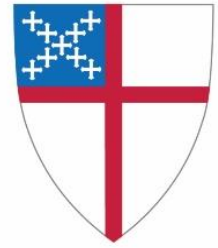




*St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church
Newsletter
January 2025*



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

HAPPY★NEW★YEAR



From our Rector

Happy New Year!

As we enter 2025, may you be blessed with every good thing in your life. We often have a bit of anxiety about what each new year will bring us, personally and collectively in our nation and our world. Let us pray that the peace and goodwill blessing of the Christmas Angelic host become a true and lasting outcome for our year ahead.

As we head into February, Jeff Speer, our church Senior Warden, will be working with the Diocese to begin the next steps in our search for a new priest/rector upon my retirement. We have several folks who have indicated their interest in being part of the search committee and they will begin the process of reviewing and revising our church profile (who St. Stephen's is at this point in its church life and our hopes for our future). When it is ready, it will be posted to the public and the call for resumes for interested clergy will begin. That will happen this spring-summer. Candidates will be interviewed and hopefully one will be a good fit for our church. That will happen during the summer.

My intended last day as your rector is planned to be Sunday August 24th. Robin and I and Karen, Robin's sister, will then depart on a vacation to Europe for 40-ish days. We will need to worship in other churches for a year while the new rector begins at St. Stephen's and after that we will worship with you again. I will also be available for some supply work in the Diocese and maybe a short-term interim position.

Until August, let us continue to enjoy each other's fellowship and support of one another. You have enriched my life so very much these past years... and our association is not over, we will just have a short pause before we continue our journey with Christ again in each Other's company.

God bless you and keep you in this new year and always,

Rev. Allison Cornell

New Year's Traditions:

Do you have certain things you do on New Year's Day to ensure a good year to come? Here are some of the things you may have experienced as part of the New Year's Day traditions:

Make Hoppin' John:

The mix of black-eyed peas, pork and rice is delicious no matter when you eat it. But the dish carries extra significance if it's eaten on January 1, since many believe it'll bring luck, peace and prosperity for the rest of the year.

According to History.com, "Hoppin' John was, and still is, often eaten with collard greens, which can resemble paper money, and 'golden' cornbread. The peas themselves represent coins. Some families boost the potential of their Hoppin' John by placing a penny underneath the dishes — or adding extra pork, which is thought to bring more luck."

Make a Resolution:

Historians believe that the idea of a New Year's resolutions, in one form or another, dates back more than 4,000 years. They say the Babylonians, one of the first cultures to actually celebrate the changing of the year, made promises to pay debts or return borrowed objects. A friend of mine once joked she had to make New Year's Resolutions so that she would have something to give up for Lent!

New Year's Eve Kiss:

When the clock strikes midnight, revelers are supposed to kiss someone they love. It's not just about stealing a smooch, either. According to the Washington Post, the tradition comes from English and German folklore, which believed that it's "the first person with whom a person came in contact that dictated the year's destiny," so choose those partners wisely.

Keep the Windows and Doors Open:

It's a common superstition that opening the doors and windows will let the old year out, and the new year in unimpeded. Let's hope this old year goes out as quickly as possible, so you don't let all the warm air out with it.

Watch the Times Square Ball Drop:

The New Year's Eve ball drop in Times Square has been a tradition since the early 1900s. While celebrations in Times Square date back to 1904, it wasn't until 1907 that the crystal ball made its big debut. Since then, the spectacle has been a staple of New Year's Eve celebrations, with hundreds of thousands of people flocking the streets, and millions watching from home.

History of Celebrating January 1st as the start of the new year:

Julius Caesar instituted January 1 as the first day of the year, partly to honor the month's namesake: Janus, the Roman god of beginnings, whose two faces allowed him to look back into the past and forward into the future. Romans celebrated by offering sacrifices to Janus, exchanging gifts with one another, decorating their homes with laurel branches and attending raucous parties.

Today in many countries, New Year's celebrations begin on the evening of December 31—New Year's Eve—and continue into the early hours of January 1. Revelers often enjoy meals and snacks thought to bestow good luck for the coming year. In Spain and several other Spanish-speaking countries, people bolt down a dozen grapes—symbolizing their hopes for the months ahead—right before midnight.

Continued

In many parts of the world, traditional New Year's dishes feature legumes, which are thought to resemble coins and herald future financial success; examples include lentils in Italy and black-eyed peas in the southern United States. Because pigs represent progress and prosperity in some cultures, pork appears on the New Year's Eve table in Cuba, Austria, Hungary, Portugal and other countries. Ring-shaped cakes and pastries, a sign that the year has come full circle, round out the feast in the Netherlands, Mexico, Greece and elsewhere.

