



April—May 2024

My dear friends at St. Stephen's



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Spring has sprung. I am having fun being able to leave doors or windows open for a while and feeling the fresh air enter the long closed rooms at home.

Easter has reminded me of new birth, of rebirth, of renewal. I always feel such eagerness to get things done in the spring. I admit that this year each ordinary task I remember loving takes me more time, more adjustments to the way I have done things in past years, and more rests. I just can't do what I could do this year. Jim and I have

had to share some duties, combine our strength and energy in new ways. Some things just don't get done.

We have picked up some new activities and certainly do the old ones in new ways. We figure we can make adjustments or we can give up on some things.

Sometimes we have to do things we don't want to do, give up things we love doing. This happens in our personal lives, even on jobs, in our social life over the years.

Same things happen in a group of people over the years. We loose energy do things we "used to" love and value. Or the person who organized the activity has moved away. You know what I mean. It's hard to face - at home or at church. During announcements yesterday, I heard people stand up and talk about the upcoming Bicentennial Celebration, the Rummage Sale, the Mother's Day plant sale, the Memorial Day Parade Ice Cream Social, a vestry meeting. Things are still happening here at St. Stephen's. People are here week in, week out for worship.

Things have changed as well. We are renting out the Rectory where you were so used to having a priest live. We are renting out space in the Parish House for classes, events, meetings, and Yoga. AA and Alanon still meet here, as well as an Embroidery Group, and a Women's Group. It is good to know all that work you have put into cleaning and freshening up the buildings is reaping rewards now. We have a Deacon on staff for the first time. We need to share her with the district and she won't always be here every Sunday. Deacon Lynne brings a special energy and enriches our activities as well as our worship. So much to be grateful for!

Spring is change. Let's embrace it. Just like the disciples found themselves carrying on in good times and the difficult ones as well, our little faith community thrives as we do the same thing here.

Jesus left us with a basic command - we are to love one another. Just like Jesus and the Father love one another. While Jesus was on earth, it looked very different than it had before then, but God was still God and this is something we can rely on as we go forward here at St. Stephen's.

As you know after June our paths will diverge. We will all be doing things differently. But we are still going to be "doing our thing". We know that "with God's help", we will continue in ways we might not be able imagine today.

Things will seem scary at times, delightful at times, slow or too fast at times, but God's call to us is ongoing. God's grace will continue to continue to sustain us in new ways.

My prayer for you all is that you can cultivate a sense of wonder and joy as changes happen. You have - and certainly the church has shown strength and resolve through these 200 years - or St. Stephen's would not have hung in there. I find that resiliency - that ability to stretch and relax into changes is a critical success factor in transition. I think the people of St. Stephen's have proven yourselves to be the most resilient parish I have ever known. Such a blessing.

Isn't it fun to imagine what God might have in store for us next. And so we will "labor on". I for one want to do that smiling, seeing what is around every corner, enjoying all I can, dealing with some "stuff" and delighting in the rest. Right now, I am committing myself to living the best way I can, following the God who has brought me to many new and challenging moments. I have to trust our God who brought me here and allowed me to serve the good people of St. Stephen's for these three years. We all have adventures ahead. Can we do it? Yes, we will with God's help.

Faithfully, joyfully,
Mother Kathlyn +



This July, delegates from all over the Episcopal Church, in the US and far beyond these borders, to grapple with the ongoing decisions and planning needed. This year, our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will retire from that position after serving the whole of his nine year

term. There is a slate of five Bishops ready for the election of the next "PB". One of the five is our own Bishop DeDe Duncan-Probe. Please keep the Bishops, the lay and ordained delegates in your prayers that they make wise decisions as we move forward in these difficult years for denominational church.

Coming Events

Memorial Day parade and Ice Cream Sundae Social:

Please join us for the Memorial Day parade and Ice cream sundae social on Monday, May 27th! Suggested Donations of \$2 for the ice cream but we are always looking for Vestry members if you're unable to do that.

Set up starts at 5 pm at church, Sundaes at 6 pm, parade starts at 7:00 pm.

See Dora or Sarah Kilian with questions or to donate goodies!



Got Stuff? Our annual Rummage Sale will be held July 12 & 13. Come join the fun!

