

# The Voice of St. Stephen

Volume 12 Issue 3

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## LIVING THE SPIRIT OF EASTER BE FEARLESS, BE JOYFUL, BE RENEWED

The Easter season - beginning on Easter Sunday and continuing for fifty days - is an opportunity for us to cultivate a spirit that defines who we are as Christians. What does living the spirit of the Easter season mean in practical terms? Here are some concrete suggestions on how to do that.

Joy is a deep-down gladness that cannot be taken away, even in the midst of sorrow or pain or death. The passion and resurrection of Jesus teach us that suffering is transformed through faith in the risen Christ. With this faith, we are able to hold on to an enduring sense of joy even in the midst of the sadness we experience from the loss of a loved one, a failure to achieve an important goal, or a setback during recovery from an illness.

The resurrection teaches us that God can overcome anything, even death. When the risen Christ appears to the women at the tomb and later to his disciples, his first words are, "Do not be afraid!" These words speak to our hearts, helping us cope with the fear from the loss of a job, a serious illness, or a crumbling relationship. Our faith allows us to trust that God can overcome our most serious problems bring the death of fear.

Easter means to live with a sense of newness. Just as the return of spring lifts our spirits and makes us feel like the whole world is new, the resurrection of Jesus makes all things new. The Easter spirit is a spirit of renewal that enables us to show up with a positive attitude, to renew relationships, and to express appreciation and affection to those closest to us. It means to see the world through different eyes - through God's eyes.

We can use the fifty days to cultivate an Easter spirit that enables us to be truly Christian: embracing joy, living without fear, and seeing the world again - as if for the first time.



**HE IS RISEN**

CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTION

## St Stephen Anglican Church

Anglican Church in North America

# PASTOR'S CORNER

A FEW WORDS FROM FATHER JIM

## LIVING AN EASTER LIFE IN A GOOD FRIDAY WORLD

As followers of Jesus, we know that his death was the antidote for our sin. He was, and is, the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world. We speak often of his death, but not too often do we speak of the resurrection - at least not until Easter rolls around every year.

In his book, *On The Resurrection*, author Eugene Peterson observes, "It's interesting that the world has had very little success in commercializing Easter - turning it into a commodity - as it has Christmas." If our commercial world can't find a way to make money on it, they lose interest. But resurrection is not available for our use. It's exclusively God's operation.

During this Easter season, I believe it's important to ask, "What does it mean to me personally that Jesus Christ, God's only Son, died and rose again? Does it - and if so, how does it - affect the way I live, each and every day? Does it impact how I live and love and behave and think?"

The apostle Paul declared the resurrection to be of utmost importance for our faith in his first letter to the Corinthians, where he writes, "Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved. For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures."

Saint Paul goes on to say that if there is no resurrection, then our preaching is vain and so is our faith. We need the resurrection. His letter states, "If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied." The resurrection impacts our faith both now and for all of eternity. Through it, the Lord offers assurance of his promises, hope to dispel the fear of death, and power beyond ourselves.

The Book of Revelation leaves us with a picture of resurrection, "God will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." As I reflect on the question I asked earlier about how the resurrection affects the way I live my life, I realize the answer is in an old hymn from my youth, "What have I to fear? What have I to dread?"

# COMMUNITY INTEREST

## NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

### **GREAT RESPONSE TO TITHE PLEDGING!**

When we decided for the first time to use a pledge system for better forecasting of our tithe revenues, we had no idea how people would respond. We are glad to report that the response was wonderful and that pledges are sufficient to cover seventy-five percent of our budget. For the first two months of the year, most of us have been very faithful in fulfilling their pledges. Please use the envelope system as a reminder tool so that we can continue to support our church in a sustainable way into the future.

### **DIOCESAN SYNOD IN OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND**

Father Jim, Father Rickey, and Deacon Clay will be attending our MDAS Synod in Ocean City, Maryland on Thursday-Saturday, March 15-17. This is the annual meeting where the business of our diocese is conducted. The MDAS is a non-geographical diocese, so this is one of the very few opportunities our clergy have to spend time together. In addition to the business portion of the meeting, there will be retreat teaching sessions and time for fellowship. Please pray for safe travel and for a successful meeting.

### **SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY RETURNS**

Dr. Brian Shoemaker continues his teaching of our Adult Bible Study on Sunday mornings at 9:30. Brian is opening the Gospel of John, enabling us to learn more of Jesus through the eyes of the beloved disciple and the response has been very encouraging. Please take advantage of this wonderful resource as an avenue of learning and growth.



### **THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**



Saint James wrote, "Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed." In addition to the healing grace that flows from God, spiritual and psychological healing comes from openly revealing our sins. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available at the church from 10:30 AM until Noon on Saturday, March 10, as well as at any time by appointment.

## PAGE SIX: VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY

### CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

#### A REFLECTION ON LENT FROM JOYCE CURRY

Lent is a time to practice our hearing. For many of us, our spiritual listening skills are probably not very good. There is so much noise around us: news and messages demanding our attention, music through earbuds to facilitate our escape to some other world that we would rather be in, and background television that is on everywhere we go.