ANNUAL MEETING: Sunday January 19th 2025: We ask that all of our members be sure to attend our once a year meeting to welcome new vestry members, thank outgoing vestry members, review the proposed budget for the coming year, and hear the "State of the Church" address from your rector. We will order pizza and have beverages for everyone this year to make things easier. In the coming weeks, please be sure to let us know your preferences for pizza toppings. The meeting will be held in the Ed Building following the Sunday worship, about 11:15am.

SHERRY SIMON TO BE ORDAINED DEACON January 25th at 10am at The Trinity Cathedral, Phoenix. We are excited to see Sherry complete her process towards being ordained to the Holy Order of Deacons! We will have a few cars which will carpool to the ordination and back again. Leaving the church parking lot at no later than 6am and returning later on Saturday following the service and reception. Let the church know if you want to ride in the carpool.

Announcements:

Looking for a Treasurer Assistant – Primary duties are to create checks to pay our bills, work with our bookkeeper, and prepare an annual budget (with vestry and bookkeeper) and annual report for the Diocese (fill in form sent by Diocese). See Rev. Allison.

Calling for new vestry members – We have openings for three new vestry members to serve a two-year term (two at-large members and one to be Clerk of the Vestry). Vestry members meet to discuss and make decisions for the church as leadership of the church. Meetings are once a month for about 1.5 hours each meeting.

Coming in January:

- **Second Saturday Supper**-We will meet at Chile's at 6.30pm on Saturday Jan 11th for dinner together. Anyone who would like to join us for a nice dinner out with friends is welcome!
- **Supporting survivors of suicide-Saturday January 11th in the Parish Hall 10am to 12 noon:** St. Stephen's is hosting a guest speaker who will discuss ways to support people who have had a suicide of someone close to them. Explore your individual beliefs and attitudes about suicide, the importance of the words we use, how death by suicide creates more complex grief, and helpful ways you can learn to support those grieving. See Deacon Dottie for RSVP or more information.
- **January 11th St. Paul's Tombstone** – Installation of The Rev. Keith Saare as Vicar of St. Paul's. Time is 11am for the service.
- **Third Wednesday Art and Meditation Hour – Jan 15th 11am to noon.** Bring your art/craft project to work on while we have a quiet time of reflection and calm in the midst of our Xmas season. Let your mind be at peace and listen for God's still small voice.

- **Annual Meeting of the Church** – January 19th at 11:15am with Pizza ordered in for lunch. Let us know your preferred pizza flavor/toppings. All members are encouraged to attend for vestry elections, state of the Church address, and presentation of the 2025 budget.
- **Sherry Simon is getting ordained to the Holy Order of Deacons January 25th in Phoenix at the Trinity Cathedral.** Anyone who wants to go, we will carpool up for the service and reception to follow.
- **New Vestry Retreat** – January 31st – Feb 1st in Parish Hall. New and continuing vestry members will meet to get to know each other and plan for the coming year.
- **February 7th- First Friday Film Night: “The Jesus Revolution”**, 2023 film in which Kelsey Grammar Plays Chuck Smith, a Pastor who is at first totally against the counterculture movement that the hippies of the ‘60s and ‘70s represent, but when he actually meets with one, the charismatic Lonnie Frisbee, his view of them begins to change and he welcomes them to his church. Soup supper 5pm-5.30pm and movie to follow in the Parish Hall. Invite a friend.
- **February** – Nancy Rea is planning a house blessing for her new home. More on dates and times coming soon.
- **February 14** – Valentines Day!
- **Greg Lamberth Memorial – Friday February 21st at the Veteran’s Cemetery** with military honors and then a reception at Ramsay Canyon Inn for a time of story sharing and mutual support.
- **March 4th** – Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. Come enjoy Pancakes, sausage, coffee, juice for dinner with us at the church Parish Hall, 5:30pm to 6:30pm!
- **March 5th** – Ash Wednesday. Services at 9:30am and 6pm.
- **March 8th-9th** – First weekend in Lent.

Coming this Spring:

- **Women of the New Testament Bible Study in the Parish Hall 10am to 11am Saturdays starting March 8th to May 31st** led by Deacon Dottie. Study materials provided. Please see Deacon Dottie to sign up for this study and reserve your booklet.



From our Treasurer

Happy New Year to the people of St. Stephen's.

Congratulations! We have a budget for 2025, and your generosity has made it both realistic and viable. Thanks to all of you who got your Stewardship pledges in, and we are happy to get more and/or adjust as the days go by. The whole report will be given at the Annual Meeting on January 19th. Hope to see as many of you as can make it!