Set up will begin Tuesday, July 9 and continue every day.

Sale is 9:00 am thru 4:00 on Friday, July 12th

"Bag Sale" 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. July 13.

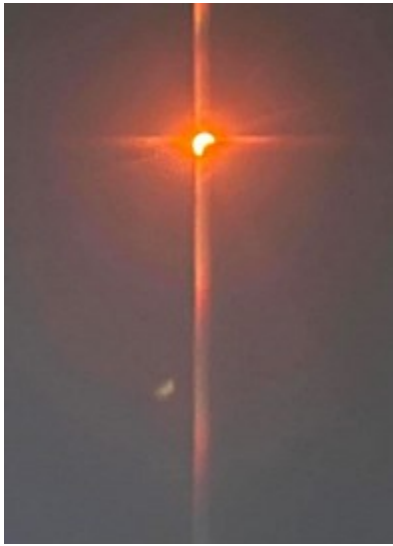
Leftover donations will be distributed after the sale to needy organizations.



Donations may be dropped off July 5, 7, 9, 10, 11 ; 8 am- 1 pm.
See Dora, Barb, or Molly with questions.



Mass at the Lake: The Beyels' have once again invited the congregation to their house on the lake for a service and a potluck lunch. Please save the date of July 21st. The service will begin around 11:00 am. With the potluck following shortly after. See Dora or Jim B for directions, or meet at church to form a convoy!



From a biblical standpoint, the symbolism of the eclipse isn't restricted to the death of Jesus on the Cross. It extends to his entire life as the incarnate Son of God. For a brief moment in history, the glory of the eternal God was veiled in human form, much as the moon temporarily hides the light of the sun.

“The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.” This passage appears to refer to both a solar eclipse (sun turned into darkness) and a lunar eclipse (moon turned into blood).

Warden's Reflections

A Blessed Springtime to All,

As winter starts to fade away and I await the first flowers in my yard. I am reminded of a tale one of my Franciscan sisters told at the beginning of one of our meetings. She shared a time when she was first learning gardening and started with planting seeds. She learned that it didn't matter how the seed went into the soil. The seeds always first start growing the roots and always make sure they go down into the deeper soil. When they have started their root foundation, then they start the process of creating the stem and parts to be above the soil and give us such beauty or other benefits.

This year our parish community is following the example of our plant friends. This is the year of our 200th anniversary . We are remembering our St. Stephen's history. We celebrate the vision of our founders, especially one who was very instrumental in the creation of our parish family and the wonderful building they gave us, Jedidiah Sanger (who also founded New Hartford).

Many of us have had a connection through multiple generations. I can think of one active family that is in their 3rd generation. Many can think of special events in our lives that will always be in our hearts. Maybe yours is the baptism of your baby or grandchild; it could be a wedding or a funeral. We always celebrate both the start of life and our passing on. For a select few, it might be an ordination or a profession.

For others, it could be a special class or group experience. Perhaps you attended Sunday School with Joan Tibbitts, Sharon Vogelaar, Kim DeBuono or me. Maybe you remember youth ministry with Gary Gilbert or Adirondack hiking with Holly Eden, or puppet shows and clown ministry with Kim DeBuono, Yvonne Millar and me.

As we reflect on what lives in your hearts of St. Stephen's, I invite you to recognize it and list it on newsprint which will be hung in the parish hall. We want this year to be a year of remembering the joy and special times and be grateful.

These events have become the roots supporting our faith and our love of God and our neighbors. God and our ancestors have gifted us with the seeds that produced our roots. It is up to us to nurture the continued growth of the stem and branches. Our ancestors have done what was theirs to do. May we do what is ours!

Peace and All Good to you all,
Lynn Herne, TSSF
Senior Warden



Mother's Musings

~ Thank you to all of you who come in with bright greetings and smile encouragingly to each other and to me.

~ It is so good to see that you welcome strangers. Keep up the good work of including each person as they explore where God is calling them here at St. Stephen's. Welcome to Eileen! (Here's my memory - Eileen I hope I have this right - last name Lake?) But Welcome!!!

~ It is so great to have Deacon Lynne with us. I thought she would only be able to stay 6 months - every additional month is a treasure!