Lent is a gift from the church for us to tune into what God is trying to tell us. I approach Lent as a time of warning, much like the road signs like Dead End, Slow, Curve Ahead, or Exit. All these messages are meant to alert us, calling for needed behavior changes before we get into trouble.

The prodigal son found great mercy and a much better life when he returned to his father, but he had to acknowledge his mistakes and reverse direction. Lent invites us to do the same. The ultimate goal of Lent is to end up in that kingdom in which the prodigal son made his home. Yes, Lent reminds us of our faults, but it does not end there. Such examination helps us to get out of the ruts that prevent us from living our full potential as children of God: gifted, loved, and made in His image.

Lent probes our ways that can be small and foolish in light of the real prize. It speaks with a certain urgency to not waste time, to not waste our lives. Lent offers hope in that my repentance does not all depend on me, but on God's grace that is there for our asking. Lent invites us to ask.

The first step in listening to God is to assert and affirm our desire to hear Him and to actively place ourselves in His presence. For these forty days



of Lent, we can hang a "reserve" sign on certain moments of the day so we can listen to God through scripture, prayer, the needs of others, and our own hearts. We are all a bit lost, but Lent is that time to turn our ears, minds and hearts to God who will always be there to listen.

## LECTIONARY / READER / ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

### 03/04/18      Third Sunday in Lent

First Reading	Exodus 20:1-17	Mark Styles
Psalm 19	Prayers of the People	Clay Cook
Second Reading	Romans 7:13-25	Mark Styles
Gospel Reading	John 2:13-22	

### 03/11/18      Fourth Sunday in Lent

First Reading	2 Chronicles 36:14-23	Kathy Caccamo
Psalm 122	Prayers of the People	Diana Flatico
Second Reading	Ephesians 2:4-10	Kathy Caccamo
Gospel Reading	John 6:4-15	

### 03/18/18      Fifth Sunday in Lent

First Reading	Jeremiah 31:31-34	Michael Flatico
Psalm 51	Prayers of the People	Brian Shoemaker
Second Reading	Hebrews 5:5-10	Michael Flatico
Gospel Reading	John 12:20-33	

### 03/25/18      Palm/Passion Sunday

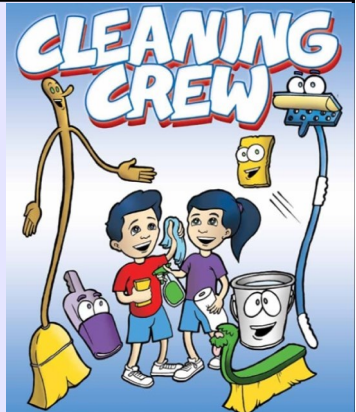
First Reading	Isaiah 45:21-25	Vicki Luckett
Psalm 22	Prayers of the People	Jessica Cook
Second Reading	Philippians 2:5-11	Vicki Luckett
Gospel Reading	Mark 15:1-39	

### 04/01/18      Resurrection (Easter) Sunday

First Reading	Isaiah 25:6-9	Joyce Curry
Psalm 118	Prayers of the People	Mark Styles
Second Reading	Acts 10:34-43	Joyce Curry
Gospel Reading	Mark 16:1-8	

## Church Cleaning Schedule

02/26 - 03/03	Rachelle Lo / Family
03/05 - 03/10	D Renfrow / D Flatico
03/12 - 03/17	V O'Banion / B Brown
03/19 - 03/24	J Curry / J Cook
03/26 - 03/31	Rachelle Lo / Family



# St Stephen Anglican Church

**Church Location:** 8005 Vaughn Mill Rd.  
Louisville, KY 40228

**Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 91485  
Louisville, KY 40291

**Church Office:** 502-231-1326  
**Church E-Mail:** [ststephen@ststephenlouisville.org](mailto:ststephen@ststephenlouisville.org)

**Rector:** Father Jim Curry  
**Cell Phone:** 502-930-7018  
**E-Mail:** [fatherjim@ststephenlouisville.org](mailto:fatherjim@ststephenlouisville.org)

**Associate Rector:** Father Rickey Brown  
**Cell Phone:** 502-827-8291  
**E-Mail:** [rickey@bardstowncable.net](mailto:rickey@bardstowncable.net)

**Pastoral Associate:** Deacon Clay Cook  
**Cell Phone:** 502-269-8410  
**E-Mail:** [clay.cook125@gmail.com](mailto:clay.cook125@gmail.com)

<b>Office Manager:</b>	Position Open
<b>Altar Guild Ministry:</b>	Brenda Brown
<b>Outreach Ministry:</b>	Joyce Curry
<b>Fellowship Ministry:</b>	Jessica Cook
<b>Facilities Manager:</b>	John Lyons

<b>Worship &amp; Holy Eucharist</b>	10:30 AM
<b>Adult Bible Study</b>	9:30 AM

Our hope is that Saint Stephen Anglican Church is not just a place that you attend once a week, but a place where you can connect with people and be involved in life changing ministry. Faith should touch every part of our lives. Come on in. We've been expecting you.



**LIVE AN EASTER LIFE!**