



# ***THE BEACON***

*THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH*

**June, 2010**

## ***Father Bill's Message***

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Fred Philcox  
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Dick Cerasuolo  
*Sexton*

### **Every Sunday**

8:00a Holy Eucharist  
9:15a Church School  
9:30a Service w/ Eucharist  
and music

### **You'll Be Just Fine!**

As our time among you winds down, Gail and I are hearing such things as, "I'm really going to miss Gail; she's such a good reader", or "Fr. Bill, I'm really going to miss your sermons." I realize that such statements are expressions of both loss and fear, and so I'm writing to re-assure you that everything will be fine. Most of you have gone through a vacancy before, if not at St. Stephen's, then in another parish. And even if you haven't, the parish leadership has. Trust them. What can you all do to help facilitate the process? First and foremost, be people of prayer. A deep relationship with God will help alleviate the stress of a search. Pray that God will be in the midst of the search committee. Pray that God will continue to send St. Stephen's new families. Pray that God's choice for your new priest will find fulfillment in the search process. Secondly, be people of worship. By this, I mean increase your Sunday attendance. All too often when there's a rector vacancy, parishioners tend to "slack off". This is the worst thing that any of you can do. Become a greater part of the worshipping community. Support those in positions of leadership with your continued attendance. "We who are many are one body, for we all share one bread, one cup". Those words should produce a corresponding action. Thirdly, be good stewards. Give more of your time, talents, and treasure. Obviously, the last word in the previous sentence is self-explanatory. Keep up your pledges; if you haven't yet pledged, now is a good time to do so. Often during a vacancy, people don't give out their money readily, yet now is the time the parish needs your financial help the most. Like it or not, a vacancy costs money. But stewardship is also time and talents, and during this transition, St. Stephen's can really use your help. For example, Bishop Scruton will make his bi-annual visitation next April. There will be five or six teens to present for Confirmation.

Who among you will step forward and run a weekly class for two months to train them? Or how about EFM? I won't be here to mentor the group next year. Who will go for mentor training to take over? We don't have an Every Member Canvass chair for this coming Fall. Who will volunteer? Speaking of the Fall, who would be willing to teach Church School? I ask these questions not to produce more anxiety, but to affirm your abilities to fill all of these holes in the parish's ministries. I have great faith in what you can do together. Work hard, have fun!

Fr. BILL



from the editor's desk

Well, it's almost June and the weather is getting very June-like: hot, humid, the occasional thunder shower. Typical. Thoughts turn to summer activities: swimming, outdoor barbecues, family picnics. The sorts of things that make us look forward to the season. Right now, I'm looking out the window at one of those spectacular blue skies with the puffy cumulus clouds that photographers like to feature in their summer shots. Life is good.

This is also the time for summer chores. Sharyn and I spent last weekend engaged in a chore that we had been putting off for years: cleaning out the garage. The reason? The delivery of my new riding lawn mower. "Where are we going to put it?" was the question. Well, the answer was to clear a section of the garage. To do so, we had to fill five Town of Northborough trash bags. (Northborough residents have to put their trash into a certain green trash bag that are purchased from a number of places around town.) No green bag? It won't get picked up.

But the weather was good, and we ended the day, tired but with that sense of satisfaction that come with the completion of a long-dreaded task. We also finished with a sense of gratitude to God for all he's given us: the wherewithal to purchase a riding mower, a place to keep it, and good health that allowed us to clean out the garage. Strange things to be thankful for? Perhaps. But Sharyn and I feel so blessed for the life we have, thanks to God's grace.

I'm going to shift gears here. You know that Fr. Bill is retiring. I could not write this, the last *Beacon* column before he leaves, without paying tribute to the man who has been a spiritual leader and a good friend. We have shared many jokes over the years, many – maybe most – of them bad. We've talked about spiritual things and more earthly things, we've talked about St. Stephen's, its past and its future. Bill joins a long line of pastors who make up a good part of the history of our church. Many of us wonder what the future holds for St. Stephen's. The only thing we know is that we must trust in the Lord; that he will provide for our needs as he sees them, not necessarily as we see them. One last thing: I have to thank Bill for religiously – sorry about that, Bill – getting his column to me every month before the *Beacon* deadline. That has been a real blessing. Thanks, Bill, and best wishes for you and Gail as you start this new phase of your lives.