~ Rest assured you have a good Vestry who will lead you well into the future. It's a bit restructured with only one Warden. But you have done it that way in the past at times. This time, our Vestry has committed itself to sharing the Warden duties and making sure all the necessary aspects of parish life are shared among the whole vestry.

~ Transitions always present challenges, but this one will be very different from your last transition in terms of sustainability and stability. St. Stephen's is strong. I know the good people of this parish will weather the changes ahead with grace and flexibility.

~ You will get a list of what will focus on what aspect of parish life. I know that some of you are uniquely positioned by experience and sometimes God's call to lend your hand and energy to help in each area. Next newsletter will have that plan with contact information. As you know a church is both a simple and complex organization. Each one of you brings something that is needed here. It's time to step up to try something new or continue to help where so many of you have already chosen to do.

~ A random thought - does anyone know how to or know who might be able to replace the rope on our Bell. The beautiful bell tower is silent again and it would be great to be able to hear the bell ring next month for our Bicentennial Celebration.

~ I will be getting ready to move! All prayers are appreciated. Sorting through the debris of 54 years of life together and 17 years of priestly ministry in parishes, although a daunting task, is proving both challenging and rewarding. I am having fun looking back over these years and getting excited about moving out of state. That process has begun and I am glad for it.

~ This hold a message for the parish. Life goes on despite changes. We have all been through countless transitions in life. Easy or hard, we have been strengthened by them. And I believe deeply that God will never leave us though any of these good or tougher times. As we talked about Sunday - we can trust and abide in that.



Thank you to all who donated food for the St. Margaret's Food Pantry at Grace Church. Pictured are just some of the items collected.

Ashes to Go

It's an "ordinary" weekday, and in the middle of your daily tasks, you stumble into a moment of prayer. The street corner, the coffee shop, or some other ordinary place is suddenly a place where God has come to meet you. The church has come out from behind the comfortable pews and doors to be in the places where the rubber meets the road. It's Ash Wednesday, and you're invited to wear your ashes,



to claim repentance, grace and deep relationship with God for the challenges of your daily life.

"Ashes to Go" is about bringing spirit, belief, and belonging out from behind church doors, and into the places where we go every day. It's a simple event with deep meaning, drawing on centuries of tradition and worship to provide a contemporary moment of grace.



St. Patrick's Day
at St. Stephan's
and Bringing out the Green.



Prayer Against Gun Violence



God of mercy and compassion, who wept with Rachel as she lamented over her children-be with us, who lament the plague of gun violence that lies heavy over our land. Open our eyes to see the ways we might transform the shadow of strife and death into the way of love and peace. Strengthen us to tirelessly care for one another, that we may truly find our security in the boundless love you call us to, and lead us all to your promised future, where no sword will be drawn against another, and no power known but the power of love. All this we ask through the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.

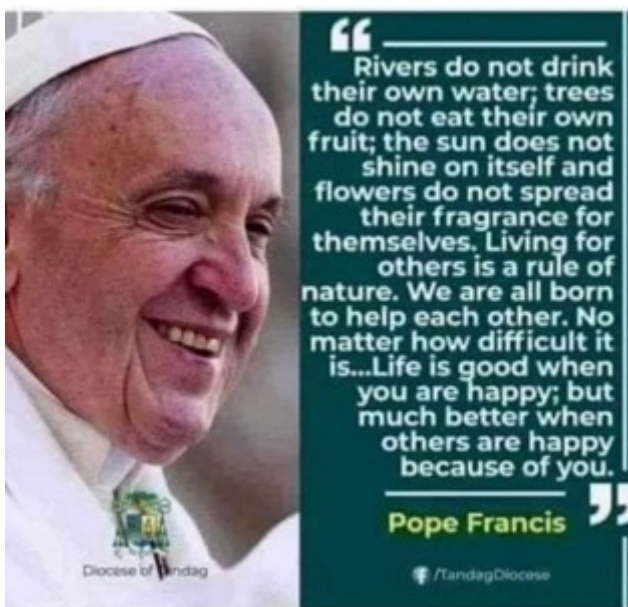
Amen.



