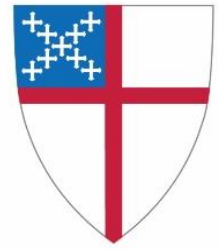




*St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church
Newsletter
November 2023*



Office manager: Email: marksowards@ststephensaz.org Phone: (520) 458 4432



From our Rector

Dear Friends

It is such a blessing to be your pastor! With all the strife around the world, I am thankful that although we may have many different views and beliefs among us, we can come together as friends and family to hear and respect each other without animosity. We may not always agree on various topics and that is okay. We choose to honor each other's personal perspectives and love one another. This is what I believe Jesus and God want from us... that we should by our word and example be a light for others to see and hopefully be inspired to imitate and follow. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus tells his followers:

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Thank you for living and acting in ways that are a light to the world. It is a reflection of your dedication to live in harmony with the teachings of Jesus.

In this season of thanksgiving and gratitude, I hope you are thinking about some of the things that you find make your life pleasant and meaningful. When you can, let those persons who are part of your gratitude know how much you appreciate them.

With Gratitude and Joy,

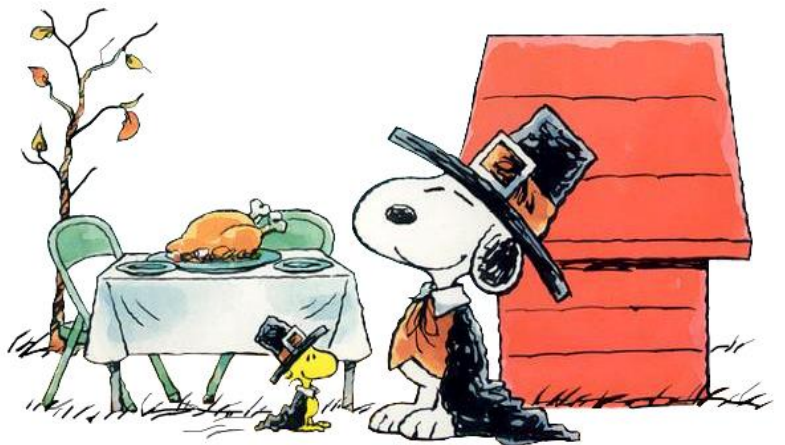
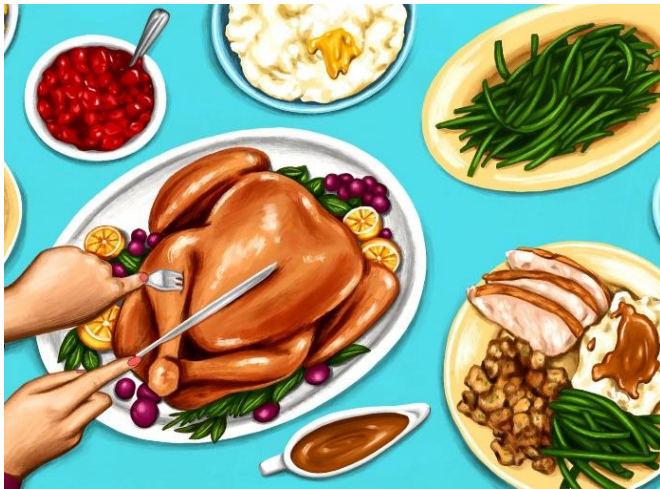
Rev. Allison Cornell

Thank you card for the Jewish temple who donated the digital organ

We will have a thank you card in the church for anyone who would like to sign to express our gratitude for the new (to us) digital organ that Doreen Oberg, our accompanist is eagerly exploring and learning how to play. We are so grateful for this gift to us that allows us to have our organ music once again in church. The Temple allowed us to take it with only the cost of moving and installing it at our church. Please take a minute to add a note of thanks and we will then send it off to the Jewish community in Phoenix that blessed us with this gifted organ.

Thanksgiving Day Worship service and dinner to follow:

On Thursday November 23rd at 10am we will have our Thanksgiving Day worship in the church and then afterwards a traditional Thanksgiving dinner at 11:30am in the Parish Hall. We will have a sign-up in the Parish Hall for the various parts of the dinner we will need others to provide. Rev. Allison and Robin will cook the Turkey again this year. Please indicate what you will bring and how many will be in your party... so we know how much to prepare.



November is Stewardship Month:

Paying it Forward, Paying it Back! This is our theme this year as we look forward to those who come after us and backwards to those who preceded us. We hope you will gratefully and generously support our church and the things we do to live our mission of being “called to love and serve.”

Every year your vestry looks at the donations and expenses from the last year and with the donations that are pledged (promised) for the coming year, build the anticipated budget for the coming year. We rely on the giving from our congregation to establish our budget and we cannot be a church without your giving. Some of you may be reluctant to pledge (promise) what you hope to give in the coming year due to your own circumstances. We understand that, and we hope you also understand that it is hard to develop a budget without knowing what to expect throughout the year in donations.

We are very grateful for your giving this year!