Fondly,

*frp*



Bulletin Board

**The next Vestry Meeting** will be held on Monday, June 21, beginning at 7:00pm. 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.

Our co-treasurers ask that as summer approaches (and more of you go away on vacation), that you all try to catch up on your pledges and keep them current. They thank you very much for this.

We will go to a **one service summer format on Sunday, July 4<sup>th</sup>**. The time of the one service will be 9 AM. This will continue through Labor Day weekend in September.

*Fr. Bill and Gail's* last official day with us will be Sunday, July 25<sup>th</sup>. At that time the *Rev. Will Bergmann*, Dean of our South and East Worcester Deanery, will be with us to officiate at a service for the Ending of a Pastoral Relationship and Leave-Taking from a Congregation. More details will follow as we get closer to the date.

The Diocese would like me to vacate the rector's office by the time *Gail* and I leave for England on July 28<sup>th</sup>. Over the years, I have collected many books, videos, DVDs, etc. and I'd like to give away many of them before I begin to pack the rest. Therefore, feel free to come into my office and look over what I have...I'll be happy to give away such "gifts".

Thanks, *Fr. Bill*

**Hay, Hay Hay!!!** That is what the church lawn is beginning to look like. A **lawn mowing sign up sheet** can be found on the table **in the narthex below the memorial book**. Please sign up for at least one of the weeks and help keep the lawn looking "lawnish". Your efforts are greatly appreciated!

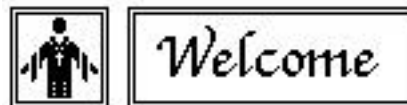
Vacation time is fast approaching. Please let us know what weeks you will be away and/or unavailable for **Liturgical Ministry duties** and **Vestry Person of the Day duties**. If we know in advance so we don't schedule you when you are away, it makes it easier for both you and us since replacements don't need to be found. Please let *Nancy Harris* know what dates you will not be available via e-mail at [ststephch@aol.com](mailto:ststephch@aol.com) or a note in her in-box. Many thanks, in advance. *Bev Boyer* and *Jeff Bartee*

If you are on the list for **coffee hour** and you will be away on vacation or just away on your assigned date, please trade with someone and then let *Nancy* know who you have traded with.

**Our condolences** on the death of *Bruce Start*, the husband of *Lynne Urso's* niece. May his family find solace and comfort at this time.

**We welcome into the family of God** *Skyler Kate Norton* daughter of *Kimberli Norton* and *Joseph Considine*,

**Our meditation room** (in place of the old library) is furnished with items brought back from the Lawton Chapel at Bement. Several of those items were either made or donated by parishioners here at *St. Stephen's* in memory of the *Rev. Jack and Nancy Lawton*. Please feel free to use the room for prayer, thinking, and rest.



*The Rev. Simon Stevenette*, his wife, *Nicola*, and four of their boys will be arriving in Westborough on Thursday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, at around 1 PM. They'll be living at the rectory for a month, and *Simon* will officiate at Sunday services on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup>. Please make them feel welcome; this will be the first time that they have visited the United States.

## Prayerful Notes

If I have one obsession in my life, I would have to say it is books, especially spiritual books. While I never seem to find the time to read them all and some I do not make it all the way through, still I have an ongoing love affair with my spiritual books. They have taken me down varied paths and opened new doors, that I might have otherwise missed on my journey of faith.

My books are like treasured friends, that have planted new seeds within me and helped me to grow spiritually. I have seen the new computerized books. I believe they call them E-Books. They hold no appeal for me. I like the feel of a "real book," in my hands. I often underline things I want to remember or make notations in the margins. I always read with a pencil at hand.

Have you ever purchased a book, brought it home but didn't get around to reading it until a year or so later? I am reminded of that old Buddhist proverb; "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear." This happened to me, with a book I am currently reading.

