

*At St. Stephen's,
our Mission is to
worship, love and
serve Our Lord
Jesus Christ,
welcoming
everyone,
deepening our
faith, helping our
neighbors and
caring for creation*

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The St. Stephen's Clarion



Words from our Senior Warden - Susan Ho

Earlier in June, your vestry gathered and spent a Saturday morning coming up with a Mutual Ministry Agreement. This is a document required by the Diocese, to state goals the congregation and the Rector want to accomplish during the year. It helps us pinpoint where we are, and where we are going. The morning was very fruitful, and I feel that we have some pretty awesome work to do together. I am including that Mutual Ministry document in this column, and I would like you all to read it carefully, and see what specific areas you would like to be most involved with. As with most things, it takes a village to accomplish good things, and we need all of you as part of our village. Thank you to all who have been so willing to step in and step up in our church community, and I look forward to working with all of you during this time of growth and energy.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Mutual Ministry Agreement
June 8, 2019

1. Improve communication within the congregation
 - a. Set up rector with the Constant Contact app.
 - b. Review format and function of our weekly church email.
 - c. Upload audio and video of sermons
 - d. Set up a video or podcasts of a summary of vestry meetings.
 - i. Insert a link on the web site.
 - ii. Insert a link on Constant Contact communication and our church monthly newsletter, "The Clarion".
 - e. Promote our web site more – in announcements, "Clarion", on stationery and business cards, etc.
 - f. Add parishioner photos to our church directory.

(continued)

Words from our Senior Warden - Susan Ho (continued)



2. Work on improving our outreach to our neighbors
 - a. When we have an event, such as a concert, recruit groups of parishioners to knock on doors and hand out brochure to several blocks surrounding our church.
 - c. Organize an annual yard picnic and invite all the neighbors
 - d. Host a meal for social service agencies and first responders on Whidbey Island. Our intention here is three-fold.
 - i. Thank them for their ongoing work with at-risk populations.
 - ii. Provide informal networking forum between agencies and with St. Stephen's.
 - iii. Identify an unfilled or under-served niche that St. Stephen's can work to fill.
 - e. Organize a joint social event with St. Augustine's in-the-Woods.
 - f. Define what "radically welcoming" looks like. What is the modern "red door"?
3. Continue to improve our pledge drive
 - a. Increase the number of pledgers through good communication, preaching and teaching.
 - b. Improve our pledge drive form by adding space for time and talent pledges.
 - c. Strengthen capital improvement funding by including an itemized list of needed capital improvement projects needed, and estimated costs.
 - d. Investigate extended stewardship of our church campus, to include better use of our back lot, chapel, portables, narthex, and multi-purpose room (already slated for use as a Day Monastery one day a week)

(End)



Birthdays & Anniversaries



July Birthdays

- July 3 Linda Krueger
- July 6 David Carter
- July 10 Robert Green
- July 23 Connelly Howes

July Anniversaries

- July 11 Jim & Virginia Wagner
- July 14 Rick & Michele Chapman
- July 26 John & Christine Visick

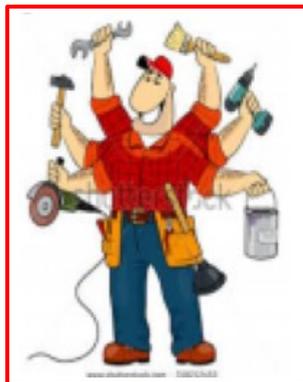
Ordination Anniversary

July 7, 2001 The Rev. Dennis Taylor

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Hey, Bill, Tell Us Something Cool

The Book of Common Prayer 1979 tells us that the Holy Eucharist is “the principal act of Christian worship on the Lord’s Day and other major Feasts...” [13] This being so, I want to explore the rite in this column and perhaps another. We’ll see.

