

LETTER FROM YOUR RECTOR

"St. Stephen's, I see you."

[Fr. Phil Mason](#)

Dear Friends,

In my Sunday, March 29 Morning Prayer, I talked of the extreme measures that are being taken by us and, in fact, everyone around the globe. I also talked of the reasons we are taking these measures. Yes, we are fearful of the possibilities. Yet, we also practice cautious behavior for the protection of others and ourselves. The actual reason is because *we care* for one another. That is why we find ourselves in the practice of intentional, cautious behavior. And in so doing, we seem to, in a strange way, be closer to one another. I get more phone calls from my brother! Our separateness has brought us together. Like Pastor David Platt of McLean Bible Church, "Today I am preaching to an empty room, but I can see our church more clearly than ever."

St. Stephen's I see you. And I hear of all the things you are doing for one another. I see all the things you do for our community. I can see you ALL.

The sacrifices we make are for everyone. We are all safer.

The greatest enemy for us right now is fear. Fear of the future, not just our health. Fear for the way we live our lives going forward. What will the church look like on the day we open the doors again?

We can find some peace by focusing our attention on where we are right now. There is so much love and connection right now. In this moment right now, there is no fear. Maybe the Holy Spirit, God, had something to do with this most remarkable way of coming together.

In my mind and heart, I can see you ALL, and I love you.

*Peace and love to all,
Phil+*

*I've been thinking about the way, when you walk
down a crowded aisle, people pull in their legs
to let you by. Or how strangers still say, "bless you"*

*when someone sneezes, a leftover
from the Bubonic plague. "Don't die," we are saying.
And sometimes, when you spill lemons
from your grocery bag, someone else will help you
pick them up. Mostly, we don't want to harm each other.
We want to be handed our cup of coffee hot,
and to say thank you to the person handing it. To smile
at them and for them to smile back. For the waitress
to call us 'Honey' when she sets down the bowl of clam chowder,
and for the driver in the red pick-up truck to let us pass.
We have so little of each other, now. So far
from tribe and fire. Only these brief moments of exchange.
What if they are the true dwelling of the holy, these
fleeting temples we make together when we say, "Here,
have my seat," "Go ahead--you first," "I like your hat."
- Danusha Lameris*



PHONE APPOINTMENTS WITH FR. PHIL

While the church is closed to the public, know that Fr. Phil remains available to you. You are always welcome to call the church office, 512-847-9957, or e-mail: office@ststeve.org, to schedule a 30 minute phone or video call with Fr. Phil.

"I would very much like to know what's on your mind," assures Fr. Phil.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Both Fr. Phil and the church staff wish you to know how grateful we are to have our Senior Warden Nancy Cooke-Jenkins. She plays a crucial role in keeping our St. Stephen's ship on course.



SENIOR WARDEN NEWS

Nancy Cooke-Jenkins

These past few weeks have brought many changes, among them new phrases for our list of mantras. "We're all in this together" and "we'll get through this" are two that I hear on a daily basis. "Yes, we are," and "yes, we will." These words made me think, *how?*

At St. Stephen's we have a church family of members working behind the scenes every day to keep us viable and operating.

Lonnie Brown, Mike Williamson, and Rachel Krotzer make up such a team, checking our well, maintaining grounds, and keeping our buildings clean and ready for occupancy upon our return.

Jeannetta Watson and Lydia Baese continue to maintain the office and keep the lines of communication open. Although the offices are closed to in-person visits, Jeannetta and Lydia remain at their respective stations ready to answer your emails and phone calls. Lydia can be reached at the church main line: (512) 847-9956 and at office@ststeve.org. Jeannetta may be reached through the same main church line and at jwatson@ststeve.org.

Roy Buckley, our Treasurer, tends to our finances from his home office and shares a monthly report for us.

We are blessed to have a superior print and online Communications team, Jackie McFadden and Hunt Sparra, who not only keep us abreast of all that is going on, but get our messages out to the public, as well.

Elisa Webster, Family & Youth Minister, holds Sunday School classes with her students by email and snail mail, engaging children and parents in activities.