Last fall, I attended a retreat at Adelynrood, an Episcopal Retreat and Conference Center in Byfield, MA. The subject of the retreat was Teresa of Avila. Saint Teresa was a mystic, who lived in Spain in the 1500s. A contemplative nun, she nonetheless traveled extensively and founded 17 convents in Spain.

Previously, I had done some reading on the saints but not really in depth. I saw this retreat as a chance to delve a little deeper. We tend to think of saints as perfect people, forgetting that they were human, just like us. I was surprised to learn that while she was a contemplative nun, she also had a very lively, outgoing personality. She loved fashion and having a good time. She also went through real struggles with her faith, as is common to all of us.

At the end of the retreat, I purchased a book about Teresa, entitled *Falling Into The Arms of God*. It was written by Megan Don, our retreat

leader, who has studied Teresa's life extensively and leads Pilgrimages to Avila, Spain.

For some reason, perhaps because I go caught up in my busy fall schedule, I never got around to reading the book. *Contemplative Prayer, Just Resting in the Presence of God*, has become a vital part of my daily devotional time. I surmise that is why, just a few weeks ago, I finally began to read this book. The chapters are short, just 2 or 3 pages and each chapter ends with a guided meditation.

In *Psalms 46 : 10a*, we read, "Be still and know that I am God." Often this can be very difficult to do. Our busy minds tend to wander. I have found these simple guided meditations very helpful in stilling my mind and helping me to be more present to God. Teresa has proved to be an influential teacher and guide on my journey. She has reappeared in my life, now that my schedule is winding down, with summer coming on.

For us avid readers, summertime usually finds us at the book store, checking out the newest books. Before heading out, however, you might just want to check out your own book shelves. Perhaps for you, as for me, the student is ready and the teacher will appear.

Wishing you happy, insightful summer reading!

Blessings Always,  
Phyl Endicott

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**Folk Concert at St. Stephen's, June 7 at 7:00pm.** *Mark Mandeville* and *Raienne Richards*, two Massachusetts musicians, are embarking on a walk from Becket, MA to Somerville, MA to promote their respective solo releases. They stop and perform each evening. On June 7 they will be at St. Stephen's in Fay Hall, offering a concert. Admission is \$10.00 with 60% going to St. Stephen's. Come and support these two on this ambitious undertaking



A big THANK YOU to all parishioners who helped out with the Youth Yard Sale. We really appreciate the donation of treasures and delicious baked treats for the sale. A very special thank you goes out to those who attended and/or helped on the day of the sale! With sincere thanks, the Youth Group

Many thanks to *Basil Brigandi* and his crew for putting on the Mother's Day brunch for the ladies of the parish. And, of course, we offer a special thanks to all grandmothers, mothers, and future mothers for all your love and care and compassion.

The **Spring Fling** was held at **2 o'clock on Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>**. Many parishioners enjoyed an afternoon of good food and excellent entertainment. *Yvette Kite* directed a skit featuring several parishioners who demonstrated that there is a great deal of thespian talent in the parish. *Gretchen Pruden* provided background music for the skit as well as playing selections on the piano before festivities started. The duo *Side by Side* (Cam Sowa and Fred Philcox) provided entertainment with a selection of '50's and '60's songs that were well received by all. Many thanks to all who were involved in providing food, fellowship and entertainment.

**Pentecost** was celebrated on Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Once again thanks to those who read the Gospel in a variety of languages to symbolize the good news being given to the whole world. Hearing the Gospel being read in different languages simultaneously was a most effective example of what Pentecost might have been like 2,000 years ago.



There will be a combined July/August *Beacon*. Publication date is???.; deadline will be ????

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## HOW TO STAY YOUNG

(George Carlin)

1. Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight and height. Let the doctor worry about them. That is why you pay him/her.
2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever. Never let the brain idle. " An idle mind is the devil's workshop." And the devil's name is Alzheimer's.
4. Enjoy the simple things.
5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for! breath.
6. The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person who is with you your entire life, is yourself. Be ALIVE while you are alive.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it's family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever. Your home is your refuge.