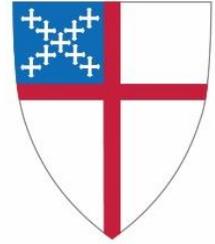




*St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church
Newsletter
February 2026*



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HAPPY
Valentine's Day



From Our Reverend Deacon Dottie

WOW WOW!!! We just took down all the Christmas Season decorations and now in just a few short weeks LENT will begin! Does this mean we have to give up sweets, watching TV or whatever other pleasures? Kind of the opposite of a New Year's Resolution, I guess. But, let me share something with you about the season of Lent and why we honor it-----The Season of Lent is an ancient part of Christian History. The early church recalled the suffering, death, and resurrection of our Lord for a 4 day remembrance.

Over time, the season was expanded to the present 40 day observation. Lent is an opportunity to renew and strengthen our spiritual lives, through study and personal practices such as penance, fasting and abstinence, donating to charity, and spiritual exercises such as Stations of the Cross, etc. I invite any and all to join me in walking the Stations of the Cross at church every Friday during lent starting on Feb. 20th at 6pm. In the past we carry the wooden Cross, take turns with the readings and holding the Cross as we approach each station.

Also, during Lent, I invite anyone interested in learning more about some of the Saints (translated means Witnesses) =====both men and women are subjects of this brief study and discussion time. It will be Saturday mornings at 10am in the fellowship/parish hall starting February 21st. Looking forward to seeing y'all there.

Wishing you all a Happy Valentines Day!!!!
Reverend Dottie Gutwein, Deacon

From Our Reverend Deacon Sherry



DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

In the words of Pope Francis

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

pietrafitness.com



Blessings
Deacon Sherry

From our Treasurer



We stepped into a New Year with a number of changes. One is the appointment of Fr. JJ Bernal to St. Stephen's Sierra Vista. He actually began on November 1, but he was already tied to St. Stephen's Douglas and to his ministry at the Border. The Annual Meeting of the church on January 24 was designed to be transparent about what our church is doing inside and outside. The budget for 2025 was over by a little, but there were reasons. The budget for 2026 is up some, mostly for one item. Yes, the bills went up – like every other home. But we are also paying our two Deacons now. During this transitional year, they have been carrying a great deal of the load of preparing worship, teaching, and doing pastoral care visits. Fr. JJ is here for a couple of days a week, and only for one Sunday – the second of the month. He is here for Saturday services, and for the Wednesday service. Our neighbor from St. David, Rev. Henri Capdeville, has also come to celebrate with us on some Sundays. Numbers for the budget are available if you are interested.

Anne Roth, Treasurer.

February 2026 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 Rev Deacon Sherry or Rev Deacon Dottie of substitutions and record substitution on the document posted in the sacristy

Saturday February 7th		
LEM - Jeff Speer	Lector – Tim Holsonback	Altar Guild – Deacon or LEM
Saturday February 14th		
LEM – Tim Holsonback	Lector – Jeff Speer	Altar Guild – Deacon or LEM
Saturday February 21st		
LEM – Tim Holsonback	Lector – Sandra Calhoun	Altar Guild – Deacon or LEM
Saturday February 28th		
LEM – Jeff Speer	Lector – Tim Holsonback	Altar Guild – Deacon or LEM
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Sunday February 1st		
LEM – Nancy Rea	Lector – Anne Roth	Altar Guild – Deacon or LEM
Sunday February 8th	BIRTHDAY SUNDAY	
LEM – MJ Mahland	Lector – Renee Olejnicak	Altar Guild – Deacon or LEM
Sunday February 15th		
LEM – Renee Olejnicak	Lector – Ann Crandall	Altar Guild - Deacon or LEM
Sunday February 22nd		
LEM – Nancy Rea	Lector – Renee Olejnicak	Altar Guild – Deacon or LEM

February 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	2 Bible Study 3 pm Via Zoom	3	4 9.30 am Holy Eucharist and Healing Prayers	5	6 Film Night Cancelled	7 5.00 pm Spoken Service with Holy Communion
8 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	9 Bible Study 3 pm Via Zoom	10	11 9.30 am Holy Eucharist and Healing Prayers	12	13	14 5.00 pm Service Followed by Supper at Golden Dragon Chinese Restaurant 6.30 pm
15 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	16 Bible Study 3 pm Via Zoom	17	18 Ash Wednesday 12 noon & 6pm	19	20 Stations of the Cross 6pm	21 5.00 pm Spoken Service with Holy Communion
22 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	23 Bible Study 3 pm Via Zoom	24 Newsletter Articles Due For March Issue	25 9.30 am Holy Eucharist and Healing Prayers	26	27	28 5.00 pm Spoken Service with Holy Communion

Sunday February 8th will be **“BIRTHDAY SUNDAY”** celebrating everyone who has a birthday in the month of January. There will be cake for all to enjoy.