Perhaps you have already received a call from the fabulous members of Community of Hope. If you haven't, you will! This ministry is checking to see if everyone is alright and if they need anything. They help to keep us united and healthy in mind and spirit.

Our Prayer Warrior leaders, Elayne Leidecker and Cynthia Drake keep us up to date on parishioners suffering from illnesses, surgeries, and changes in life circumstances. Most of us know it's a powerful group.

Our music leaders, Anne Jones and Allen Hennig, are still able to lift our spirits on Sunday mornings, while we await the return of in-person worship with our choir. Thank you, Anne and Allen, for sharing your musical offerings through live-streaming with Fr. Phil during Sunday Morning Prayer and the Holy Week recordings.

Speaking of live-streaming, Robert McLemore is giving generously of his time and energy to record Fr. Phil's Sunday Morning Prayer.

Our Team of Meditation Writers never miss a beat! Through thick and thin we can count on their weekly dose of daily devotionals to guide and nurture us with powerful words, scripture, and personal stories.

Know, too, that many of your ministry groups, classes, and committee leadership teams are continuing to meet, provide needed direction, and spiritual guidance, behind the scenes. These teams are bravely embracing new methods of technology with ZOOM, freeconferencecall.com, and other inventive measures. In this issue of *eNEWS*, you will also learn about some of these groups and their April virtual meetings.

Speaking of leadership, yes, your Vestry continues meets monthly. We teleconference and are able to work toward always bettering the church.

We are so very fortunate to have Fr. Phil as our interim leader during this time. His evenness, cheerfulness, pragmatic manner, and spirit give rise to keep us on an even keel and strengthen our faith.

Lastly, we have YOU, our church community. Your ever present loyalty will further keeping us united and as a family unit.

Hopefully, no one has been left out of our behind the scenes warriors. If so, my apologies.

Yes, we are "all in this together" and we are "getting through it," with God's help.

*Blessings,
Nancy*

*"In three words, I can sum up everything I've learned about life:
IT GOES ON!"
- Robert Frost*



PALM CROSSES READY FOR PICKUP
SATURDAY, APRIL 4, AFTER 9:00 A.M.

St. Stephen's has a gift for you! Elisa Webster and Judy Holmes have made palm crosses for all of us, just in time for Palm Sunday, April 5. On Saturday, April 4, these palm crosses will be placed outside the Chapel at 9:00 a.m. in a basket. You are invited to swing by and ***pick up your cross any time on Saturday, April 4***

COVID-19 guidelines remain in effect, therefore, we will be live-streaming our Palm Sunday Service. Please tune-in at [Facebook Live](#) at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, April 5 to enjoy a virtual Eucharist with Fr. Phil presiding and accompanied musically by Anne Jones and Allen Hennig.

FROM YOUR TREASURER

[Roy Buckley](#)

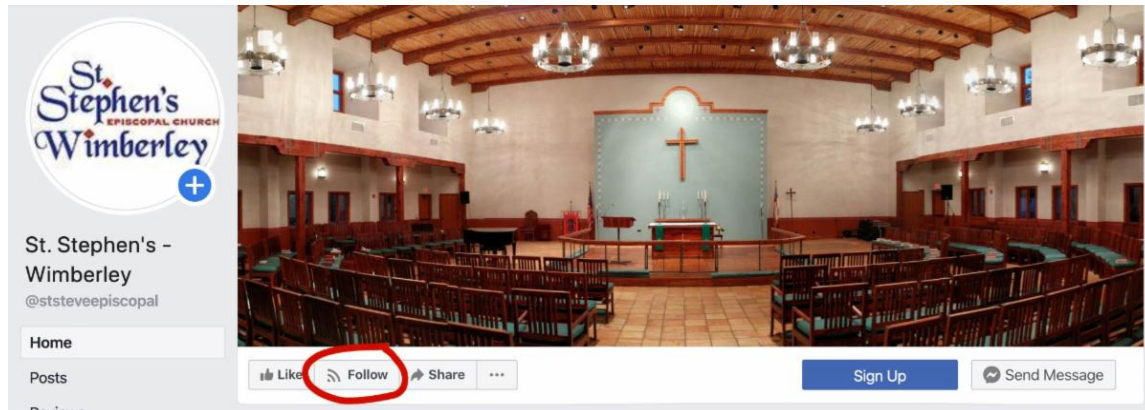
We want to take this time during our "social distancing" to thank all our St. Stephen's members for remaining committed to seeing their Pledge obligations through during this difficult and trying time in our lives. It is with considerable pride that we take in all of our devoted members and pray that we all remain safe and healthy during this unique and difficult period in our Church's history. It is understandable that many members find themselves financially stretched during this recent crisis. We ask that if there is anything St. Stephen's can do to assist our members who find themselves somewhat overwhelmed by difficulties resulting from the pandemic, please contact us. Neighbors helping neighbors and family helping family is the way we want to approach this challenge by extending our helping hands to those in need.



