teams

If you are unable to serve at the appointed time and day, you are responsible for finding a replacement. Please notify Robin of substitutions.

Now forming a Pastoral Care Team (also known as Eucharistic Visitors) – volunteers to be trained to take communion to people unable to come to church and visit with them for a bit. If you are interested, please sign up for this ministry.

Covid infection rates are high in Cochise County – You are encouraged to wear a mask indoors at church especially if you feel vulnerable to the Covid/Flu/RSV viruses. If you feel it is necessary also, please social distance yourself from others along the back and sides of the church. And of course, if you feel sick, please stay home.

Prayers for Robin St.Clair – Rev. Allison's wife is having hip replacement surgery March 13th and Rev. Allison may have odd hours for the six weeks following, working from home some and taking Robin to appointments.

Parking Lot resurfacing – March 9-10: The church parking lot will not be available for a few days while we have cracks filled and the surface resealed and repainted. More info as it happens.

New Forward Day by Day booklets available in the church and parish hall – pick yours up for Feb thru April.

Throughout this year, we are looking at the theme of "Spiritual Journeys" – Where are you on your spiritual journey and what helps to bring you closer to God or what prevents you from coming closer to God? We will be offering different activities to explore footsteps on our pathways to God that will expand our ideas and experiences of self-care, prayer & meditation, nature & creation, and other topics. Stay tuned for workshops and other activities that you are invited to join and which will be led by members of our church and community.

Ministry Teams Schedule for March

Wednesdays 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

LEM, Lector, Altar Guild – Dottie / Sherry

Saturday 4

LEM – Sherry Simon Lector – Sandra Calhoun Altar Guild – Sherry Simon

Saturday 11

LEM – Ed Stone Lector – Tim Holsonback Altar Guild – Ed Stone

Saturday 18

LEM – Tim Holsonback Lector – Jeff Speer Altar Guild – Jill Holsonback

Saturday 25

LEM – Jeff Speer Lector – Tim Holsonback Altar Guild – Jeff Speer

Sunday 5 (2nd Lent)

LEM – Nancy Rea Lector – Judy Davis Altar Guild – Sherry Simon Deacon – Dottie Gutwein

Sunday 12 (3rd Lent)

LEM – MJ Mahland Lector – Wilma Swartz Altar Guild – Deb Ash Deacon – Dottie Gutwein

Sunday 19 (4th Lent)

LEM – Peggy Brown Lector – Nancy Rea Altar Guild – Sherry Simon Deacon – Dottie Gutwein

Sunday 26 (5th Lent)

LEM – Sherry Simon Lector – MJ Mahland Altar Guild – Deb Ash Deacon – Dottie Gutwein

March						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 	4 5:00 pm Spoken service with Holy Communion
5 11:00 am Worship In person and Live Stream	6	7 Bible Study (Psalms) 5 pm via Zoom	8 9:30 am Spoken service with Holy Communion	9	10	11 6:30 pm Denny's 2397 Fry Blvd
12 11:00 am Choral service with Holy Communion	13	14 Bible Study (Psalms) 5 pm via Zoom	15 9:30 am Spoken service	16	17 	18 5:00 pm Spoken service with Holy Communion
19 11:00 am Worship In person and Live Stream	20	21 Bible Study (Psalms) 5 pm via Zoom	22 9:30 am Spoken service with Holy Communion	23	24 New sletter Articles Due	25 5:00 pm Spoken service with Holy Communion
26 11:00 am Choral service with Holy Communion	27	28 Bible Study (Psalms) 5 pm via Zoom	29 9:30 am Spoken service	30	31	