

# Vision of St. Stephen

## June/July 2023

I call on you, my God, for you will answer me; turn your ear to me and hear my prayer.

PSALM 17:6

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

7800 Erie St. • Sylvania, OH

(419)885-1551

[www.ststephenlutheran.church](http://www.ststephenlutheran.church)

Pastor: Rev. Beth Ferne Johnson

[sslcpastor@buckeye-express.com](mailto:sslcpastor@buckeye-express.com)

### Betty Lock's Legacy

“Continue with our prayer time even though I will not be with you in person.”

These were Betty's last words to me in a text on March 31, 2023, seven days prior to her death. As many of you know Betty was blessed with the gift of prayer and often submitted articles to this newsletter section for many years. Prayer was not only her gift, it was her passion, it was her answer to all of life's challenges/blessings, it defined who she was. She couldn't imagine life without communication with God in ALL things, ALL the time. I know this personally because I had the privilege of being one of Betty's prayer partners for over 25 years . . . our time together will be sorely missed.

Without having planned to do so, Betty has left a legacy of prayer with the congregation of St. Stephen. She has given something that will be valued and treasured by those of us who survive. Without a doubt I know she will be encouraging us to become educated, inspired, enlightened and refreshed by the power of prayer. She would tell us that God awaits to hear from each of us every day, multiple times a day.

Let's make Betty proud. . .let's make prayer a priority in this congregation and in our personal lives. After all there's no end to what prayer could accomplish – one need only listen to the daily news for suggestions. Let's talk about prayer, ask questions, schedule a class on the subject, hold a retreat, read about it, share answered prayers, etc.

I'm sure Betty will be in touch often to give us some ideas!

*-Nancy Pfau*

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# Spiritual Growth

## **Prairie Group**

Did you know that the idea of a church prairie is gaining ground, quite literally? Faith Lutheran in Swanton is in year 2 of their project, while Community of Christ Lutheran in Whitehouse has just begun establishing one. There is also a local group, Sacred Grounds, which works to build healthier habitats and neighborhoods through installing native plantings and wildlife habitats at houses of worship. They have about 20 locations/participants in the Toledo area. The first meeting of our prairie group will be announced in our Sunday bulletin insert. If you'd like to participate, please speak with Pastor Beth.

## **Gathering Space**

Our adult Sunday education time will be on hiatus until the fall. Over the summer, if you think of something you'd like the group to focus on, please let Pastor Beth, Nancy Pfau or Dave Had-dix know!

## **Jeremiah Bible Study**

Our Wednesday Bible study continues as we examine the role of a prophet in conveying God's word to a people that are resistant to it. We're not quite halfway through the Old Testament book of Jeremiah—but new folks are welcome to join us at any time! We meet at 11:00 a.m. in the library.

## **JOY Club**

Women—would you like to go out for lunch? Please consider eating with the JOY club at noon on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. On June 20<sup>th</sup>, we'll be eating at The Seafood Restaurant at 5504 W Alexis. On July 19<sup>th</sup>, we'll be at Shorty's BBQ, 5111 Monroe Street. There are signup sheets in the narthex to help with planning.

## **Men's Group**

Our Men's brunch group meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. at Scrambler Marie's on Central Avenue. In addition to conversation, the group is bringing a topic or devotion to discuss at each meeting. If you'd like to join them on June 13, 27, or July 11 or 25, please do!

# Youth and Family

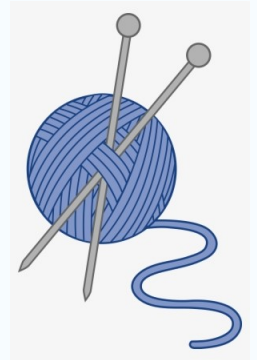
## **Vacation Bible School**

Our Vacation Bible school will focus on Water as a theme for many Bible stories and an important gift from God. We'll be meeting on Wednesdays beginning July 19th through August 9th. We'll be meeting from 6:30-8:00 p.m. As plans get underway, we may meet at area streams (weather permitting), as we think together about water.

