

The Witness

Volume 26, Issue 8

Welcoming Worshipping Working

August 2022

Special points of interest:

Sunday

8:00 AM Service
10:00 AM Service

Tuesday

5:00 PM Centering
Prayer via Zoom

Wednesday

12:15 PM Service

*August is like the
Sunday of Summer*

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Why celebrate?

By The Rev. Ian M. Delinger

The Second Sunday in September has been designated as our patronal festival, the day we remember our patron saint, Stephen, the Church's first Deacon and first Christian martyr. Patronal festivals have been observed for centuries, and while we may place particular focus on St. Stephen, our worship is always of God: Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier. We remember and give thanks for the witness to Jesus Christ that the patron gave, in the case of St. Stephen, with his life.

In 2019, Bishop Mary joined us for St. Stephen's Day and confirmed and baptized members of the congregation. In 2020, St. Stephen's Day was pre-vaccine, and our worship was offered online. Last year, we missed Bishop Lucinda due to her contracting COVID the week before but had a great celebration in the parking lot. This year, Bishop Lucinda *will* be joining us. The Staff are planning a series of activities on Saturday and Sunday, September 10 & 11. We want this celebration to include you, anyone you bring with you and members of the wider SLO Community.



Highlights from
St. Stephen's day 2021

Celebrations serve many purposes. In a patronal festival, we honor Christ through the life and witness of St. Stephen. With a Bishop's Visitation, we acknowledge that the Church, the Body of Christ is far bigger than those who gather within our walls. Through music and enriched worship, we praise God through the Gifts of the Spirit that we have been given. By sharing food and drink, we give thanks for one another and our presence in one another's lives. By inviting our friends, family members, colleagues, and neighbors, we acknowledge that we are open and welcoming, not a closed members-only club, that we are thankful for the diversity that we are among, and that corporately we are a part of the community of SLO.

This particular celebration is our opportunity to honor all of that *and* re-ignite who we are as a St. Stephen's Family now that we can be together more easily than we have for the previous 2½ years! If you haven't been to in-person worship yet and are looking

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for the “right opportunity”, this is it! If you’ve been meaning to ask a friend to join you for the experience of worship at St. Stephen’s, this is the time! If you receive The Witness but have rarely attended Sunday Services and want to join us once again, this is the moment! Whoever you are, and wherever you are on your spiritual journey, St. Stephen’s welcomes you.

For those of you who have been attending worship since we reopened the building on July 4 last year, I want you to invite the wider community. Friends, family members, colleagues and neighbors are definitely welcome. But also, someone from another organization you belong to. If you belong to a community organization, invite the chairperson or someone you’re close to. The person doesn’t need to be seeking a place of worship (*but they may be, or they may be members of other faith organizations – we aren’t trying to poach them!*) – invite them as a representative of that organization. Encourage them to wear a t-shirt from that organization. I will be extending an invitation to members of at least 6 organizations that St. Stephen’s works with, and 2 have already put the date into their calendars!

Our patronal festival should never be just about us; our worship should never be just about us. We gather together to worship the Living God. Yet, we are living lives enriched by so many other things! There is no reason to maintain a rigid separation between the two. There is every reason to have the excuse to bring them together and celebrate the rich and full lives God has given you!

St. Stephen’s Day!

We turn 155 this year! And we’re going to celebrate with music, worship and a birthday party!

On Saturday, September 10, we will welcome Bishop Lucinda with a Music Recital featuring our Organist, Choral Scholars, and St. Stephen’s Chancel Choir. The recital will be in the sanctuary at 7:00pm followed by a desserts reception in Ramsden Hall.

On Sunday, September 11, Bishop Lucinda will be the Celebrant at both the 8am and 10am Services. The 10am Eucharist will include the full musical brigade of St. Stephen’s: Organist, Choral Scholars, and Chancel Choir, and the Bishop will Baptize and Receive members into our household of faith.

After the 10am Eucharist, it’s time to have a BIRTHDAY PARTY! We will celebrate our founding date (*which is actually a week earlier*) with fun festivities and bounteous fare. The entire neighborhood is invited to our party. This is a great day to bring a friend and their family to St. Stephen’s!

Let’s show Bishop Lucinda how San Luis Obispo knows how to have fun while Welcoming, Worshipping and Working!

CELEBRATING
OUR COMMUNITY
ST STEPHEN’S BIRTHDAY PARTY
SEPT 11, 2022



St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church
Welcoming Worshipping Working

CREATION CARE REFLECTIONS

On the final day of the recently concluded 2022 General Convention of the Episcopal Church, the House of Bishops issued a “Mind of the House” statement on climate change and our responsibilities as stewards of creation. I offer here some excerpts that comprise the core message, taken directly from the statement, and published by the Episcopal News Service.

