



ST. STEPHEN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
3900 MECHANICSVILLE RD.
WHITEHALL, PA 18052-3347
610-435-3901

STEVE-ADORE

2012



"Vision-directed, People-oriented, Gospel-disciplined"



ASH WEDNESDAY (February 22nd) SERVICES

7:00 a.m. Ashes and Reserved Communion
12:00 Noon Ashes and Reserved Communion
7:00 p.m. Ashes and Eucharist

CHURCH GROWTH/FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE AND MISSIONS/OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Are you busy on the 2nd Thursday of each month? Then why not consider joining one or both of our church committees. New members and ideas are always welcome. Missions/Outreach meetings are at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room. Church Growth/Fellowship meetings will follow immediately after at 8:00. Meetings are usually held every other month but may be held each month if necessary. Please help us in our goal to reach out to our neighbors in the community as well as to help us to grow within our church family.

THE STEVE-ADORE is a Publication of ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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THE FORGOTTEN SACRAMENT

Here are some numbers: 3, 11, 31, 45, 55.

Here is what they mean. A survey conducted by the National Catholic Reporter indicates that 3% of U.S. Roman Catholics say they make a weekly confession; 11% make a monthly confession; and 31% make an annual confession; which, taken together, adds up to 45% leaving 55% of Catholics confessing to not confessing even once a year.

Surveys about behaviour, though, are often self-inflated.

In terms of volume, there are over 68 million U.S. Roman Catholics, so even 3% is more than 2 million. To put it another way, the average Roman parish has 3,000 members of which 3% is 90. Ninety confessions, at a fast average of five minutes, is 450 minutes or 7 1/2 hours. No parish has seven and a half hours of confession time each week. Even St. Joseph's in Orefield, an above-average size, offers only three one half-hour slots each week—total 90 minutes.

Why this is significant is because, for many years, it was popularly believed (though never official Catholic teaching) that Roman Catholics had to go to confession to take Communion and, indeed, the same NCR survey found that 90% said that thinking they were fulfilling a requirement for taking Communion was the main reason they went to confession. A mere 4% said it was for personal spiritual growth.

In other words, 90% of those who say they do it wouldn't do it at all if they didn't think they had to in order to get something.

I began this article by calling Reconciliation the "forgotten" sacrament. In the classical definition, a Sacrament is "The outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." The Church has defined seven - Baptism, the Eucharist, Confirmation, Ordination, Matrimony, Anointing, and Reconciliation.

All sacraments have someone to administer them. Everyone expects a priest to celebrate the Eucharist and baptize. Nobody objects when the priest visits in hospital to anoint. Nobody objects to having a priest at a wedding. Nobody objects to having the bishop confirm and ordain.



But when it comes to Reconciliation, the objections fly fast and furious. Why do I need a priest? Why can't I confess to God by myself? In other words, why can't I absolve myself?

Perhaps, this is because Reconciliation is the sacrament which calls for honesty in our spiritual life. We live in a sin-free world. Nobody "sins" anymore. That's an out-dated concept. To actually vocalize the words, "Bless me, for I have sinned" means admitting that I am not perfect. It also means there are standards which I have not invented.

Christians originally confessed in public (!!!), just as they were baptized or married or confirmed in public. The practice of "private" confession was regarded with suspicion—by the laity—because of the lack of a congregation! This is why, in the prayers of the sacrament, the person confesses to God and "to his Church" (BCP pg.447) and asks to be restored "to the blessed company of your faithful people" (BCP pg.450). These are liturgical vestiges of those voyeuristic days as well as reminders that my sins don't only affect me.

Actually, in the Old Testament it was worse. You had to bring an animal to the temple and everybody could see from the type of animal what your sin was. You then had to tell the priest in the courtyard the details of why you were there, and then slaughter the struggling animal yourself, all the while singing penitential psalms and making sure you got the chant tones right.

But obtaining forgiveness for sins was at the heart of the Old Covenant—just as it is in the New.

Of course, we have the General Confession as part of our Eucharistic Liturgy and that is a perfectly valid form. The thing is, as one person put it, most of our sins aren't "general", they're personal and need to be dealt with personally.