# Outreach

## Knit/Crochet Group

Our knit/crochet group is busy making personal projects and prayer shawls. What is a prayer shawl? As the person makes it, they include prayers for healing. Those who receive it are wrapped in prayer. At our creative time on June 5<sup>th</sup>, Nancy Kubiak will be teaching us how to read a pattern! We meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of the month at 1:00 p.m. (June 5, 19, July 3, 17) New folks are most welcome any time!



## Father's Day Celebrations

Please feel free to stay after service June 18 for "Donuts with Dad!" We will have light refreshments to celebrate dads and people who helped make them dads! Happy Father's Day St. Stephen! You're invited to send a favorite photo of a special dad in your life to Janell by Saturday, June 17 at 12PM to go into our Facebook post celebrating fathers!

## Movie Matinee

We'll provide snacks, the movie, and a chance to discuss the movie after we see it together in the sanctuary.

June 25, 3:00 p.m.—A widower, who has given up on life, has his world upended when a new family moves in next door.

July 23, 3:00 p.m.—Based on a true story, a mother works for justice for her teenage son who is brutally lynched in the south.



## "Fruit of the Spirit" Can Drive

Look in the Narthex for the start of our "Fruit of the Spirit" canned fruit drive! We will be collecting canned fruit to help stock the LSS Pantry! This particular drive will also have supplemental funds provided by Thrivent! Thank you again for your generosity!

# Gathering Space Notes

## **Gathering Space about Genacross' ministry**

You may be aware that Genacross provides care through its assisted living, nursing care and rehabilitation locations and programs, but did you know that they also provide care for approximately 100 youth? These kids between the ages of 6-18 need mental health and behavior stabilizing services. These kids, who have often had 16 or so unsuccessful foster home placements, often live in smaller buildings (5-10 youth) with around the clock supervision. Kids attend a local school during the day, or in one larger location, teachers come to them. Mike George, executive director of the Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation, spoke to our Gathering Space about these ministries. In our conversation with him, he identified some specific needs. The youth in these programs often have never had a birthday cake of their own to celebrate their birthday. Our Council has responded to this need with a \$250 gift to purchase cakes through a local bakery. We're exploring the idea of helping provide birthday gifts to these youth as well.

Do you have an unused suitcase at home? These youth often come with all their belongings in a trash bag—having a suitcase (especially a smaller one, because often they don't have a lot of possessions), helps provide dignity. We will be collecting suitcases here at St. Stephen through the end of July to give to Genacross. Interested in learning a bit more? An article on our narthex bulletin board features a story on one of these youths.

## **Gathering Space on Medical debt**

Dr. Stefan Pomrenke spoke to our Gathering Space on May 21st. Here's a summary of his presentation:

Medical debt in our country is an all too common occurrence.

As people of faith we unite in creating community so that we locally, as well as our neighbors of all walks of life, can find freedom through God's grace.

Unburdened from debts of sin, unburdened from our debts to others.

Medical debt is a particularly challenging debt - one that we can help fix.

The city of Toledo has already earmarked a significant amount of debt relief to the Toledo area. Action still is possible in other areas of Ohio.

As Sylvania churches we can come together to create a significant dent in our neighbor's debt in greater Ohio.

Because contributions are buying medical debt after a series of multiple layers of prior debt collectors, a \$1 donation has the potential of eliminating \$100 of medical debt. This website has more information.

<https://ripmedicaldebt.org/campaign/ohio-2/>

We'll be thinking about additional ways to support this effort during the summer, so stay tuned!

# Church Finances

## **QUARTERLY DONATIONS**

Our quarterly donation for \$1,000 for April, May and June was designated by our church council in this way. \$500 to Salem Lutheran Church in the Vistula neighborhood of Toledo to help their ministries, especially those that feed kids during the summer months. \$250 to Sylvania Area Family Services to help in feeding kids this summer. \$250 to the Genacross Foundation—earmarked to provide birthday cakes for kids in their care (see related Genacross article).

## **GIVING ENVELOPES**

If you'd like to no longer receive these, please contact Janell in the church office. You may receive one or two additional mailings because of the way the company sends them out.