There are several different ways of considering the content or structure of the rite. Looking at the rite itself, using Rite II as our instance, we note at the outset that the rite is composed of two sections, the first called “The Word of God,” [355] and the second “The Holy Communion.” [361] These titles make clear that the Holy Eucharist is composed of these two, equally important components.



What we see here are the two antecedent realities behind the rite. On the one hand, we have a classroom, a place where books and teaching/preaching are central. On the other, we have a dining room, a place where food is available and consumed in community. A book or books and food, that’s what’s there to be seen.

Further, this means that the focus of the liturgy from the beginning to the middle is on the ambo, the place where the reading and teaching/preaching take place. The focus of the second part is the altar/table. [Remind me sometime to talk about the gospel procession and the altar/table business.]

The Word of God is centered on the Bible and its reading and exposition and The Holy Communion is centered on prayer over bread and wine and the sharing of both with everyone.

So, from the rite itself, we see clearly that it is composed of two essential parts, marked by their own central objects and actions.

Another way to view the composition of the liturgy is to use the pattern printed on pages 400 and 401 of the Prayer Book. On these pages we find “An Order for the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist.” [Remind me sometime to talk about the “orders” that are contained in the Prayer Book. There are three.]

On these two pages, we find an outline of the Eucharist. Interesting to note, this outline first appears in a text written in the second century. The outline describes the pattern of Holy Eucharist from the very earliest life of the Church.

On these pages, the outline describes what the priest and people are to do so as to celebrate the Eucharist rightly. There is very little content provided. What is given is a sequence of actions. And, it is important to note, this sequence is common to the Church’s history and to broad contemporary liturgical practice.

Hey, Bill, Tell Us Something Cool (continued)

It is an easy and helpful thing to use this outline to explore the content of our Sunday liturgy, every time out. The outline contains eight topics, to which I invariably add a ninth. You will see how straight-forward and really familiar this outline is.

First, we are to gather in the Lord's name. Then we proclaim and respond to the word of God. In other words, we read the Bible and explore the reading. Next, we pray for the world and Church. This praying we accomplish in the Prayers of the People and, seasonally, the confession. Then we exchange the peace. With this action, we have completed the first part of the liturgy, the part called in the Prayer Book "The Word of God."

Then comes "The Holy Communion." Here we are told to prepare the Table. This is where the bread and wine are brought forward and prepared for the blessing. This is also the time when alms are gathered and presented. Next, we are to make Eucharist. We do this by praying the Great Thanksgiving, of which there are several available for our use. Called the Eucharist Prayer, it invariably ends with the Great Amen, capital letters and italics!

Then we break the bread. This action is done mindful of Jesus' actions as recounted in Luke's gospel. Following their experience with a stranger on the Emmaus Road, a stranger they recognized as Jesus, two of his followers reported that He had been "made known to them in the breaking of the bread." [24.35] What Jesus did on that road and what we do at this point in the liturgy are the same. We break bread so that justice can be done—everyone gets some—and generosity is done—everyone gets some.

Finally, from the Prayer Book list, comes our happy obligation to share the gifts of God. This is the Holy Communion, where all are welcome.

This completes the eight topics and directives in the Outline. What I add to this list is the dismissal. To the extent that we convene formally, so also we are formally dismissed. At the end of the liturgy, we are sent out, to move into our communities to do what we are called to do. The dismissal is our commissioning to act. This seems an essential element in our larger outline.

That's perhaps enough for this time. If there's interest, I will continue with this topic next time out. Let me know as you can.

Benedicite!

EfM - Gaylene Reiten



"Belief, especially Christian belief, has entered a critical stage in Western society. Masses of people now reject belief. For many centuries, Christians have equated faith with belief...It is not only the case that the Western world has grown weary of doctrine, but that Christianity itself is changing; shifting away from being a belief-centered religion toward an experiential faith...belief questions have become: 'How do you believe?'

