



THE BEACON

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

July/August, 2011

Father George's Message

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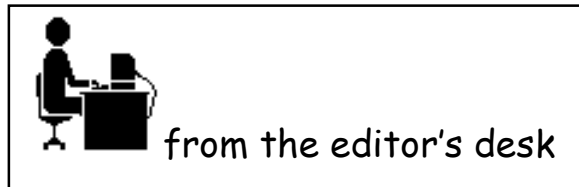
My Dear Friends,

What a joy it has been for me to serve as your Interim Rector this past year. I thank God for this time in my spiritual journey and look forward to all that is in store as yet.

As far as St. Stephen's is concerned you are a delightful parish and well prepared for your journey ahead. You and Father Jesse have made great choices in each other. St. Stephen's has a long history of quality shared ministry and it is good to see the solid educational and experienced background of your new Rector. The Anglican Communion is well known for the high quality preparation of her priests.

Lastly, I express my sincerest thanks to everyone here at St. Stephen's for a wonderful interim year with you. How joyful it is to meet new and friends from years ago as we travel ahead. Whenever and wherever we continue to cross paths your smiles and big hugs will always be most welcomed. Thank you for your welcoming love and support during this transition time.

With all best wishes and prayers, I am
Sincerely yours in Christ,
The Rev. George H. Warren



Good news! We have a new rector - Fr. Jesse Abell. The Search Committee had completed its work, made a recommendation to the Vestry; the Vestry accepted the recommendation and has worked out a contract with Fr. Jesse.

I attended the parish pot-luck supper on June 22 at which the Search Committee, chaired by Marq Davis presented its report. Several members of the committee spoke at this meeting. Their enthusiasm for Fr. Jesse became immediately apparent. It also became apparent that the Committee was convinced that the Holy Spirit was a large part of this process. Fr. Jesse will arrive in Westborough early in August with his wife Allison arriving sometime later.

In the meantime, much work has been done on the Rectory and the church making things ready for the next stage in the life of Saint Stephen's. There is still much to be done – big jobs and small jobs. If you would like to be part of the process, talk to any Vestry member. Each Vestry member has an area for which they are responsible; talk to someone; they will find something for you to do.

Along with the excitement of welcoming a new rector is the sadness we feel as Fr. George ends his time with us. He has been a breath of fresh air in the months he has been with us. His sermons have been timely and offered from the heart. He has been helpful with his pastoral counseling; he has been an active participant in parish programs. His love of Christ is obvious. And he has provided us with a first, (at least I think it's a first) He's the first priest at Saint Stephen's who frequently come to work riding a Yamaha motorcycle! Way to go, George!

Thanks for sharing yourself and your experience with us in what can often be a trying time.

Peace,

frp

Addendum: Hope you kept up with the doings of the Youth Group on their recent mission trip. Several of the group kept us posted by Facebook messages. Great job, group!

frp



Bulletin Board

The next Vestry Meeting will be held on Monday, August 15. All vestry meetings are open to the entire parish. Parishioners wishing to include items on the agenda are asked to contact one of the wardens or the rector no later than two (2) weeks before the meeting. Vestry meeting agendas and minutes will be regularly posted on the bulletin board between Fay Hall and the narthex.

A mini-flower ministry is available for anyone who is ill, homebound, or in a rehabilitation or nursing facility. Any small vases or decorative pots for indoor plants that you could donate would be appreciated. Flowers and plants will be in Fay Hall after Sunday services for you to bring cheer to someone. See *Gretchen Pruden* or call her at 978-368-1422 if you have any questions.

A huge thanks to everyone who helped with IHN guests! A super job with the meals and sleep-overs were done because people stepped

up when needed. We are so grateful – the IHN guests and the directors are too. A special thanks goes to *Pastor John* and the *Methodist Church* for allowing us to use their building. *Basil* and *Bev* for your M&O committee.

