



ST STEPHEN'S SIGNPOST

ST STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
HEATHSVILLE, VIRGINIA



A welcoming family united in Christian love, worship, and
service

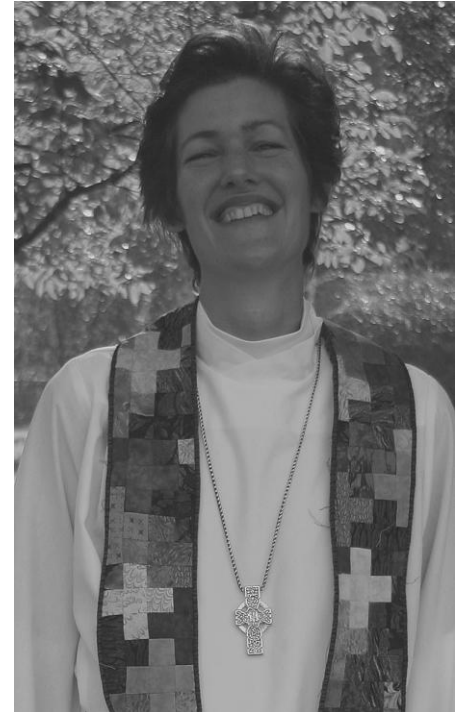
ststephensheathsville.org

THE RECTOR'S COLUMN

A parishioner forwarded me a link to a website which had all sorts of ideas for how congregations could celebrate Earth Day Sunday. I realized that the Sunday before Earth Day falls on our first outdoor service, and we would have a solar-powered worship service! What better way to remind ourselves of God's gift of creation than to worship right in the middle of it. I have heard Bishop Lee say that no cathedral in the world has a higher ceiling than our cathedral, because our cathedral is the Shrine at Shrine Mont. And our church here in Heathsville has a ceiling just as high: for St. Stephen's the sky is the limit!

Our procession around the parish house on Palm Sunday and our procession through Heathsville during the Easter Vigil were partly outdoor services too. As our Easter Vigil procession passed the familiar and ordinary landmarks of Heathsville, I remembered that God is present in each of those places. We can pray and sing and hear scripture even along Route 360 as the cars drive by, because we are the church without walls, and so the whole world is our church. And our church is the group of people walking through Heathsville, following a candle and a cross.

Alleluia!



Lucia +

RECTOR'S SCHEDULE

It's time I set a schedule for my office hours, or at least a "default schedule" to follow when there are no special events or special circumstances. Here's my plan:

- Sundays 8:00-12:00
- Tuesdays and Fridays 8:45-2:45
- Thursdays 1:00-9:00

VESTRY MEETING NOTES

March 12, 2009: The February mini-retreat 2009 goals were distributed and reviewed.

Facilities expenses were up due to the unexpected plumbing repairs in the upstairs bath.

David Chilton has requested increased rent and that St. Stephen's pay the utilities. Bill commented that significant money has been invested in building repairs and maintenance (the Chilton family is aware of this). The vestry approved paying up to \$150 towards the utilities, but not increased rent.

Vestry meeting minutes are now being archived both online on the church website and in a "vestry minutes" book in the church office. Dick emails a copy of the completed minutes and meeting handouts to Amy for inclusion. Amy has updated the service schedule with the local newspapers. Dick will get 2009 newspaper advertising (display ads) costs.

Leslie Hatch has agreed to be the kitchen coordinator. Lynn Hower will assist with some of the Costco shopping when she returns from vacation. The Blessing of the Animals is scheduled for Saturday October 10th at the Parish House.

The Building and Grounds Committee is being formed. The vestry approved increasing the house keeper's services from monthly to every two weeks. Regular Sunday services over the summer and general increased activities at the Parish House make this necessary to keep up.

The Farmer's Market does have *minimal* charge for non-profit organizations selling goods or services, mention was made of the upcoming Light Street renewal project (some of the water recipients reside there), members of St. Stephen's will handout "thank you" Easter baskets after service to members of HUMC. Sandy Kirkpatrick has accepted the Education liaison position for the vestry.

Respectfully submitted,
Dick Eager, Register

April 16, 2009: Present were Lucia Lloyd and vestry members Bill Kirby, Joel Stubbs, Dawn Mahaffey, Nancy Gates, Dick Eager and Rick Skelton. Also present were Ellen Kirby, Treasurer, and guest Rocco Tricarico.