'How could I ever believe?' 'How does this make sense?' 'How would believing this make my life different?' or 'How would this change the world?' ...'How' is a question of meaning and purpose that pushes people into a deeper engagement in the world, rather than memorizing facts...From 'what' to 'how' is a shift from 'information about' to 'experience of'...Belief itself is being enfolded into a new spiritual awareness as belief questions morph from 'what' to 'how', from seeking information 'about' God to nurturing 'experience' of the divine." Diana Butler Bass

Have you read Diana Butler Bass's book [Christianity After Religion](#)? Does this quote spark your interest? I have a handout of an excerpt from this book taken from EfM Reading and Reflection guide for you if you are curious about discussing this topic with a seminar group in September.

Living faithfully in a multicultural world has been the theme of EfM this past year. When I pick up and peruse a history book, a newspaper, a sacred text or theological commentary, I get a feel for differing cultures and their resulting differences in beliefs and practices. I am reminded that conflict has always been a part of history, current news and theology.

As I seek to keep growing spiritually in hopes of living more authentically into my Christian faith, I use the process of theological reflection I'm learning in EfM to give me perspective with questions like: How can any of us know the truth? How can personal beliefs that differ permit peaceful coexistence and humble openness? How can the holy be worshiped? How can integration and wholeness be achieved?

I find these interesting questions and I'm wondering if perhaps you might as well. If you would like a copy of the Butler Bass excerpt from "Christianity after Religion" taken from the 2018-2019 EfM Reading and Reflection guide please let me know. (I have permission to make copies for this discussion.)

We will be discussing this excerpt from the Diana Butler Bass book on September 4th, 12:30-2:45 with our combined St. Stephen's and Christ Church EfM group. We are inviting people who are curious about EfM or who have participated in EfM before to come join us in this discussion.

Also, just to let you know: **January 2020 will start a new year of EfM.** The people from Oak Harbor who are traveling to Anacortes for EfM are hoping that there will be enough people in Oak Harbor to have a new EfM seminar group who would meet at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. We hope to have a diverse seminar group with people from a variety of denominational (or other religious/spiritual/agnostic/atheistic) backgrounds participating. We would come together in October and choose our own day and time for our new St Stephen's EfM group which would officially begin in January 2020.

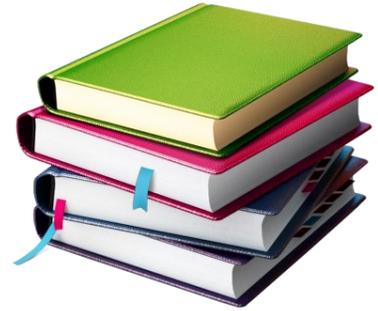
Let Gaylene Reiten know if you are interested or have questions.

email: gaylenereiten@yahoo.com

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What We Are Reading at St. Stephen's

- * From Gaylene Reiten: I am reading *Life Together* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer as a preparation for the discussion of that book in our new 2020 EfM group. I am also reading the bestseller: *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* by Eric Metaxas. This biography reads like a very personable historical novel.
- * From Mary Green: *The Second Mountain* by N.Y. Times columnist and NPR pundit David Brooks. It's a semi-autobiographical book on the second half of life and the search for meaning and love.
- * From Michele Johnson: *Madame President: The Extraordinary Journey of Ellen Johnson Shirleaf*, by Helene Coper. A bio of the first woman president of Liberia. A women's empowerment book.
- * From Jeff Neuberger: I recently concluded participation in a four-week study group of Parker Palmer's *On the Brink of Everything: Grace, Gravity, and Getting Old*. Palmer's book explores a perspective of his life from his 80's in a series of themed chapters, each with numerous nuggets worthy of highlighting. "Drawing on eight decades of life -- and his career as a writer, teacher, and activist -- Palmer explores the questions age raises and the promises it holds. "Old," he writes, "is just another word for nothing left to lose, a time to dive deep into life, not withdraw to the shallows."
- * From Virginia Wagner: I recommend *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean. It's a great read about the Los Angeles Library, a mystery, history of libraries, and the interesting collections libraries contain.
- * From Rev. Peter Rood: I am paying more attention to the raptors in the air since reading *H Is for Hawk* by Helen Macdonald. It is a beautiful meditation on nature, falconry, and the meaning of life. Also *Americana* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is an extraordinary novel about race, class, immigration, and belonging from an African perspective. A clever and poignant love story.
- * From The Roseberrys:



Alaine is reading *Fix it Friends, Have No Fear* by Nicole Kear. It is about a group of friends who show their friendship to a girl who is afraid of bugs. They try to help her overcome her fear.