“God is the source of all creation, and we, humankind – made in God’s image – have been given the gift of life and responsibility to care for creation. We depend on God’s creation to sustain our life together, and, by serving as good stewards of creation, we reflect God’s tender love for all that has been made. . . .

We are only fully human and fully alive when we are in right relationship with the whole created order. Apart from each other and nature, we are not our whole selves. It is no surprise that once Adam and Eve surrendered to temptation and sought to grasp divine knowledge, to idolize and center the self over all else, that the whole creation began to suffer, and humanity along with it. Sin flowed forth in estrangement, exile, and eventually violence and death.

The pattern of separation and sin is ours today. We crave and hoard what we do not need. We take and grasp what does not belong to us. We burden and dominate what was meant to be free. As a result, the planet and our most vulnerable neighbors suffer. This flows from our failure as human beings to live as the people made in [the] image of God, bearing the sacred responsibility entrusted to us.

Climate change and environmental degradation are manifestations of our turning away from God. The effects of this willful separation from God resonate across our collective lives: All areas of justice are either worsened or made better depending on the health of the planet. A changing climate and degraded environment worsen conflict, forces human migration, and causes food insecurity. These related crises increase the rate of violence, cause more natural disasters and humanitarian crises, and deepen the wounds of those already suffering from racism. People living in poverty are plunged further into poverty by the deteriorating condition of the planet.

As people of faith we are not without hope, but the sustainability of God’s creation demands our action. Confronting climate change and environmental degradation has never been more urgent. As members of The Episcopal Church, we are committed in baptism to resist evil, seek God’s will, treat all people with dignity, and strive for justice and peace.

If we hope to treat all human beings with dignity, we must address climate change so droughts, floods, and extreme weather patterns don’t force people into exile and desperate, life- threatening migration.

If we hope to build peace, we must address climate change so that competition for scarce resources does not drive further violence.

If we hope to ensure that every child of God has enough to eat, we must address climate change so that our bountiful earth can continue to support and sustain food systems that nourish people and the soil.”

Our Stewardship program at St. Stephen’s includes stewardship of creation, along with time, talent and treasure. Already we’re using fewer disposable items (paper plates, cups, etc.) at coffee hour, whether hosting in Ramsden Hall or outside in the courtyard. As plans for resurfacing the parking lot evolve, we seek to include as many environmentally friendly features as possible. And we’re considering a move to drought-tolerant landscaping to save water and money. Our water bill currently runs around \$250 per month and has been as high as \$400. With more water efficient landscaping we should be able to save more.

If you have ideas or suggestions for how St. Stephen’s can better its stewardship of creation, please speak to a member of the Creation Care committee or the Vestry. In answer to the question, “what can a small parish accomplish”, consider the possibility that a majority of Episcopal parishes would act on the House of Bishops’ call to action. This would make a material difference and set a helpful example for our local communities.

Kathryn Bumpass



Coffee Hour

St. Stephen’s Coffee Café is open and in need of hosts for the summer. Doughnuts have been donated for the summer. Volunteers requested to make the coffee and the lemonade. Only 4 openings for the month of August!!!!

Centering Prayer

Please consider joining the Centering Prayer Group.
Currently they are meeting via Zoom.

Where: on your computer or telephone

When: Tuesdays at 5-5:30PM

How: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://tinyurl.com/CenteringPrayer2022>

Meeting ID: 327 152 8720

Password: 0908

Dial by your location:

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose),

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

When prompted enter the Meeting ID and Password.



Hands-On Stewardship:



Thank you to those watching the services at home on our Facebook page or on YouTube.

Thank you to Bill Crewe, Lynn Hollister, Kay Lewis, Carolyn Platt, Elizabeth Potter and Kathleen Pennington for counting the collection and preparing the deposits during July.

Thank you to all who helped fold, tape, and label The Witness.



General Information

The Witness is a monthly newsletter published by St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, San Luis Obispo, CA to provide information about the parish to the congregation. Subscriptions are free to anyone. Send request along with your name and mailing address to the church office. Donations to help offset distribution costs are appreciated.

Make checks payable to St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church

The Church’s e-mail address is: office@ststephenslo.org

Contribution of articles is encouraged. Please e-mail submissions to witness@ststephenslo.org
The deadline for emailed submission of articles is the third Friday of the month. Email any questions to witness@ststephenslo.org © Copyright 2022 by St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church. All rights reserved.