Our Episcopal Prayer Book provides two liturgies for personal Reconciliation. One is based on the Western Roman rite and the other on the Eastern Orthodox rite. They may be found on page 447. Give them a read. Consider which one speaks to you. And then, give it a try.

Reconciliation. Let's not forget it.

Fr. Frank +

THE LENTEN FOLDERS



For many years, it was the custom in the Episcopal Church to take a special collection for Missions/Outreach during the Season of Lent. “Mite Boxes” were one of the ways this collection was taken, especially in Sunday School. Another way was through “Lenten Folders” with their pre-cut slots for forty dimes (when I was little), then forty quarters (when I was a teen), and today (now I am an adult), forty one-dollar bills.

The idea was that we were making an extra donation during the self-denial season, over and above our pledge, to help the needy.

Several years ago, however, the practice arose at St. Stephen’s of designating 10% of all parish income to Outreach and the Folders just got lumped into the General Fund. As they lost their special intention, support for the Folders waned, but they continued to be provided because that was a routine.

The fact is that purchasing and mailing these to everybody is eating up more and more of the declining revenue as fewer and fewer people are using them. Only twenty-one were turned in, last year, and not all of those were filled up.

THEREFORE, there will be **no Lenten Folders**, this year. But, if you feel moved to make a special Lenten donation to the General Fund over and above your pledge, that will be gratefully accepted.

To those of you who have been loyal Folder users, Thank You for your support.

On a personal note, I miss the emphasis on Missions that Lent used to provide but understand that we give more to Missions/Outreach, today, through our parish income tithing that we ever did in times past by individual donations.

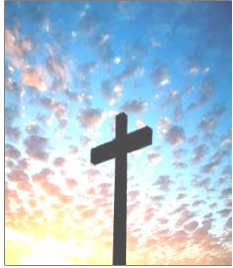
Actually, the first time I ever addressed a congregation was during Lent of 1967. The Sunday School at St. Paul’s, Chestnut Hill, PA had been using their Mite Boxes to help build a church in Liberia and I made the presentation announcing that we had raised enough to pay for the roof.

And forty-five years later, I’m still talking to congregations about money!

Fr. Frank +



The Leadership of Vestry



The men and women who serve on our vestry are very special because they believe that vestry leadership includes a spiritual dimension. In Lent, they covenant to hold every member and friend of the parish up in prayer throughout the season.

Every weekday, a vestry member attends a Eucharist in the chapel (it runs about 20 minutes) at which he or she reads prayers for a section of our parish list.

Here is the schedule for this Lent beginning Wednesday, Feb. 23rd:

Mondays at 8:00 a.m. A-D

Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. E-G

Wednesdays at 7:00 a.m. H-M

Thursdays at 2:15 p.m. R-S

Fridays at 9:30 a.m. T-Z

Why not join them at the services in prayer for yourself and your fellow parishioners? The old saying that there's safety in numbers applies to prayer, as well. The more of us together, the more strength we give and receive and in the context of the Eucharist it is multiplied beyond measure.

Your Vestry: Tom Steckel (Senior Warden—Leadership), Libby DeVore (Junior Warden—Property), Bruce Eitzen (Church Growth/Fellowship), Ken Rider (Education), Joe Lamm (Worship and Pastoral Care), Doreen Wagner (Youth and Outreach), Bob Gehres (Finance).

FEBRUARY 2012

Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church
 3900 Mechanicsville Road
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The Rev. Frank ST. AMOUR, III, Rector
610-264-2149
 Mr. Tom Steckel, Senior Warden
 610-261-0582
 Judy Kuntz, Parish Secretary

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

5) **Epiphany 5**
 8:00 am Said Eucharist
 9:15 am Sunday School
 10:30 am Sung Eucharist

6) 6:00 pm Food Pantry
 (by appointment only)

7) 9:30 am Healing Eucharist
 5:30 pm Weight Watchers
 7:00 pm School Board Mtg.