The Jelly Beans

Red is for the blood He gave,
Green is for the grass He made,
Yellow is for His sun so bright,
Orange is for the edge of night, Black is for the sins we made,
White is for grace He gave,
Purple is for His hours of sorrow,
Pink is for our new tomorrow.

May every day be Easter in your heart.
May the joy you feel on Easter morning be the joy of each day of your life.



“ Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other. No matter how difficult it is...Life is good when you are happy; but much better when others are happy because of you. ”

Pope Francis

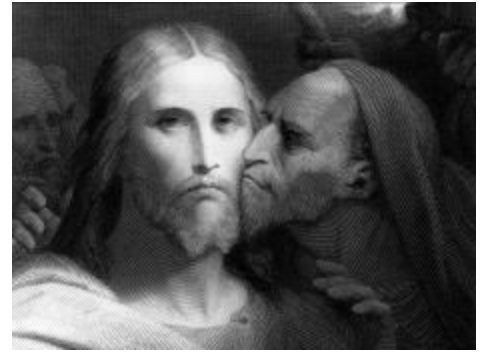
Diocese of Tandag

f/TandagDiocese

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Judas ate too

Think about this for a second. Jesus knew. He goes into that room with His disciples. He knows He is going to be betrayed. He knows it is Judas who will turn against him. He knows that He has been sold out for a handful of silver. Stabbed in the back by one He has poured His life into.



Yet, in that room, hours before the death of Jesus, Judas ate too. Jesus fed Judas too.

Jesus prayed for Judas too.

Jesus washed Judas' feet too.

I struggle to fathom that kind of love.

A love that would feed the mouth that deceived you.

A love that would wash the treasonous feet of the traitor.

A love that could forgive even the vilest of betrayals.

I honestly struggle to comprehend it.

And then, suddenly, I realize that I'm Judas.

And in that moment, I'm so thankful & altogether overwhelmed that Judas ate too."

Why?

On the street I saw a small girl
Cold and shivering in a thin dress,
with little hope of a decent meal.
I became angry and said to God:
'Why do you permit this?
Why don't you do something about it?'
For a while I heard God say nothing.
That night he replied quite suddenly:
'I certainly did do something about it.
I made you'.



You light up our lives —

All our grand Children



Grandchildren

make the world
a little softer,
a little kinder,
a little warmer.



A Look Back



This land on 25 Oxford Road was purchased for \$150 in the early 1820s. With the generous financial support of Jedediah Sanger, a member of the founding Vestry of St. Stephen's, a building fund was established of \$2,000. Exterior and interior changes have taken place throughout the years. In memory of Jedediah Sanger, who died in 1829 at the age of 78, there is a marble plaque inserted in an interior church wall. The inscription includes, "He, being dead, yet speaketh." In 1997 the U. S. Department of the Interior recognized St. Stephen's as a National Sacred Historic Site.

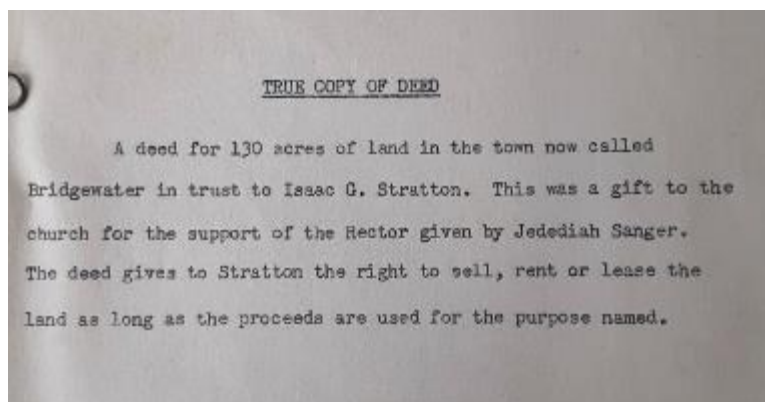
In early June 1824, the Rev. Amos Cotton Treadway, an Episcopal priest, arrived in New Hartford to visit his sister. Finding a number of Episcopalians in the area, he conducted services in a variety of places including the Presbyterian Church, a schoolhouse on Seneca Turnpike and the Masonic Temple. By fall, this faithful community committed to forming the second oldest church in New Hartford, and the fifth Episcopal Church in Oneida County.