Treasurer's report: Actual income was down only slightly from budget. Pledges still remain behind, but unrestricted gifts have helped to make up the difference. Expenses are slightly ahead of budget as outreach & pastoral care expenses are up. Income from the BBQ, plant sale and the Oyster Roast events will make up some shortfalls. Forty chairs have been purchased for outside services. We will pay HUMC \$50/month for copier services over the summer.

Everyone agreed the Easter Vigil should be repeated next year. Earlier planning and advertising should increase participation.

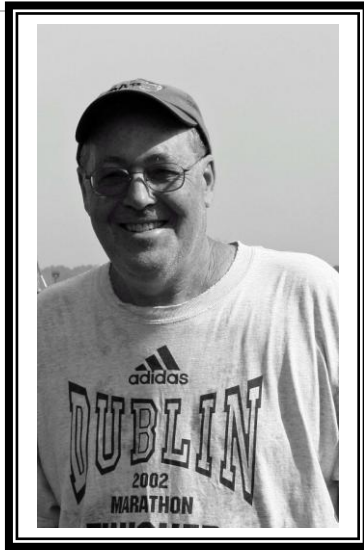
Sunday School Appreciation Sunday will be Sunday, May 31st, on Pentecost. The last regularly scheduled class will be celebrated at coffee hour. Some children's events are planned for the summer.

The new outdoor Episcopal flag has arrived and is in use. Ted Hower has been asked to make a sandwich board sign to be used for announcing service times. Justin Fulcher will paint the sign. Bill will work with David Kirkpatrick to install Welcome signs at each end of Heathsville using the sign now in front of the Methodist Church, and another from Ware Church, that will be refurbished.

Outdoor services will mean the ushers (two for the summer) need to arrive by 8:15 to set up. Choir will assist moving the keyboard. Adult bible study will continue through summer. Heifer projects are tentatively scheduled for July.

Respectfully submitted,
Dick Eager, Register

SENIOR WARDEN COLUMN



Dear Folks,

Time flies when you are having fun and growing older faster. It seems like Christmas was just last month and yet Easter has already come and gone!

Holy Week marked both beginning and endings. Lent ended at sundown Holy Saturday with what I hope will begin an annual tradition at St. Stephen's: Easter Vigil. After the lighting of the Easter Candle in front of Chilton House, a small but hardy band followed Lucia and her family, our flag, and the cross along Northumberland Highway to Heathsville United Methodist Church. There were stops along the way in front of St Stephen's, in Northumberland Hall, and in front of the Courthouse for readings and hymns. The service concluded in the church with a renewal of Baptismal Vows and Holy Eucharist. It was a moving and meaningful service.

Easter Sunday, marked both the ultimate renewal—the Resurrection—and the end of our services at the Methodist Church. We celebrated the occasion by handing out Easter baskets to our Methodist hosts. Over 50 members, family and friends of St. Stephen's attended our final service! We are all thankful for Lucia's leadership, for Alice and Amy, and for the Easter Bunnies who turned out to fill Easter baskets. Their work helped make Holy Week—including Maundy Thursday and Good Friday—the special and blessed time that it was for all who attended. St. Stephen's continues to move forward with God's help!

Now that we've moved our services outdoors at 9:00 for as long as the weather cooperates, some folks have been asking, "What happens in the Fall?" Well, slowly, a plan is taking shape: **Chilton House**

Transformation Phase II. You can read about it on the following page.

Much has been happening outside. Joel organized a cleanup party the day before the first outdoor service, so the yard and garden look great! George Freeman has been patiently and diligently working on the front lawn for three springs, and his annual seeding of creeping red fescue has been paying off. We have another small Victory Garden this year, and have added a small cutting garden to help supply altar flowers during the summer. If you can help with weeding, and watering chores... see the little red hen—or me! A mowing roster has been posted in Chilton house and sent to the lucky grounds crew.

Thanks to an anonymous donor, we were able to contract for the repainting of the front porch. What a difference it has made to our entrance way! Thanks to Tomas Fatrai for the repair work and painting. Ted Hower has found a second (or is it third?) career in carpentry and furniture making, turning out a new sandwich board sign, outdoor altar and credence table in very short order.

