

# GOOD NEWS

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

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June 2009

Dear Friends,

I am spending sometime reviewing a booklet from the Church in England entitled 'Worship Changes Lives' and came across the following thoughts which I thought I would share with you in the hope that it might assist us in our own worship. Perhaps in the fall the Worship Committee and others might study this brief booklet and the supporting resources so we can deepen our own experience of encountering God through our worship.

We all know that headlines make or break a newspaper. The writers of this booklet use this imagery to catch our attention regarding worship. "They ( headlines) catch the eye, draw the reader into the story, and engage the brain. The more a writer, journalist or publicist can make their work stand out, the more chance it will be picked up and read." I wonder what St. Stephen's reaction would be if the Erie Times stated on the front page headline: "Bishop Rowe of the Episcopal Diocese blasts shoddy services at local Episcopal parish in Fairview." It would certainly grab my attention! How would you react- denial or determination to do better?

You will remember I have often mentioned what we share with friends regarding the movies one should see, or a wonderful concert, something at the Erie Playhouse, or a wonderful restaurant. What's missing? What news headline is a journalist more likely to pick up from the conversation over a coffee in church: one about the wonder of worship or one about house prices, the price of gas or the weather? Again quoting from this excellent booklet: "The trouble is that most Christians don't see worship as worthy of conversation, let alone headlines. They Should."

Worship connects us with the God who, through Jesus, transforms us and the world. That should be headline news. That should be enough for us to invite others to the parish. Worship can be exciting, transforming, moving, mysterious, and can be headline grabbing. On the other hand it can also be dull, lifeless and monotonous. Why

is that? In some parishes worship is beautifully well planned and carried through in a magnificent manner. In others it's bland and boring. There is little thought in planning, even less into its effect on new worshippers. Instead all too often the focus is all on getting it done, not on how well it is done.

"Worship is vitally important. It should honour God, and like a newspaper headline, grab people, engage them and change their lives. It should inspire and excite. It is the heart of a church. Worship is the Church's headline business."

I hope in the autumn a group of us can work together to help each other look again at what we are doing when we worship God. One of the gifts of our heritage is that we as Episcopalians know that worship lies at the heart of what and who we are as Christians. Worship shows God to us and us to God

The authors of the booklet conclude: "Worship transforms us as individuals and as a community:

- We belong to God and to each other in the worship we share.
- We become the people God wants us to be through worship
- We believe in God and that belief is shaped by our worship

So what headline would we write about St. Stephen's that would compel one to come and join us on Sundays?

God Bless,  
Geoff+



**St. Stephen's Annual  
Strawberry Festival**

**June 20, 2009  
3—8 PM**

**ANGELA COOK RETIRES**

After more than 30 years of service to our parish as director of the St. Stephen's Nursery School, Angela will be retiring in June. She has been an important part of the lives of many of our parish families, as well as many, many other families in our community. We will be honoring her ministry and service to us on Sunday, June 28 during the 10AM worship service and also at a reception to follow. We are hoping for a big crowd that day and are especially encouraging nursery school "graduates" to join us. If anyone who has attended St. Stephen's Nursery School, or has had a child attend, wishes to take part in the service, please let me know, and please pass the word to others you think would like to attend. We will be presenting Angela with a gift, and anyone wishing to donate towards that may contact Karen Acker, myself, or the church office. I am also soliciting donations of cookies to be served at the reception, so please let me know if you would be willing to donate some goodies.

Cindy Willis

**Ministry Fair**

Ever wonder what St. Stephen's parishioners do around here? Ever wonder how you might fit in? On Sunday, May 31, after both services, parishioners representing many of our ministries will be in the parish hall to answer your questions and invite you to join them in ministry. There will be no formal presentations, no pressure, just a time for you to enjoy your coffee and snacks while you consider how you might give of your time and talents for the benefit of our parish in the coming year. Please join us! Cindy Willis, Volunteer Coordinator

Thanks to Erie Landscape and Supply .....for giving us free delivery of our mulch. Please patronize our donors. We thank Jason for his kindness.

**June Birthdays & Anniversaries**

Birthdays	Anniversaries
1 Emma Schuette	2 Ben & Blanche Hill
2 Margie Walker, Allan Strange	3 Bill & Joyce Wilhelm
3 Andrea Weschler, Andrew Strange	8 Mike & Sally Patasky
4 Louise Llewellyn	12 Matthew & Jean Bacon
6 Baron Denniston	14 Harry & Martha Sinden
9 Steve Ropski	16 Jim & Alison Steadman
15 Anthony Pastore	18 Clark & Donna Davis
18 Suzanne Lawlor	19 Ray & Gail Burlingham
19 James Steele, Cindy Willis	20 Richard & Judy Biiley
20 Ben Willis	20 Bill & Linda Perry
25 Sherri Naylor, Elizabeth Masteller	23 Mark & Ellen Masteller
26 Blanche Hill	28 Don & Marlene Eagley
	30 Joseph & Jacque Yatzor

**Good News Deadline**

In order to get the Good News out in a timely fashion, we are asking that anyone who wishes to have an article or announcement printed, please submit that by the 15<sup>th</sup>. of the month. The office staff will be very grateful!

**Diocesan Picnic at Waldameer**

Sunday, June 21, 2009  
 Registration at 10AM  
 Worship Service at 11AM  
 Lunch and rides to begin at 12:30PM  
 Tickets are \$15 per person and include the meal and all rides in the park and Water World  
 Tickets MUST be purchased by June 7  
 Please see Cindy Willis on Sunday morning, or contact the church office.