We would also like to remind and recommend to our parishioners the [on-line giving platform of St. Stephen's website](#) as a very user-friendly and convenient means of making donations or meeting pledge obligations as we await the end of this quarantine. Please [visit the site](#) and try to become familiar with the on-line giving

platform. From that point, you can decide if the on-line giving process is something that gives enough user-comfort as would convince you of its good merits. If it does not lend enough confidence in your way of thinking, there is always the reliable U.S. Postal Service that can be used to carry your donations to St. Stephen's safely and securely. Do, however, give the on-line giving site a "look-see." Who knows, you may learn something about it to your liking and find that it is an excellent way of making donations or meeting pledge commitments - all the while impressing the younger generations with your uncanny technical skills. Give it a go!

*Wishing all good health, plus God's blessings and His undying love,
Roy R. Buckley, Treasurer*



HOW TO JOIN ST. STEPHEN'S FACEBOOK

We will continue to live-stream Sunday services through Facebook Live. It's a great time to sign up. Once you join St. Stephen's Facebook, you will receive an alert when live-streaming begins and alerts to any new posts of reminders and news to the St. Stephen's Facebook.

To join, simply visit the [St. Stephen's Church Facebook](#). Click "Follow" and you will be all set.



DWTX IMPORTANT MATTERS

SUSPENSION OF PUBLIC GATHERINGS EXTENDED THROUGH APRIL 30

In his March 27 letter, Bishop David Reed extended the current suspension of in-person worship and meetings through Thursday, April 30. At this time, it is still permissible for persons to be on-site to prepare recorded or live-streamed services, so long as the minimal number of people needed are present and the total number does not exceed 10 persons. [Click here](#) to read more.

APRIL APPORTIONMENT PAYMENTS CANCELED

Like other parishes within the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas (DWTX), St. Stephen's sends an apportionment payment to DWTX each month. On March 27, however, we learned that the Executive Board of the Diocese of West Texas voted unanimously to cancel the April apportionment payment from all 85 parishes and missions. THANK YOU!!! The intention of the cancellation is to provide some relief from the many stresses and anxieties confronting all the DWTX churches in these difficult and uncertain times. [Click here](#) to read more.



The poster features a background of a desert landscape with a rising sun, silhouettes of three crosses on the left, and a city on a hill on the right. The text is centered and reads:

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
LIVE-STREAMING
EASTER SUNDAY
@ 10:30 a.m. April 12
Holy Week Services
Sunday Services @ 10:30 a.m.
ststeve.org
facebook.com/ststeveepiscopal/



PALM SUNDAY



Maundy Thursday



GOOD FRIDAY
IT IS FINISHED

April 5 @ 10:30 a.m.
LIVE-STREAM

April 9 @ 6:00 p.m.
AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE

April 10 @ 12 noon
AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE

HOLY WEEK DETAILS

MAUNDY THURSDAY & GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES [AIRING ON YOUTUBE](#)

Both the Maundy Thursday Service and Good Friday Service will be pre-recorded and will air on [St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Wimberley YouTube](#). While we are saddened that we will not be meeting in-person this year due to COVID-19 guidelines, we are gladdened to know that we will be able to worship, pray, sing, and be together in a new way. Please do join us! A reminder email will be sent out to you shortly before the services with the link to view the services.