Finally – and just in case I've not mentioned it before –June 6 (5:00-8:00) is our **Bluegrass and Barbecue Pickin' Party**. Attendance is **mandatory** (yes, the parish by-laws were changed last month!) In all seriousness, this is one of our signature community events. Fundraisers make up a significant portion of our operating and outreach budget. All hands are needed in selling tickets, setting up, serving and hosting, and talking it up among neighbors and friends! We have a small, dedicated posse doing most of the heavy lifting, but we will be finalizing a duty roster for the event in a couple of weeks, so please let me know if you are unable to join us. Every bit of additional help is appreciated and will help ensure a successful fundraiser. Music this year will be provided by the Honeywind Bluegrass Boys. Mason Brent has once again made Roanoke available for us and will be reprising his role as grillmaster! See me about tickets; they make great gifts!

Faithfully,

Bill

CHILTON HOUSE TRANSFORMATION **PHASE II: WORSHIP SPACE**

On April 30, Bishop Jones visited St. Stephen's and met with the Vestry to discuss a plan to enclose and finish the Chilton House back porch. This plan will enable us to add worship seating for 10-12 persons, and consequently to have all services and activities at Chilton House in comfort.

Bishop Jones has enthusiastically supported the plan, and encouraged the Vestry to put it in place. He will contribute 10% of the costs from his discretionary fund, and indicated that it was likely that Bishops Johnston and Lee would make significant contributions as well—covering up to 40% of the project. The Vestry decided to move forward on the project by securing the building permit and drawing up a contract with a local builder who bid on the job. We are also securing concurrence by the owner, written assurance that the property will continue to be made available to St Stephen's at least until litigation ends, and appropriate consideration for the improvement to his property.

The project costs can be broken into 3 components: (contact me for cost details):

Construction. The first component consists of the actual construction and finishing of the porch. These costs will be covered, assuming the Bishops' contribution is realized and that we do some of the labor ourselves (painting and trash removal).

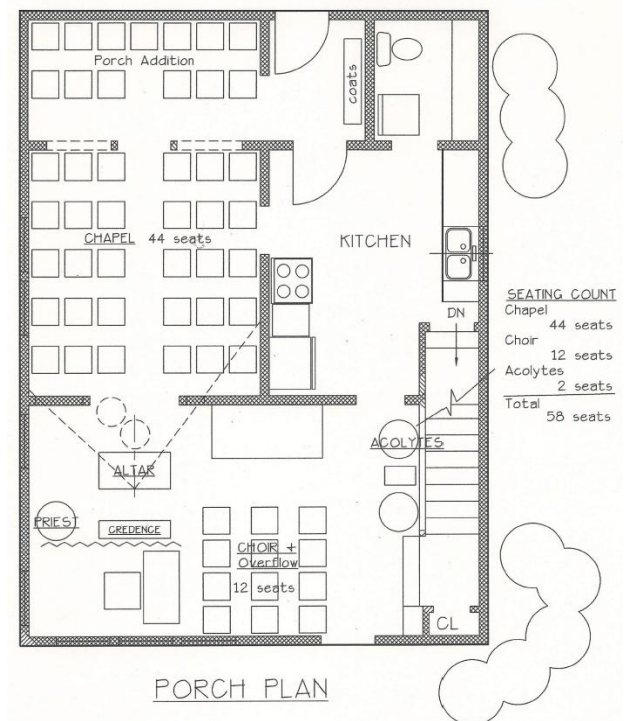
HVAC. The current heating and air conditioning system is not sufficient to service the additional finished space. The cost of the supplemental system will be paid for from existing parish reserves. These costs are less than two years of rental at HUMC. Essentially the costs of a supplemental system will be paid for with those savings.

FF&E. The third component consists of furnishings, fixtures, and equipment to enhance the worship space. These items are not essential to the project and don't have to be purchased immediately. They would include things like comfortable stacking chairs, lighting fixtures, a sound system for both indoor and outdoor services, an altar table and

credence table, a pulpit, wall hangings and/or stained glass, carpeting, a candle lighter, etc. The Diocesan ECW has offered to help purchase chairs and possibly some other items. The Vestry and Lucia are proposing that additional costs be financed through special donations from the congregation. As we did with the first Chilton House renovation, a steering group will be formed to refine and prioritize a "wish list" and budget for these items. That list will be presented to the congregation and the Vestry, and those would like to contribute to the effort can do so.