# Administrative News

## **PASTOR BETH VACATION**

Pastor Beth will be away on vacation to the Upper Peninsula from June 9-16 and July 1-15. If you're in need of pastor care during this time, please call the church office or a member of church council to connect you with a local Lutheran pastor.

## **PASTOR BETH AT LAKESIDE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Pastor Beth will be attending the Lakeside Lutheran Chautauqua from June 19-23. This year the main speaker is Pastor Michael Beck. As a Methodist pastor and participant in the Fresh Expression movement, he will be sharing his experience of establishing worshipping groups outside of the church's 4 walls. As a part of the week, the group will experience a "dinner church".

## **GIVING A MEMORIAL GIFT**

Because of increases in postage, we will be changing our procedure for memorial gifts. If a non-member gives a memorial gift at the time of a funeral, they will continue to receive a thank you note from St. Stephen. If a member gives a memorial gift, the monetary amount will be shown on their financial statements, but a thank you from St. Stephen will not be sent. The family of the deceased will be informed twice a month as memorial gifts are received.

# Prayer

## Past Prayer Notes from 2022

I am still “singing” the hymns from last Sunday’s worship service. We sang “Because He Lives” and “I’ll Fly away” .....both wonderful hymns and you could tell they were loved by the volume and enthusiasm in the singing. I thought the service music had been planned just for me.....for I was preparing for eye surgery later in the week....and the faith and the joy in those hymns gave me such encouragement! Isn’t it wonderful how God uses our worship people to lift us up just when we need it the most. I find that happens a lot.....I’m struggling with an issue and there’s the right hymn to remind me who is in charge. I am feeling lonely and depressed and there’s that hymn that lifts me right up and reminds me of God’s wondrous love. I see the world and all that’s going on that is so disturbing and there’s the beautiful world that God created for us and the music that celebrates His creation and His love. Now, I have to admit, you will not hear me singing out loud in church. I can’t carry a tune. Even I don’t like to hear me sing. But God does. And so my singing comes deep in my soul and in my mind and He can hear it. (I am reminded of my daughter’s comment one time. She said she missed hearing Grandma sing. I said “you what?!! Grandma couldn’t carry a tune! Her response, “yes, but she sang with such gusto.”) You probably won’t hear me sing but if you do, I hope you will realize that I am just praising God with gusto!

~Betty Lock

## COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Carrie—Healing  
Alice—Healing & Comfort  
Chris—Peace & Comfort  
Imber Family—Comfort & Healing  
Those with Cancer—Healing  
Greg—Healing & Comfort  
Olivia—Healing & Comfort  
Shannon—Comfort & Peace  
Dave—Healing & Comfort  
Devon—Healing & Recovery  
Afghanistan Refugees  
Ukraine  
Victims of Gun Violence  
Stephanie & Layla—Healing  
Mary—Healing & Comfort  
Judie—Healing & Comfort  
Beth—Healing  
Amber/Grace—Healing & Comfort  
Rook—Healing & Comfort  
Greg—Healing & Comfort

# Fun

## ALL IN GOOD FUN

Q: Need to  
build an ark?

A: I Noah Guy!



## BIBLE QUIZ

In what city did the first Pentecostal celebration take place?

(Answer page 8)

- A. Jerusalem
- B. Canaan
- C. Nazareth
- D. Bethlehem

## ARE YOU OKAY?

If you find yourself in need of emergency supplies or in need of someone to talk to, please don't hesitate to call the church office and we will assist you however we can or direct you to resources that may be able to help.

# Council

## **2023 Council Members**

<i>President</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Vice President</i>	Tom Dangelo
<i>Secretary</i>	Lin McKelvey
<i>Treasurer</i>	Bob Housel

## **Ministry Liaisons were established as follows:**

<i>Christian Education</i>	Pastor Beth
<i>Finance</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Prayer, Praise, Worship</i>	Pastor Beth
<i>Property</i>	Tom Schmidt
<i>Staff Support</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Stewardship/Evangelism</i>	
<i>Technology</i>	Tom Dangelo
<i>Youth &amp; Family Ministry</i>	Lin McKelvey
<i>Social Ministry</i>	Joan Haddox

## HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

Hearing assistance equipment for up to 8 users available for anyone who needs help hearing the service better. Please ask Jeremy Hopkins or anyone who uses the equipment for assistance.