Abbie has been enjoying the *Divergent* Series by Veronica Roth. It's about a girl named Tris who lives in a dystopian world of factions that you have to fit into, but Tris doesn't fit into just one faction, which makes her "Divergent."

What We Are Reading at St. Stephen's (continued)

Andy recommends *Battle Ready* by David M. Hansen. It is a brief history of the national coast defense system and the fortification of Puget Sound from 1894-1925.

I (Val) have been reading Jeff Chu's *Does Jesus Really Love Me? A Gay Christian's Pilgrimage in Search of God in America*. I just discovered Jeff Chu and I appreciate his perspective. Also, the guy can PREACH!

Roseberry Read Aloud: We just finished reading *Catherine Called Birdy* by Karen Cushman. It's a historical novel written as a diary about a girl in the 13th century. All of us loved Birdy and were rooting for her as she tried to find a way out of the marriage betrothal her father had arranged with an old, repulsive, toothless man she calls, "Shaggy Beard." It was one of the most fun books we read for school this year.

- * From Grant Heiken: Rose George—*Nine Pints - A Journey Through The Money, Medicine and Mysteries of Blood*. Matt Goulding—*Pasta, Pane, Vino—Deep Travels Through Italy's Food Culture*.
- * From John Visick: Langdon Gilkey, "Shantung Compound:" "This book is about the life of a civilian internment camp in North China during the war against Japan." Roger E. Olson, "The Essentials of Christian Thought." This is a book that talks about what a Christian metaphysic might be. There are a lot of thought-provoking ideas and issues discussed. Kenneth Scott Latourette, "A History of Christianity." 2 vols.
- * From William Seth Adams: I'm reading *The Boy at the Door* by Alex Dahl [2018]. This is a remarkably well-written and well-structured story, full of interesting turns in the discovery of a mysterious boy who "appears" in the Swedish town, Sandefjord. A bit of Scandinavian *noir!*
- * From Mike Moore: I am reading the first volume of Rick Atkinson's new history of the American Revolution, *The British Are Coming*. Two more volumes will follow. Also just finished Robert Caro's new book on writing history, *Working*.
- * From Tom Johnson: *The Accidental Anglican*, by Todd D. Hunter. It is subtitled "The Surprising Appeal of the Liturgical Church."

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

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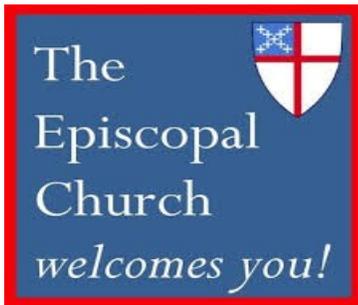
Calendar of Upcoming Events:

◆ Friday: 3:00 pm Vestry Meeting
Multipurpose Room—
Downstairs

Continuing Events

◆ Sundays: 10:30 am Holy Eucharist
Nursery Care Available

If you have information or any fun photos you would like included, in the monthly newsletter, please contact Cindy Geibig at cindynkilo@yahoo.com.



Wherever you are in your life with God -- whether a hesitant searcher or a regular churchgoer -- we invite you to worship with us and to think of St. Stephen's as your spiritual home.

We meet in the Main Sanctuary for Eucharist at 10:30 AM each Sunday, followed by fellowship in Miller Hall. Our office is in the A-frame building with All Saints Chapel.