We anticipate that construction can begin before June. A preliminary floor plan is reproduced below. We will keep everyone informed at each step along the way.

Bill



Sept. 5 Plant Sale: Divide and Pot Now

This is a good time to begin potting up perennials. We're particularly looking for mums, asters, sedums, and other late summer - early fall bloomers. If you need help dividing or potting, it can probably be arranged.

We'd like to add garden art, planters, and related items. If you have experience working with Hyper-Tufa, or know sources of these items, let us know!

A REVIEW:

The Scandalous Gospel of Jesus

Peter J. Gomes, HarperCollins, 2007 (243 pages)

“*What’s so good about the good news?*” Peter J. Gomes, a Harvard professor, minister of the Harvard Memorial Chapel, and the author of three previous bestsellers on spiritual guidance, has a talent for asking questions that few others think of. In this eminently readable little book, Gomes demands that we take the teachings of Jesus seriously, starting with a fresh look at parables and passages in the Gospels that may have become all but meaningless to us, from years of hearing them repeated.

Gomes remind us that Jesus was a radical and a nonconformist in his own time. Jesus was no friend to the supporters of the status quo; the comfortable, the complacent, the smug pillars of society. He had little patience with “this is the way things are done,” and was certainly no advocate of the “don’t make waves” theory of social interaction. In the Gospels we see Jesus lashing out at the strict legal constructionists, at those who made a great show of their piety and charity, and those who considered themselves superior to the common herd. We see him embracing prostitutes and tax collectors as his friends and equals and having a magnificent temper tantrum when he finds the Temple being trashed and degraded by greedy vendors

Gomes asks us to remember that the Christian life we are called to live isn’t supposed to be a comfortable untroubled existence, nor did Jesus make any rosy promises to his followers. Just the opposite: He promised them that they would be hated, reviled, and probably killed; and of course he proved his point—by dying a horrible and humiliating death.

Gomes asks some unsettling questions in this slim, innocent looking little volume. Are we, as Christians, even getting close to meeting the challenges Jesus presents us with in his teachings? Why are the churches of today so often the last to embrace and implement change in our society? Why

do we focus so much of our energy on questions concerning the sexual orientation of our clergy or the current interpretation of Scripture? In a world where Darfur and 9/11 happen, where thousands die of preventable hunger, disease, and gunfire, where millions are excluded from all but a marginal survival—Gomes asks, quite simply, “How did we get it all so wrong?”

In this season of Easter, as we celebrate the risen Christ, we are reminded that it is as important as ever—perhaps more important than ever—to hear not only His words of love and hope, but the challenge He offers us as well.

Starr Morrow

Church Bulletins: A Cautionary Tale

Fortunately we have only one sermon on Sundays:

This morning’s sermon: “Jesus Walks on the Water”
This evening’s sermon: “Searching for Jesus”

And it is easy to see how heartburn could be a byproduct here:

The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment, and gracious hostility.
Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 pm—prayer and medication to follow.

Maybe we are lucky not to have a thrift shop at present:

Ladies, don’t forget the rummage sale. It is a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement in Friday afternoon.

And we certainly want to avoid these scenarios:

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and the deterioration of some old ones.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

WATER MINISTRY REPORT

The delivery segment of our water ministry continues to grow. We are now delivering approximately 500 gallons of potable water every month, at a cost of \$400.00. We are serving a varying population of up to two dozen households.

Other aspects of the program are also having an impact, as the following letter from SAIF Water indicates:

Dear Friends,

Give yourselves a standing ovation! Your Mustard Seed grant of \$2,250 has sprouted into \$70,000 in government funds to bring much needed water research to our area.

You will recall that the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Geological Survey started a monitoring research station in Northumberland County in 2007. They dug a core hole to find out where our aquifers are located and planned to dig nine monitoring wells. In April of 2008 we were informed that all state funds for the project had been pulled and there was no money to dig even the first well.