We are so thankful for your donations this past year. We have been able to continue to both take care of our church with its needs and also to be a source of support for many in our community. We had a couple of big projects this year that we needed to take care of and your generosity allowed us to complete them.

Many of you know that the original linoleum tile floor was cracking and breaking in several places in the church and that the glue used to hold those tiles contained asbestos. It was a major safety concern that we get that old floor replaced as soon as possible to eliminate the threat to our health from that flooring. We had the old flooring removed and replaced it with a new poured aspartic flooring. We also replaced the old stained and torn carpet with new carpet around the altar area.

Our parking lot received two improvements: The parking lot lights were switched over to LED lights which should burn longer and use less energy. The pavement was resurfaced and repainted as it was beginning to be hard to see the lines.

Other more routine maintenance items included termite treatment under the education building, replacing a faulty microwave oven, some landscaping needs, and soon new gutters on both buildings.

In serving our community, your donations allowed us to:

- continue to provide “Better Bucks” for some of our neighbors who are struggling economically to buy food and personal hygiene items,
- we helped some people with rent and utility bills when they could not pay those bills,
- we supported the rebuilding needed by St. Stephen’s in Douglas after the arson fire,
- we supported the people in Lahaina Hawaii after a wildfire destroyed the church and town there,
- we gave food donations to the community food banks in Cochise County,
- we gave school supplies to two elementary schools in McNeal and Double Adobe in Cochise County, and
- we have donated and continue to donate our aluminum cans to the animal shelter in Sierra Vista for their ongoing needs to care for those animals in their pens.

Thank you for all that you give out of love of God, our neighbor, and ourselves. You make a difference in the lives of many whom you may never know or meet.



Christmas Worship Services:

This year, as happens from time to time, we have 4th Advent on the same Sunday as Christmas Eve. Therefore, we are planning to have our 4th Advent service on Saturday night Dec 23rd. Then on Sunday December 24th there will not be a morning service. We will have only our Christmas Eve service at 5pm that Sunday. If at least 6 people plan to attend Christmas Day service on Monday December 25th we will have a Christmas Day service as well with a small brunch to follow. Otherwise, if fewer than 6 plan to attend Christmas Day, we will ask that folks let Christmas Eve be the main Christmas service and will not have a Christmas Day service.



Become an advocate for peace in Israel-Palestine:

Sometimes it is hard to know what we can do to promote peace when conflicts arise. The Episcopal Church has an office for Government Relations with a website to find resources of information and actions you can take concerning the conflict in Israel and Gaza. For instance you can send a letter to your congressional representatives to ask them to promote peace, humanitarian aid, and a ceasefire by going to this link: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/action-alerts/?vvsrsrc=%2fCampaigns%2f108223%2fRespond> . The letter is already written and when you include your information it will automatically email it to your representatives.

You can also find other updates and information about current events about this conflict on this link: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/resources-for-the-conflict-in-the-holy-land/>

From our Reverend Deacon



Prayer for Peace in the World

Almighty and Everlasting God, our days are in your hands: we lift up all those in the Holy Land who are victims of violence and injustice, that you might empower your Church to bring healing to the wounded, relief to the suffering, and comfort to those who mourn: we pray also that you would soften the hearts of all those involved in the recent conflicts, that they would be led to work for justice and lasting peace in the land where your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ first came to bring hope and abundant life to all people: these things we ask in his Holy Name. AMEN

Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem Hosam Naoum

From Our Treasurer

The Vestry has approved plans to move the Emergency Funds into a series of CDs for investment through the Edward Jones company. Their rates are approximately 5.6%, which is the best we have seen in a while. If those funds are needed, we can retrieve them. If not, the investment will roll. Our Building Maintenance funds remain at National Bank of Arizona for immediate use.

Anne Roth

November Lay Ministry Teams Schedule

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

Saturday 4th

LEM – Jeff Speer Lector – Sandra Calhoun Alter guild – Jeff Speer

Saturday 11th

LEM – Tim Holsonback Lector – TBD Alter Guild – Tim Holsonback

Saturday 18th

LEM – Robin StClair Lector – Tim Holsonback Altar Guild – Robin StClair

Thursday 23rd 10am Thanksgiving Service followed by Thanksgiving Feast 1130am

LEM – Robin St Clair Lector – Doris Millard Alter Guild – Robin StClair

Saturday November 25th

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

Sunday 5th

LEM – Nancy Rae Lector – Peggy Brown Alter Guild – Nancy Rae Deacon - Dottie Gutwein

Sunday 12th

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

Sunday 19th

LEM – Nancy Rae Lector – Ann Crandall Altar Guild – Nancy Rae Deacon - Dottie Gutwein

Sunday 26th

LEM – Robin StClair Lector - Wilma Swartz Alter Guild – Robin StClair Deacon - Dottie Gutwein