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE

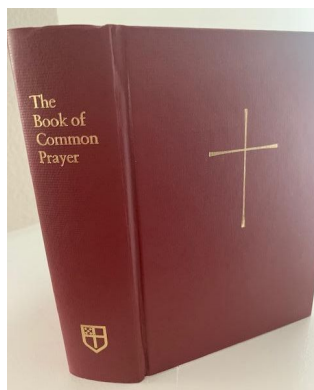
Thursday, April 9, 6:00 p.m.

Candlelit from the Chapel with songs, prayer, the story of The Servant Leader, and discussion on the tradition of foot washing.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Friday, April 10, 12 noon

Join us as we explore, "Were you there?" in prayer, song, and sermon.



BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE [CLICK HERE](#)



ORDERING EASTER LILIES Deadline Extended: Wednesday, April 8

You may continue ordering and paying for Easter lilies online. ***Final day to order is Wednesday, April 8.*** Dedications will be printed in your Easter Sunday electronic program and read by Fr. Phil during the live-stream Easter Sunday Service on April 12 at 10:30 a.m.

To order flowers, click link below:

<https://ststeveimberley.wufoo.com/forms/altar-flowers-order-form/>

To pay for altar flowers, click link: <https://www.ststeve.org/online-giving>. In the "give to" field's pull down menu, select "Altar Flowers." Cost is: \$15.

Thank you for your beautiful donations of Easter Lilies adorning the altar this Easter.



YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

EASTER PACKET COMING

All JH/HS aged students on our rosters will be receiving by U.S. postal mail a packet containing a special Easter lesson and activities. If your physical mailing address has changed since December, please email Elisa your preferred physical mailing address. ***We will not be meeting in-person in April on Sundays.***

If you have friends or neighbors ages 13-17 who would like to receive an Easter packet as well, email Elisa their physical mailing address. We have extras and are happy to share!

FUNDRAISERS

We will **NOT** be holding our April breakfast taco fundraiser. In the meantime, let's get our creative caps on with fundraising ideas that can be done virtually and on-line.

For more information, contact: Elisa Webster, elisawebster9@gmail.com.



FAMILY MINISTRY NEWS

SSEC Family Events

By now you should have received the first Sunday School packet in your mailbox. Next up, be on the lookout for a special Easter packet. If you are not currently on our rosters and are interested in receiving Sunday School packets with lesson and activities for your family's children ages 5-12 and/or teens, ages 13-17, e-mail Family & Youth Minister, Elisa Webster, elisawebster9@gmail.com.

Although you see scheduled events below, please be aware that we continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and make adjustments as necessary. As you may notice all in-person April events have been canceled.

Friday, May 8	6:00 p.m.	McArthur Hall	Kid's Fun & Faith/Parent's Date Night
Saturday, May 16	1:00 p.m.	Courtyard	Church & School Picnic



GROUPS MEETING VIRTUALLY

While we continue to follow COVID-19 guidelines and are unable to meet in-person, several ministries, classes, and groups are now meeting virtually. See the chart below for details. If your group is not on the list below and would like to be added in the next eNEWS, please email, Jackie McFadden, eeant@mac.com.

Monday Bible Babes	12:30 p.m.	ZOOM	contact: Cindy Taylor
Thursday Bible Babes	12:30 p.m.	teleconference	contact: Nancy Cooke-Jenkins
Cancer Support		email, text, phone	contact: Sharon East & Dave Boyd
Grief Support		email	contact: Evie Martin



EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

St. Stephen's has its own chapter of the National Episcopal Church Women and all women are automatically members.

The SSEC ECW mission is "to develop relationships throughout the community, to create events to raise funds to address the needs of St. Stephen's Church and School and the community at large."

Board members include Carroll Dolezal, Sharon Lucier, Joann Seeberger, Esther Purcell, Kristen Schmidt, and Sherri Schmitt.

Sherri Schmitt would like to thank all the women at St. Stephen's who responded to the ECW Survey.

"You can be assured that we will be contacting those who wish to be on a committee," Sherri explains. "We have added to the events we were planning to have and, unfortunately, have had to postpone some due to the COVID-19 virus."