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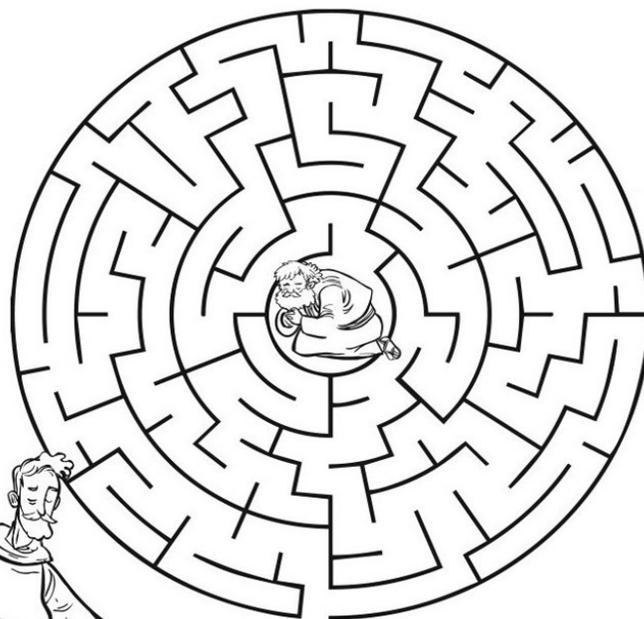
+ + + + + Saint Stephen + + + + +

Stephen is the Patron Saint of St. Stephen's Episcopal church. He was born in Jerusalem and lived in Jesus' time. God worked many miracles through Stephen and he spoke with such wisdom and grace that many of his hearers became followers of Jesus.

Stephen was the first martyr of the church, the first disciple who died for his faith in Jesus. Enemies of the Church of Jesus threw stones at Stephen to kill him and while they were throwing stones Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit," and "Lord do not hold this sin against them." As well as being the patron saint of our church, St. Stephen is also the patron saint of altar servers, Deacons, stonemasons, Italy and Germany.

We remember Stephen because he helped take care of widows and poor people, fearlessly told people about Jesus and was the first disciple to die for his faith.

Read about Stephen in Acts 6:1-7:60



START

Help Stephen get through the maze to preach to help the man in the middle.

T	B	W	I	S	D	O	M	H	F	N	R	W
S	U	O	M	E	H	P	S	A	L	B	Q	O
T	E	N	I	S	C	H	E	A	R	T	E	R
I	M	D	R	S	O	M	N	N	Y	D	G	D
F	X	E	A	E	U	G	O	G	A	N	Y	S
F	I	R	C	N	N	N	M	E	E	A	P	T
N	C	S	L	T	C	I	R	L	G	H	T	E
E	O	A	E	I	I	D	E	N	O	T	S	P
C	A	U	S	W	L	N	S	R	D	H	W	H
K	T	L	M	A	H	A	R	B	A	G	E	E
E	S	L	A	F	H	T	I	A	F	I	J	N
D	Z	K	T	J	O	S	E	P	H	R	A	G
Y	J	L	H	A	K	S	F	V	W	V	E	R

Find the following words in the box to the left:

- ABRAHAM
- ANGEL
- BLASPHEMOUS
- COATS
- COUNCIL
- EGYPT
- FAITH
- FALSE
- GOD
- HEART
- JEWS
- JOSEPH
- MIRACLES
- RIGHTHAND
- SAUL
- SERMON
- STANDING
- STEPHEN
- STIFFNECKED
- STONED
- SYNAGOGUE
- WISDOM
- WITNESSES
- WONDERS
- WORDS



Look who is Celebrating in August

Anniversary

2-Aug Bob & Carol Misson
 19-Aug Bob & Diane Levison
 29-Aug Lee & Lynn Hollister

Birthdays

19-Aug Gina Hafemeister
 25-Aug Pam Myers
 George Gorrindo
 26-Aug Carol Astaire
 31-Aug Kay Lewis
 Anastasia Preston
 Bob Levison

If we are missing your special celebration and you would like to share it with us. Please send an email, write a note, call the office on the phone and we would love to add you to the list.

Calling All Glasses!