In case you are not familiar with IHN: “The Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) is an organization that unites the religious community in an effort to serve and nurture families who are homeless regardless of income and family structure. Thirty-one congregations, many with assistance from additional congregations, provide meals, shelter, and hospitality. Families receive individualized advocacy for housing, employment, and financial issues at the IHN day center. Massachusetts is the 5th least affordable state in the country for housing and about 20,000 children live in emergency shelters each year. Greater Worcester’s IHN has helped 255 families, a total of 754 individuals, since its formation in 1997. IHN makes a difference!”

A new parish directory is coming!!!!

There is a draft of the parish directory on a clipboard in the narthex. Please check your information including e-mail address, phone number(s), spelling of your name(s), etc. and make any corrections that are needed. Once I have that information, I can proceed with the new directory. *Nancy Harris*

Parish Life - We’re considering events for an **ice cream social** and **miniature golf**. Tentative dates are Sunday, July 24th with a picnic after services and then a trip to *Uhlman’s* for ice cream, and an evening of miniature golf on Wednesday, August 3rd, or August 10th, at the *Green Thumb* on Rte 9. For those who do not want to golf, there is a nice area where one can watch the golfers and food and ice cream are available. Please note your interest on the sheet in the narthex or contact me at 508-269-2634 or at chrisschef@aol.com. Both are nice opportunities for fun and fellowship, and to include friends and neighbors. Thanks, *Chris Scheffel*

The Transition Schedule for *Fr. George* leaving and *Fr. Jesse* coming is as follows:

August 21st *Fr. George’s* last Sunday to preach followed by a farewell reception.

August 28th *Sarah Shofstall* will preach.

August 31st *Fr. George’s* last day in the parish office.

September 1st *Fr. Jesse’s* first day in the parish office.

September 4th (Labor Day weekend)

Supply Priest

September 11th The first Sunday for *Fr. Jesse* to preach.

September 18th Welcome reception for *Fr. Jesse* and his wife.

September 25th Return to the regular 2 service Sundays (8:00 AM and 9:30 AM)

Prayerful Notes

Genesis 4: 3a. And in the process of time . . . This significant phrase appears 5 times, that I know of in the Bible. We see it acted out; however, throughout the scriptures in various situations and with different characters.

It begins in the first chapter of *Genesis*, when God created the world and everything in it. Surely, He could have done it instantaneously, He is God after all! He chose, however, to do so "in a process of time," six days to be exact. On the seventh day He ended his work and rested.

The dictionary defines process as a natural phenomenon, marked by gradual changes that lead to a particular result. While our modern world stresses high speed and instant results, God continues to work "in the process of time," in our lives. While we may prefer instant solutions, it is within "the process," that we learn patience and trust. We learn to depend on our loving God and our faith is strengthened.

We have certainly seen this at St. Stephen's this past year, as we placed our trust in God's guidance and in our Search Committee in selecting our new rector. It is an exciting time in the life of our parish, as we anxiously await the arrival of Fr. Jesse and his wife Allison. While our new rector has now been chosen, we will continue [to be]"in process," for as in any new relationship, it will take time getting to know each other and to truly bond as a family. So much of our lives is about process, from the time we are born, our growing up, raising our own families and eventually letting them go to begin the process anew with families of their own.

I have really become aware of both the value and the frustration of process in my own life recently, as I am embarking on a major remodeling project in my home. In one sense, it is an exciting time, as I try to envision the end result, but still it is fraught with anxious thoughts over the major decisions that I must make and the disruptions it will create in my daily routine, once the work is actually under way.

I have now narrowed down my list to 3 reputable contractors, all of whom have the highest rating with the Better Business Bureau. I am currently practicing prayerful discernment in choosing the right one, someone who will return my calls in a timely manner and work with me to achieve the desired result at a fair price.

If there is one thing I have seen very clearly in my spiritual journey through this life, it is that delay is not denial; it is God working "in

process'." I have seen this primarily in hindsight, still one would think it would make it easier for me, like the Psalmist to "Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him." *Ps. 37: 7*

In all honesty however, I wish this project could be like that Home Makeover show on TV, where the family goes to Disney World for a week and arrives home to find everything beautifully done over.

That is not going to happen here, so I am going to trust that "in the process of time," my 1960s bathroom will undergo a beautiful transformation! *Hebrews 11: 1* Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Blessings Always,

Phyl