Women of St. Stephen's, if you would like to volunteer to be on a specific committee that you see below, please contact [Sherri Schmitt](#) by email or call (512) 847-6917.

Garage Sale	TBD
Fall/Winter Fashion Show/Luncheon	early November
Old Spanish Mission Tour (San Antonio)	TBD



THE HUDDLE

MARCH 27, 2020

THE HUDDLE MAKES ITS DEBUT

In an effort to keep our St. Stephen's Team in the loop, we created a mini-newsletter called "THE HUDDLE" that will go out on alternating Fridays from the eNEWS. We're looking forward to joining you in the next huddle!



REMOTE CHAIR & GENTLE YOGA NOW OFFERED BY CARLA DAWS

Carla Daws, Yoga Ministry chair and Vestry member, is now offering two virtual yoga classes for you that can be done at home. These can be accessed 24/7 through the [St. Stephen's YouTube](#). New routines will be released every other Monday. No shoes or experience necessary. All abilities welcome. Grab your sturdy chair or mat, water bottle, and click "play."

Thank you, Carla, for offering this way to keep us all healthy in mind, body, and spirit.



ASK & ANSWER AVAILABLE 24/7

You can now find a form on the church website called ["Ask & Answer."](#) It is available to you 24/7 for all those questions that you don't know quite who to ask. [Fill out the simple form online](#), and we'll get started on your answer.



BIG SCOOP UPDATE

The Big Scoop Ice Cream Festival is getting a new date. Instead of being held in July, it is scheduled for Saturday, September 5. Stay tuned for more information.

Community of Hope Ministry



Do you need someone...

*To listen, without judgment, to what is weighing on your heart?
To recognize your needs and respect your rights to your feelings?
To honor any conversation with complete confidentiality?
To support you as you take steps of change on your journey?
To just walk with you and let you be you.*

Each one of us, at some point in our lives, could use a "companion" to walk with us during the challenges of our journeys. A Community of Hope Lay Chaplain is someone who cares about you, will not promise miracles, will not decide for you what you should do, will not take steps for you, and will not rescue you. He or she will be available to you, support you, pray for you, and assure you that you are God's beloved. Please, if you are walking alone, invite one to join you on your path.

*For more information during APRIL contact:
Nancy Cooke-Jenkins, nmjenkins@austin.rr.com or Kristen
Schmidt, tkschmidt@anvil.com.*



UPCOMING SUBMISSION DEADLINES

The eNEWS is published on Fridays generally every two weeks and delivered straight to your e-mail's in-box. If you have an e-mail address update, please make sure to send these to the church office, office@ststeve.org.

With more than 25 ministries and groups here at St. Stephen's Church, we've got a lot happening! Help us cover your event by submitting articles, photos, and artwork to: *Communications Manager*, [Jackie McFadden](#).

UPCOMING DEADLINES:
12 noon Wednesday or earlier

April 15

April 29

IN THE LIFE OF SSEC

Proof that live-streaming is for the whole family, humans and furry friends alike. Any pet fish out there watching during Sunday Morning Prayer? If so, send your photo to: eeant@mac.com. Thank you to Carla Daws for sending her photo of Izzie for our enjoyment.



SAT, APRIL 4

Pick up palm crosses, outside chapel in basket, after 9:00 a.m.

SUN, APRIL 5, PALM SUNDAY

Live-stream Palm Sunday Service, 10:30 a.m. (Facebook Live)

TH, APRIL 9, MAUNDY THURSDAY

Maundy Service, recorded and airing at 6:00 p.m. (YouTube)

FRI, APRIL 10, GOOD FRIDAY

Good Friday Service, recorded and airing at 12 noon (YouTube)

SUN, APRIL 12, EASTER

Live-stream Easter Service, 10:30 a.m. (Facebook Live)

Are you on Facebook? St. Stephen's is!

**[Click here](#) to visit our Facebook page
and don't forget to **LIKE** and **SHARE** us!**

Please contact the church office at 512.847.9956, Monday through Thursday,
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and 8:30 a.m. - 12 noon Fridays if you have any questions.

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)