8) 6:30 pm Scouts

9) 2:00 pm Clergy
 Bible Study

10) 9am-3pm Renewal
 Assembly in Parish
 Hall

12) **Epiphany 6**
 8:00 am Said Eucharist
 9:15 am Sunday School
 10:30 am Sung Eucharist
 12-4pm N.S. Valentine Social

13) 6:00 pm Food Pantry
 (by appointment only)

14) 9:30 am Healing Eucharist
 followed by O.S.L. Mtg.
 5:30 pm Weight Watchers
 7:00 pm Property Mtg.
 7:00 pm Finance Mtg.

15) 6:30 pm Scouts

16) 2:00 pm Clergy
 Bible Study

17) 9am-3pm Renewal
 Assembly in Parish
 Hall

19) **Last Sunday of Epiphany**
 8:00 am Said Eucharist
 9:00 am-1pm Pancake Brunch
 10:30 am Sung Eucharist
 Noon D.O.K.

20) **Office Closed for President's Day**
 6:00 pm Food Pantry
 (by appointment only)

21) 9:30 am Healing Eucharist
 5:30 pm Weight Watchers
 7:00 pm Vestry Mtg.

22) **Ash Wed.**
 7 am Mass
 Noon Mass
 6:30 pm Scouts
 7:00 pm Mass

23) 2:15 pm Parish
 List Mass (R-S)

24) 5:30 -6:30 pm
 Lenten Soup
 7:00 pm Stations of the
 Cross & Benediction
 9:30 am Parish List
 Mass (T-Z)

26) **First Sunday in Lent**
 8:00 am Said Eucharist
 9:15 am Sunday School
 10:30 am Sung Eucharist

27) 6:00 pm Food Pantry
 (by appointment only)

28) 9:30 am Healing Eucharist
 5:30 pm Weight Watchers
 6:30 pm Parish List
 Mass (E-G)

29) 6:30 pm Scouts
 7:00 am Parish
 List Mass (H-M)



For the month of February the Food Pantry is in need of the following items:

- Jelly
- Juices
- Dry Milk
- Cold or Hot Cereals
- Coffee (instant or brewing)
- Pancake Syrup
- Boxed potatoes (Instant, mashed, scalloped, etc.)
- Beef-a-Roni – Raviolis – Spaghetti O's
- Canned Meats (Chicken, Ham, Turkey)
- Sugar (packets or 1lb. boxes)
- Pasta meals (Hamburger, Chicken, or Tuna Helper, etc.)
- Dish detergent

We want to thank everyone, for their continued support of this ministry.....

Doreen Wagner
Coordinator
Whitehall Food Pantry Coalition of Churches

NURSERY SCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN

Individuals interested in registering a child for the 2012-2013 school year beginning in September 2012 may attend an open registration for the public April 10, 2012 from 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM. Children registering for the 2012 - 2013 school year must be at least 3 years of age by December 1, 2012. Classes for older children are also available. If you know anyone interested in a preschool for next year you may also have them call the school office at: 610-435-4260.



This is a busy time of year for the staff as they are preparing for parent/teacher conferences that are held the last week in January. This one on one with the teacher allows the parent to find out how their child is progressing. It enables the parents to prepare for their child's placement for the following school year.

The parent organization will be organizing the annual "Valentine's Social". The social will be held in the parish hall on Sunday, February 12, 2012. The students may come and are encouraged to bring a parent along to join in the fun with dance contests, refreshments, and other surprises.

Every year the school participates in the American Cancer's "Daffodil Day's" fundraiser. If there is anyone wishing to order Daffodil's that will be delivered mid- March, just in time to usher in Spring, please contact the school office. Order forms will also be available outside the church office. The deadline for ordering is February 16, 2012 NO EXCEPTIONS!

Don't forget if you would like to help the school, we are now participating in the A+ School Rewards program through Giant supermarkets. Simply register your 11 digit BONUSCARD at: giantfoodstores.com/aplus or call 1-888-448-4642 to register over the phone. After you register your card, each shopping trip at Giant using your BONUSCARD earns cash for our school! We continue to collect Box tops for education along with Redner's "save-a-tape" receipts. If you have any loose box tops lying around we are submitting them to be redeemed for cash the middle of February.