For just over a year now, we have been receiving the Communion wine in a glass/ mug/cup that each of you bring. There are some pretty schnazzy receptacles that come forward on a Sunday morning! Jesus would probably most definitely approve! Not only should you continue to bring your glass/mug/cup on Sunday mornings, but bring it to be in the Best Communion Glass Contest! On St. Stephen's Day, September 11, all of the glasses will be lined up. People will buy tokens, and with these tokens, they will vote on their favorite glass/mug/cup by dropping a token into those they love. Votes can be cast for more than one or multiple votes for the same one. The glass/mug/cup with the most tokens WINS! The owner gets to choose which local charity the proceeds from the contest will go. If you feel that you need to level-up your glass/mug/cup, start bringing it soon. To be eligible, a glass/ mug/cup must have been used at least once for Communion. We miss our beloved chalice and the common cup. One day we will return to it.



Bible Selections for August

	7-Aug-22	14-Aug-22	21-Aug-22	28-Aug-22
	Pent 9 / Proper 14C	Pent 10 / Proper 15C	Pent 11 / Proper 16C	Pent 12 / Proper 17C
1st READING	Isaiah 1:1,10-20	Isaiah 5:1-7	Jeremiah 1:4-10	Jeremiah 2:4-13
PSALM	Psalm 50:1-8,23-24	Psalm 80:1-2,8-18	Psalm 71:1-6	Psalm 81:1,10-16
2nd READING	Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16	Hebrews 11:29-12:2	Hebrews 12:18-29	Hebrews 13:1-8,15-16
GOSPEL	Luke 12:32-40	Luke 12:49-56	Luke 13:10-17	Luke 14:1,7-14

THE FRIEND WHO CARES

When we honestly ask ourselves which persons in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving much advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a gentle and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not-knowing, not-curing, not-healing, and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is the friend who cares. **"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." (JOHN 15:13)**

What then is care? The word care finds its origin in the word kara, which means "to lament, to mourn, to participate in suffering, to share in pain." To care is to cry out with those who are ill, confused, lonely, isolated, and forgotten, and to recognize their pains in our own heart. To care is to enter into the world of those who are only touched by hostile hands, to listen attentively to those whose words are only heard by greedy ears, and to speak gently with those who are used to harsh orders and impatient requests. To care is to be present to those who suffer and to stay present even when nothing can be done to change their situation. To care is to be compassionate and so to form a community of people honestly facing the painful reality of our finite existence. To care is the most human gesture, in which the courageous confession of our common brokenness does not lead to paralysis but to community. When the humble confession of our basic human brokenness forms the ground from which all skillful healing comes forth, then cure can be welcomed not as a property to be claimed, but as a gift to be shared in gratitude. **"But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his [or her] own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me." (JOHN 16:32)**

James Murphy, past Association President

Copied from the Marine Corps Engineer Association Sunday Newsletter

Volunteer on St. Stephen's Day

Here are opportunities for you to share your time and talent for our Birthday Party and to make it a great success:

Saturday, September 10

Recital Ushers – Saturday, September 10

Recital Reception – Saturday, September 10

Sunday, September 11

BBQ Cooks (hamburgers and sausages)

Picnic Potluck Dishes

Potluck Servers

Game Helpers

Set-up and Decorate

Tear-Down

There will be an informative meeting after the 10am Eucharist on Sunday, August 7 in Ramsden Hall with Cassandra Tarantino, Director of Music

Look for the Sign-Up List in Ramsden Hall

THANK YOU FOR YOUR BIRTHDAY PARTY SPIRIT!

St. Stephen's

Episcopal Church

Welcoming Worshiping Working

1344 Nipomo Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-3935

805-543-7212
office@ststephensslo.org
www.ststephensslo.org
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SLO4Home Afghan Refugee Resettlement

A few at St. Stephen's are keeping track of the progress of the welcoming of Afghan refugees into our community. So far, we haven't put boots on the ground, but we are aware of the needs. There are now two families here in SLO. Fr Ian attended a welcome event in July. We have the opportunity to support this effort financially, and now with the incentive of doubling our money (see below). If you would like to contribute to St. Stephen's' contribution, please send your check to the church, made out to St. Stephen's, with "SLO4Home" in the memo. Please do so by August 24. A check for the sum of the contributions will be given to SLO4Home from St. Stephen's.

To inspire the community to ensure that refugees fleeing unimaginable circumstances are supported when they arrive in SLO, Rick Stollmeyer, CEO, Inspired Flight Technologies, Inc., Co-Founder of Mindbody, has generously pledged a \$300,000 matching gift to SLO4Home.

"This gift is an opportunity to ensure that our community can be a place of refuge and safety for families as they start over," said Stollmeyer. "This is what it looks like when SLO puts our values into action. SLO4Home has stepped up to provide the kind of assistance for refugees that hasn't before existed in our community, and I am proud to support their essential work."


Family • Community • Safety • Prosperity