Anne Roth

From the Kitchen Koordinator and Rev. Allison Cornell

For more than a year, members of St. Stephen's have been enjoying our "**BIRTHDAY SUNDAYS**" where we celebrate each month's members' birthdays. When we started Birthday Sunday, we had a cake baker who baked all the cakes that you totally enjoyed. Due to work obligations the past several months, the cake baker has been unable to bake and deliver the cakes to us. Because of this, the birthday cakes have been baked by either myself (The Kitchen Koordinator) or Rev. Allison Cornell. I sat down with Allison recently regarding this and we've come up with an idea to getting cakes baked. **Starting in February 2025**, we'll have a sign-up sheet for each month of 2025 for members to sign up to either bake or purchase a birthday cake for Birthday Sunday, which is always on the first Sunday of each month. Several members have said that they're interested in supplying birthday cakes and we'd like to include as many members as possible so we can continue this celebration of your new year of life. Please join in on the celebration. We thank you for your support.

I would also like to mention that I am still in need of a **kitchen assistant** who will help me set up the refreshments etc. before the service and also to help me clear away when everyone is finished.

Also - **Hosts/hostesses/servers** and **help required during clear-up** required for Potluck meals etc. Please consider volunteering.

On that note, our **Koffee Kitty** is feeling a little neglected. Please make a small donation if you are able Potluck meals etc

NB. If you are bringing home made food for the Fellowship hour and/or for the Pot Luck meals, please either list the ingredients or inform me, so that members and guests who are gluten/lactose intolerant or have other food allergies will know in advance.

Thank you, Wilma Swartz.



January 2024 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 Cheryl (520 732 6052) of substitutions

ALL SUNDAYS – DEACON - DOTTIE GUTWEIN

Saturday January 4th		
LEM –Jeff Speer	Lector – Tim Holsonback	Altar guild – Jeff Speer
Saturday December 11th		
LEM - Robin StClair	Lector – Jeff Speer	Alter Guild – Robin StClair
Saturday January 18th		
LEM – Tim Holsonback	Lector – Jeff Speer	Altar Guild – Tim Holsonback
Saturday January 25th		
Evening Prayer – Jeff Speer		
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Sunday January 5th BIRTHDAY SUNDAY		
LEM –MJ Mahland	Lector –Peggy Brown	Altar Guild – TBD
Sunday January 12th		
LEM – Robin StClair	Lector – Anne Roth	Altar Guild – Robin StClair
Sunday January 19th		
LEM –Cheryl Stone	Lector – Ed Stone	Altar Guild – Cheryl Stone
Sunday January 26th		
LEM –Nancy Rea	Lector – Ann Crandall	Altar Guild – Nancy Rea



Donna Savill	January 12th
William Saunders	January 12th
Bill Carswell	January 21st
Andrea K. Bisby-Akin	January 28th

Sunday January 5th will be “**BIRTHDAY SUNDAY**” celebrating everyone who has a birthday in the month of January. There will be cake for all to enjoy.

January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	2	3 Film Night 5.30pm "Selma" in the Church Parish Hall	4 5.00 pm Spoken Service with Holy Communion
5 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	6	7 Bible Study 5 pm Via Zoom	8 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	9	10	11 5.00 pm Service followed by Supper at Chili's 6.30 pm
12 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	13	14 Bible Study 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 5 pm Via Zoom	22 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	23	24 Newsletter Articles Due For February Issue	25 5.00 pm Evening Prayer
26 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	27	28 Bible Study 5 pm Via Zoom	29 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	30	31	

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

Following on from Allison's article regarding New Year's Traditions, since the first New Year's Eve I can remember from my childhood in London, we always followed the Scottish tradition of 'First Footing'. We have no links to Scotland nor Scottish ancestors, but we always carried it out.

My father was usually 'First Footer' (first footers are traditionally male) and must not be in the home as midnight approaches. At the stroke of midnight, he may enter-being the first over the threshold-and bring with him a piece of bread, a coin and a lump of coal (or wood) to ensure that the occupants would have enough food, money and fuel for warmth throughout the incoming year. My eldest brother started to take over the 'duty' just before he was 'called up' for military service in 1956.

In later years, after we all had flown the nest, we kept up the tradition as best we could. I was lucky. Where I had moved to, we had a friendly Scotsman living opposite and he'd go first footing for the whole street. How he staggered home after all the beverages he would have been offered on his house visits, I'll never know! Oh and yes, we always follow the English tradition of kissing our loved ones at midnight!

Chet performed the first footing honours this year as we'd both caught Covid over the holidays and were isolating! Wishing you All a Happy and Healthy New Year!! Diane (dianepyancey@gmail.com)