With the generous financial support of Judge Jedediah Sanger, founder of New Hartford and a member of the founding Vestry of St. Stephen's, the land at 25 Oxford Rd, was purchased for \$150 and a building fund established with a \$2,000 donation. The actual construction was begun in 1825, probably to the specifications of master builder N. Caulkins. The design is that of Federal ecclesiastical building with gothic detail on both the interior and exterior. While no direct design link has been documented, St. Stephen's is unusual within the Diocese of Central NY for the similarity of its louvered triple lancet tower window to the tower of Trinity Church, New Haven (1814 -17). Many of New Hartford's first settlers came from Connecticut and could have been familiar with this church. St. Stephen's is particularly important architecturally, as well, for its nave where Gothic clustered columns and simple vaulting are the earliest known interior references to medieval structure within the Diocese.

With a very small number of original contributors, construction was a splendid effort embodying the faith, hope, and optimism of its founders. After more than a year of labor, Father Treadway wrote: *"Through mingled emotions of hope and despondency, against the popular consent of powerful and secretarian prejudice, our little band, like an army clad with strength, has pushed their pious purposes till victory has crowned the mighty efforts."*

The Rt. Rev. John Henry Hobart, Episcopal Bishop of New York, came to New Hartford on Sept. 4, 1826, and consecrated the new church.

Although its history is substantial, we are most pleased to continue to worship God and minister to many from throughout the Greater Utica area as we have for almost 195 years. In addition to regular Sunday services, we offer a Sunday and Wednesday night Compline Service on-line. We are pleased to offer meeting space to many community groups which have included AA, Girl Scouts, Embroiders Guild of America, Third Order, Society of St. Francis, and many others.



Our Bicentennial —

Celebrating our past and looking forward to our future

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, whose roots go back to New Hartford founder Jedediah Sanger, is celebrating its bicentennial in 2024.

The congregation is making this 200th year a celebration of gratitude for God and for our faithful ancestors and our present-day community of worship and fellowship that supports community endeavors such as Ashes To Go on Ash Wednesday.

Prayers and events this year are focused on reflecting on our roots while looking to the future as St. Stephen's begins a third 100 years ministering to our people, to our community and to our world. The centerpiece of the bicentennial year celebration is a Celebration of Gratitude Service starting at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 2nd, gathering at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 25 Oxford Road, New Hartford.

All are invited with a special outreach to those who have any connection with St. Stephen's:

- parishioners
- former parishioners
- former clergy
- local faith communities of all types
- former members of St. Mark's Episcopal, St. George's Episcopal, St. John' Episcopal churches
- our neighbors in New Hartford and Greater Utica
- Masonic families (there at our beginning)
- members of any group who holds meetings at St. Stephen's
- people who were married or baptized at the church

There will be photos to remember our history -- who we were (and are), what we have done, how we have celebrated and mourned, learned and taught and honored our faith.

This reunion will be a true celebration of sharing, listening, rekindling our faith and fellowship and, of course, a Birthday cake!

Parking is available at St. Stephen's behind the church, or next door at the Freidel, Williams and Edmunds Funeral Home lot.

The Last Page

I am here for You

When you are lonely
And no one is in sight
Talk to me,
I want to know you.

When you are scared
And darkness is upon you
Hide behind me,
I want to protect you.

When you are sad
And hope seems far away
Lean on me,
I want to comfort you.

When life is too hard
And you have lost your way,
Come to me
I want to love you.



"Its from our church... we've been called up for active duty."

Altar Flowers

If you would like to donate flowers for the altar in memory or thanksgiving of someone special or an event you want to celebrate, please sign up in the booklet at the back of the church, or email the information to ststephensepiscopalnhny@gmail.com



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

May Birthdays

Judy Gilbert
MaryAnn Sheldon
Emily Smith
Peggy Young

June Birthdays

Marissa Burnup
Betty Dormer
Rose Kolwaite
Becky Topham
Lynne Walton

July Birthdays

Lorel Huckabone
Sarah Lilian
Wyatt Topham

We encourage all our church members to submit their birth dates if they would like to receive a birthday greeting from the church. Nancy Tibbitts can take this information.