# Steve's Bulletin Board

## Thank You

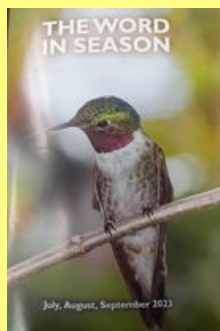
Going away for vacation? Looking for a place to worship on Sunday? In addition to watching the St. Stephen livestream, you can use the ELCA website ([www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)) to find a congregation near you. Simply click on the "find a congregation" in the black banner, enter the zip code or town of your vacation area, and it will provide information for you!

## *Chase & Amber Mercer*



Chase and Amber were married here at St. Stephen on May 6, 2023! Congratulations and prayers as they enter this next stage of their life together!

## Word in Season



The Word in Season for July, August, September are now at the church! If you can't make it to the building to pick one up, call the office and Janell can send you one!

## Mark Your Calendar

August 27th we will be having an End of Summer Picnic after our worship! More info will be released closer to the date!

Bible Quiz Answer:

A. Jerusalem



# June Celebrations

## Baptismal Birthdays

6/1 Sarah McCoy  
6/4 Christine Kahan  
6/6 Jenny Troutman  
6/10 Peggy Scholl  
6/14 Dave Davis  
6/23 Ryann Fox

## Birthdays

6/5 Lynn Golba  
6/13 Karen Bogdan  
6/14 Carol Brown  
6/15 Joan Haddox  
6/17 Nancy Kubiak  
6/21 Carol Haddix  
6/25 Ashley Senci  
6/27 Evin McCoy  
6/28 Jettie Sansbury

## Anniversaries

6/29 Ray & Marilyn Hendricks

# July Celebrations

## Birthdays

7/13 Doug Paxton  
7/14 Scott Ballard  
7/16 Marilyn Scuralli  
7/20 Ken Marvin  
7/23 Steve Ziegler  
7/24 Dave Haddix  
7/28 Nancy Rieck  
7/29 Herb Hoehing

## Anniversaries

7/14 Jordan & Kristi Shepler

# June 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation
4 10:30 AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship	5 1:00 Knit/Crochet	6	7 11:00 AM Bible Study	8	9	10 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation
<b>Pastor Beth Vacation</b>						
11 10:30 AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship	12	13 <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> 9:00 AM Men's Group	14	15	16	17 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation <b>Send Photos to Janell!</b>
<b>Pastor Beth Vacation</b>						
18 <b>Father's Day</b> 10:30 AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship 11:15 AM Donuts with Dad	19 1:00 Knit/Crochet  7:00 PM Council Meeting	20 12:00 PM JOY Club	21	22 7:00 PM Book Group	23	24 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation
<b>Pastor Beth @ Lakeside</b>						
25 10:30 AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship 3:00 PM Movie Matinee	26 LWR Quilting	27 9:00 AM Men's Group	28 11:00 AM Bible Study	29	30	

# July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b> 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation <b>PB Vacation</b>
<b>2</b> 10:30 AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship	<b>3</b> 1:00 Knit/Crochet	<b>4</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation
<b>Pastor Beth Vacation</b>						
<b>9</b> 10:30 AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> 9:00 AM Men's Group	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation
<b>Pastor Beth Vacation</b>						
<b>16</b> 10:30 AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship	<b>17</b> 1:00 Knit/Crochet  7:00 PM Council Meeting	<b>18</b> 12:00 PM JOY Club	<b>19</b> 11:00 AM Bible Study  6:30 PM VBS	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation
<b>23</b> 10:30 AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship  3:00 PM Movie Matinee	<b>24</b> LWR Quilting	<b>25</b> 9:00 AM Men's Group	<b>26</b> 11:00 AM Bible Study  6:30 PM VBS	<b>27</b> 7:00 PM Book Group	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>					