Andrew Anderson

February 2nd

Sharon Louise Lake

February 10th

Justin C. Crouch

February 12th

Renee Olejnicak

February 19th

Nancy Rea

February 21st

Christopher A. Ferrin

February 26th

Notices and Upcoming Events

February 6th - First Friday Film Night **Cancelled until further notice.**

February 8th – Birthday Sunday – Please note that Birthday Sunday will now be celebrated on the 2nd Sunday of the month.

February 14th 6.30pm – Second Saturday Supper. We will gather at the Golden Dragon Chinese restaurant, 2151 S Highway 92.

Wednesday February 18th Ash Wednesday – two services in church – 12noon and 6pm.

Friday evenings during Lent – Stations of the Cross – 6pm in church.

Saturday mornings at 10am, we are studying the Book of Common Prayer. If anyone would like to join us, please feel free to come to the Parish Hall.

Thank you to everyone for the ongoing donations of (clean) crushed aluminum cans and separated pull tabs. They will be donated to the Animal Shelter. Thank you also for your donations to Huachuca City UMC of dry laundry sheets or laundry powder in Ziplock bags and other personal care items, to assist the needy in our area.

We are still collecting no-longer needed pairs of eye glasses and their cases. We donate them to the local Lion's Club. Please drop them in the box located on the refreshment table in the Parish Hall.

Prayer Requests

If you would like our readers to pray for you or someone you know that is in need of extra prayers for healing or whatever is troubling them, please reach out to us at St. Stephen's Church.

Lord, we ask you to comfort and sustain all who in this transitory life are in sickness, or any other adversity. Open their hearts to know your love and feel your presence.

We pray for:

- Ed and Cheryl Stone (For continued healing and comfort)
- Alverita Egbert (For continued healing and comfort)
- Doris Millard (For continued healing and comfort)
- Jerry and Susan Fine (Continuing prayers for healing and peace)
- Carol Roselli (For continued healing and comfort)
- Mary Jane Mahland (For upcoming knee surgery)
- Bill and Mindy Saunders (For continues healing for both)
- Dennis Gallus (for continued healing)
- Harriet Kolen (As she heals from a broken ankle)
- Deacon Robin Hollis (Recovering at home)
- Andy Anderson (For continued healing and comfort)
- Martin McKinley (For the repose of his soul, may he rest in peace)

We pray also for:

*All who have been affected by unreasonable violence, weather, and struggling to make ends meet/care for self and families worldwide.

*St Stephen's Church Search Committee, that they will soon be interviewing prospects for our new Vicar Position.

*Thanksgiving for our newest Bishops Committee members, Sharon Lake and our new Senior Warden, Nancy Rea.

*Thanksgiving and congratulations to all the new ordinands to the Arizona Diocese as Deacons, especially for Barbara Lopes of St Raphael's Church, Benson.



"Sonoran Awakening"

The desert breathes a cooler sigh,
Beneath a vast and turquoise sky.
February's touch, a gentle hand,
Awakens life across the land.
No winter's white, but colors bright,
Where purple sage drinks morning light.

The prickly pear, with tender green,
Hides buds of pink, a joyful scene.
Cactus flowers, bold and rare,
Unfurl their beauty on the air.
Desert daisies, small and sweet,
Welcome the sun's returning heat.

Coyotes call as daylight fades,
Through rocky hills and sunlit glades.
Monsoon dreams still far away,
But promise blooms with every day.
Arizona's heart, resilient, strong,
Sings winter's end, a hopeful song.

This poem by Andrew Jackson Downing captures themes of early spring in the Arizona desert, referencing sage, cactus blooms, and the unique seasonal beauty of the region, inspired by the vibrant colors and awakening life found there even in February.

To submit an article or update prayer requests, please contact the editor: dianepyancey@gmail.com