OUR LIMITED MOBILITY SAINTS

DONALD & DORIS BOEHRER, SR., 2303 S. 11th St.,
Allentown, PA 18103

VERNA CANOVA, Luthercrest, 800 Hausman Rd. #475,
Allentown, PA 18104

HELEN CHAMBERLAIN, Luthercrest, 800 Hausman Rd. # 302,
Allentown, PA 18104

TINA DECKER, 936 N. 33d St. Allentown, PA 18104

CHARLES & MURIEL HARMANY, Moravian Square Hall,
175 W. North St. #1211, Nazareth, PA 18064

MARY LEE, Luthercrest, 800 Hausman Rd. #303, Allentown, PA 18104

NADINE SCHOONOVER, 2021 Bally Drive, Northampton, PA 18067

ANNE SISKKA, 3877 Rosewood Lane, Whitehall, PA 18052

DOLLY SMITH, Above & Beyond, 2232 SW 29th St. #231,
Allentown, PA 18103

PLEASE VISIT AND/OR

SEND A CARD OF CHEER!

UPCOMING EVENTS!

SUNDAY BEFORE LENT PANCAKE BRUNCH

On Sunday, February 19th, the Fellowship Committee will host a Pancake Brunch from 9 a.m.-1p.m. in the Parish Hall. Pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage and bacon will be served along with coffee, tea and juice. Cost per person is a “free will” donation. Please consider joining us before or after Sunday church services for some wonderful food and fellowship. If you have any questions please contact Doreen Wagner or Anna Roman.

“SOUPER FRIDAYS”

Starting Friday, February 24th, we will be having our Lenten “Souper Fridays”. Prior to our 7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross we will be serving a meal of meatless soup in the Parish Hall. We will be looking for volunteers for each week leading up to Good Friday to provide a pot of soup to share. A sign up sheet will be available in the narthex during the first week of February. Soup will be served from 5:30 - 6:30. Please consider helping as well as coming out to enjoy soup and fellowship during the Lenten season.

WEEKLY REPORT	Jan. 1	Jan. 8	Jan. 15	Jan. 22
8:00 am Attendance	21	33	25	34
10:30 am Attendance	38	50	46	43
Plate and Pledge	\$2,105.00	\$3,279.00	\$2,466.00	\$1,587.00



GOD'S PROMISE

God hath not promised
Skies always blue,
Flower-strewn pathways
All our lives through;

God hath not promised
Sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow,
Peace without pain.

But God hath promised
Strength for the day,
Rest for the labor,
Light for the way,

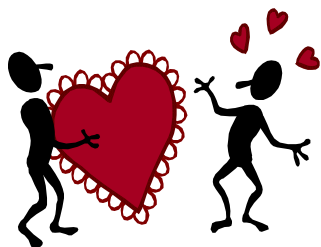
Grace for the trials,
Help from above,
Unfailing sympathy
Undying love.....

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY



- Cameron Anderson, USMC
- Kyle Dougherty, USMC
- Robert C. Gehres II, USA
- Robert C. Gehres III, PAARNG
- Seth Sassaman, USMC

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3900 MECHANICSVILLE ROAD
WHITEHALL PA 18052-3347**



The March Steve-Adore deadline will be Wednesday, February 15th



Happy Birthday

2/2 Donald Boehrer, Jr. Otho James	2/15 Joseph Lamm 2/18 James Colombo Charlotte Harbst Wes Schlauch	2/23 Joanne Searfoss 2/25 Patrick Rivers 2/26 Vickie Church 2/28 Samantha Figueroa Toby Harbst Kathy Treng Alycia Wagner
2/6 Revd. John Wagner	2/19 Haley Wagner	
2/8 Ann Reeder	2/20 Kathryn Siegmund	
2/9 Muriel Harmany	2/21 Diane Hyzinski	
2/13 Kaitlyn Searfoss Joseph Wagner	2/23 Dorothy Reiss	
2/15 Scott Holmes		



Happy Anniversary!

No anniversaries in February!