**Upcoming Parish Events**

- May 31 Celebration of our acolytes, graduates, Sunday School and Youth Leaders Both services
- May 31 Ministry Fair in the parish hall after both services
- June 6 Outdoor clean up at the church
- June 7 Deadline to order tickets for the Diocesan Waldameer Picnic  
9AM Meeting for all Lay Eucharistic Ministers
- June 20 Strawberry Festival 3PM
- June 21 Diocesan Picnic at Waldameer  
11AM WORSHIP SERVICE AT WALDAMEER  
8AM worship service only at St. Stephen's – no 10AM service
- June 28 Honoring of Angela Cook at her retirement  
10AM service - Reception to follow

# Health Ministry

by Joyce Wilhelm

*And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. (Matt 10:1)*

God's richest blessing on you and your loved ones this month! We can feel stress related to problems in our relationships, spiritual well being of loved ones, finances and our health. This month we want to discuss the relationship between stress and spirituality and Ways to Reduce our Stress Response.

## Striking Stress with Spirituality: FROG

**Fully Rely on God:** "do not be anxious about anything but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Ph. 4:6—7).

**Relax:** Close your eyes and slow down your breathing, scan your body for signs of stress, tense all muscles (starting with clenching your teeth and go down to your toes) as you take a breath in and slowly relax all with slow deep breaths using your belly rather than your chest. Repeat 4—5 times. Several other stress busters are: praying, diaphragmatic breathing, and meditating.

**Observe:** It is very important to be able to scan your body, mind and spirit in terms of where and how stress is affecting you. Try keeping a stress log.

**God's Peace:** "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace" (Col. 3:15)

May God richly bless YOU!!

**June Reflection:** Helping to reduce stress may mean learning how to say "NO".



**First Saturday of June  
Clean—up  
June 6th, 9:00 AM—Noon**

Thanksgivings for:

**All of the kits** donated to SafeNet for Mother's Day  
The folks who have generously donated of their time to prepare, serve, and clean up after the **Third Sunday Outreach Breakfasts.**

## AUCTION ITEMS NEEDED for Strawberry Festival



Please consider helping by making donations towards the Adult Auction which is held during the festival.

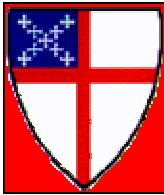
We are asking that you please submit only new items or make a monetary donation for the purchase of new items for the auction. Gift cards, certificates, gas cards, dining cards, etc. are also appreciated.

You can bring your items to the church or contact me at  
838-2986 to make arrangements for pick up.

Thank you!  
Gretchen, Kevin & Steven Tome



Healing Service  
May 31—7PM  
St. Mark's Episcopal Church  
4701 Old French Road, Erie  
Bishop Sean Rowe will be presiding



# Church School, Youth & Adult Forum

## Diocesan Summer Camp

Every summer, our Diocese offers a Summer Camp Program at Camp Nazareth near Mercer, PA. For those of us who have participated in any kind of church camp, we know that your time spent there can be very rewarding and full of memories. Yet over the past several years, St. Stephen's Youth have been noticeably absent from the Diocesan Summer Camp. This year we are trying hard to change that!

This year's camp will be held from June 14 through June 20. *Kids Kamp* is for those who are currently in grades 2 through 5 and *Teen Camp* is for those who are currently in grades 6 through 12. Two different programs are offered, but they run simultaneously with meals and worship held together. The camp program is a well-planned combination of learning, fellowship, recreation, and sharing. As in the past, I will be a member of the Camp Staff and will spend the week with our campers.

Please take some time to consider sending your child to this year's camp. Registration materials are available through the church office. Limited scholarship money will also be available from St. Stephen's and anyone interested should contact me directly. Also, if there is any concern about the school year not being over, please talk with me. Most school districts have been very cooperative in the past with excusing children from school for camp.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me in the church office at 474-5490. In the meantime, I look forward to a rewarding week at Summer Camp!

Carly Rowe

## Camp Experiences for Preschoolers

Our St. Stephen's Nursery School is offering a series of summer camp experiences for children ages 3, 4, 5 (must be potty trained). Each camp will run Tues.—Thurs. from 9:30 AM—1:30 M. Themes include Hawaiian Luau, Pirate Adventure, Under the Sea, and Circus Extravaganza. There are brochures with more information available on the table across from the church office.

## Celebrate Church School

It is hard to believe that the spring semester of Church school is winding down. It was a successful start to the new program and we are hopeful that fall will bring more new faces and added energy to the program. Many thanks to the very dedicated teachers, who jumped in and did incredible work with an all new program. They were Karen Acker, Cindy Willis, Nancy Gorman, Dana Schoen and Steve Ropski.

Also, congratulations to our young people who participated faithfully this semester: Emma Schuette, Jonathan Chase, Brianna DiGangi, Collette Franco, William Higley, Allison Higley, Jack Schoen, Steven Tome, Dusty Burrows, David Masteller and Rachel Willis. And of course to their parents, many thanks for making this commitment on Sunday mornings.

Church School kicks off again in September. We need the continued support of the parish and the involvement of all of our families to keep moving in the right direction. Hope to see you in Church School!

## Youth Fellowship Update & Thanks

The Youth Fellowship wrapped up a successful start to its' new format. Youth in grades 7-12 met every other Sunday evening beginning in February. They gathered for dinner, participated in Bible study and fellowship time and concluded each week with devotions. The group also participated in preparing an outreach meal at the Cathedral, where they fed about 75 people. They finished their year helping with the parish fellowship breakfast in May. Approximately 10 young people participated consistently. Many thanks to their families for being dedicated to this program. Also special thanks to the following members of the parish who generously prepared meals for the youth: Dom Fair, Fr. Don Baxter, Fr. Geoff & Jan, George & Cindy Willis, and John & Deanna Leuenberger.