November 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	2	3 Friday Film Night The Chosen -Series 3, episodes 5&6 5.30pm	4 5.00 pm Spoken Service with Holy Communion
5 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	6	7 Bible Study (Proverbs) 5 pm Via Zoom	8 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	9	10	11 5.00 pm Service followed by Supper at Vinny's Pizza 6.30pm
12 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	13	14 Bible Study (Proverbs) 5 pm Via Zoom	15 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	16	17	18 5.00 pm Spoken Service with Holy Communion
19 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	20	21 Bible Study (Proverbs) 5 pm Via Zoom	22 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	23 Thanksgiving Day Worship 10am Followed by Thanksgiving Feast 11.30am	24 Newsletter Articles Due For December Issue	25 5.00 pm Spoken Service with Holy Communion
26 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	27	28 Bible Study (Proverbs) 5 pm Via Zoom	29 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	30		

Saturday Nov 11th Second Saturday Supper will be at Vinny's Pizza, 1977 Frontage Rd, Sierra Vista, AZ, at 6:30pm. Link to menu is here: <https://vinnys-new-york-pizza-sv.business.site/>



Joseph Ash	November 2 nd
Alverita Egbert	November 4 th
May Sowards	November 13 th
Dinah McCreery	November 20 th
Priscilla Burrows	November 22 nd
Gretchen Lamberth	November 24 th

Doris Millard's 87th Birthday

On Sunday October 22nd we enjoyed a surprise birthday party for Doris, a much loved and well respected member of St Stephen's Church. Her good friend Alverita brought in a beautiful cake, and along with other goodies, a happy time was had by all!



Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church Fundraiser

Pine cone Christmas Tree	\$10.00 each
"LOVE" Stand Alone Desk Sign	\$7.00 each
"PEACE" Stand Alone Desk Sign	\$7.00 each
Patriotic Heart Pins	\$5.00 each
Assortment Heart Pins	\$5.00 each
Gay Pride Heart Pins	\$5.00 each
Circular Wreaths	\$15.00 each
Cross Wreaths	\$15.00 each

Orders can be made in person at church or by emailing wilma@wilmaspuppets.com

WE WILL TAKE ORDERS IF TEMPORARILY OUT OF AN ITEM

From your editor!

Dear Readers,

In September I was given the opportunity to sit with May Sowards whilst her son, Mark, attended a medical appointment. What a lovely experience that was for me. It has been a very long time since I have had a conversation with a 'senior' who has had so much experience of life and who has gained so much wisdom and insight through her experiences.

She talked about her love of books (of which she has many) especially history books. She talked about her relatives and there is a fascinating family tree (with photos) on the wall.

She also mentioned the respite home where she had spent some time during Mark's hospitalisation and recovery time. She recalled that (without any blame) she found some staff to be impatient and occasionally a little rough with her. She was aware that she had become rather slow to respond and sometimes forgetful (and how many of us wouldn't be in our nineties?) but this reminded me of a poem I read when my mother started to suffer from Alzheimer's disease, from her mid-sixties. Eventually, after my father passed, she had to go to a care home where she could receive 24 hour supervision.

Here is the poem:

A Crabbit Old Woman

What do you see nurse, what do you see?
What are you thinking when you're looking at me?

A crabbit old woman, not very wise,
Uncertain of habit, with far away eyes,
Who dribbles her food, and makes no reply, when you say in a loud voice,
'I do wish you'd try'

Who seems not to notice the things that you do, and forever is losing a stocking or shoe Who,
unresisting or not, lets you do as you will with bathing and feeding, the long day to fill.

Is that what you're thinking, is that what you see? Then open your eyes nurse, you're not looking at Me.
I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still, as I move at your bidding; as I eat at your will.

I'm a small child of 10 with a father and mother, brothers and sisters, who loved one another-

A young girl of 16 with wings on her feet, dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet,
A bride soon at 20- my heart gives a leap, remembering the vows that I promised to keep.

At 25 now I have young of my own who need me to build a secure happy home;

A woman of 30, my young now grow fast, bound to each other with ties that should last;

At 40, my young ones have grown and are gone, but my man's beside me to see I don't mourn;

At 50 once more babies play 'round my knee, again we know children, my loved one and me.

Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead, I look at the future, I shudder with dread,
For my young are all busy rearing young of their own and I think of the years and the love I have known.

I'm an old woman now and nature is cruel,
Tis her jest to make old age look like a fool.

The body it crumbles, grace and vigor depart,
And now there is a stone where once was a heart.

But inside my old carcass a young girl still dwells,
And now and again my battered heart swells.

I remember the joys, I remember the pain, and I'm loving and living all over again.
I think of the years all too few, gone so fast and accept the stark fact that nothing can last. *(Continued)*

So open your eyes, nurse, open and see,
Not a crabbit old woman, look closer, see Me.

By Phyliss McCormick

So let us take these opportunities when they arise, just to sit and listen to our lovely elders. Learn something as they reminisce, and enjoy the opportunity in the realization that some of us are not that far off (if we're lucky enough to reach such a grand old age as May has) and to know that kindness, patience and care is all that they require as they prepare to meet their maker.

Sadly, by my next visit, May was sleeping most of the time and not communicating verbally. She did, however, open her eyes a couple of times and smile at me.

Diane