Members of St. Stephen's helped lobby for funds to be restored to the budget. Some \$35,000 was put back into the budget with the promised match of \$35,000 from Northern Neck counties. However, the lowest bid for construction of the first two monitoring wells came in at \$74,250. It would still not be possible for the state to engage a driller. The gift of \$2,250 from St. Stephen's and \$2,000 from SAIF Water Wells has made it happen. Contracts will be signed next week and the wells at Surprise Hill will be finished before June of 2009.

It is relatively easy to respond to an immediate and easily observable need when we see a person hungry or homeless. But it takes a special vision on the part of church members to protect the water supply for future generations by providing the necessary scientific research....

The Board of SAF Water Wells deeply appreciates your partnership in this effort. We are all encouraged by the active involvement of so many St. Stephen's members in water ministry.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Gayl Fowler

BOOK CLUB NEWS

The May selection for the book club is Zora Neale Hurston's provocative 1920's novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. We will meet to discuss it at Nancy Gates' home at 5:30 on Tuesday, May 18.

We have chosen complementary selections for June and July: *Stubborn Twig: Three Generations in the Life of a Japanese American Family* by Lauren Hessler, to be followed in July by Hampton Sides' account of American prisoners of war, *Ghost Soldiers*. If you have an interest in exploring this aspect of our history—our treatment of our Japanese citizens and the Japanese treatment of our soldiers during World War II—read these books and join us.

Sandra Kirkpatrick

THURSDAY NIGHT PROGRAMS

May 7 6:00 Potluck Supper
 6:30 Lucia reports on Credo

May 14 6:00 Potluck Supper
 6:30 Compline

May 21 5:30 Evening Prayer,
 6:00 Potluck Supper
 6:30 Program: The Deaconate.

Mary Swann, a permanent deacon, and a member of St. Stephen's Anglican Church will discuss the vocational deaconate program. (This program was recently instituted in the Diocese of Virginia.)

May 28 5:30 Evening Prayer,
 6:00 Potluck Supper
 6:30 The Emerging Church: Part II

We continue our exploration of the current state of American Christianity looking at the model presented by Phyllis Tickle in *The Great Emergence*.

June 4 5:30 Evening Prayer,
 6:00 Potluck Supper
 6:30 Program TBA

June 11 5:30 Evening Prayer,
 6:00 Potluck Supper
 6:30 Taize service

June 16 5:30 Evening Prayer,
 6:00 Potluck Supper
 6:30 Lucia: Writing and Worship

UNITED THANK OFFERING INGATHERING

Count your blessings, write a check that reflects your level of gratitude to God for those blessings, insert the check in the enclosed envelope, and bring it to church on May 24th for the Spring UTO Ingathering.

Of course, if you have been using a blue box all winter, you have an amount established already. Make checks payable to St. Stephen's with UTO on the "for" line. We send a check for the total to UTO.

We have so much to be thankful for!

Mary Eager

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Doug & Leslie Hatch	May 4
Phil Johnson	May 6
Johnny Travis	May 8
Mary Lloyd	May 16
Meade Kilduff	May 17
Rocco Tricarico	May 19
Evie Cox	May 27
Nancy Gates	May 30
Loretta & Lew Blakely	June 2
Sandy & David Kirkpatrick	June 7
Kendall Lloyd	June 14
Margaret Cox	June 19
Lucia Lloyd	June 20
Pat Dean	June 21
Lucia & Marshall Lloyd	June 29
Betty Burroughs	June 30

New Duty Roster: Mowing and Weeding

If you volunteered your time and talent in this area, your name is listed below. If you can't serve when scheduled, please find your own substitute.

Week starting	Mow	Trim	Weed
May 10	Eager	Cox	Moore
May 17	Johnson	Kirkpatrick	Hatch
May 24	Kirby,	Stubbs	S. Stubbs
May 31	E. Kirby	Moore	Jones
June 7	Hower	Eager	Blakely
June 14	D.	S.Kirkpatrick	Hatch
June 21	Stubbs	E. Kirby	Moore
June 28	Cox	D	S Kirkpatrick

IN THE LORD'S SERVICE



Ushers:

May 10	Phil Moore
May 17	Dick Eager
May 2	Ted Hower
May 31	Dick Eager
June 7	Herb Cox, Joel Stubbs
June 14	Joel Stubbs
June 21	Joel Stubbs
June 28	Joel Stubbs

Altar Guild

May 17	Lynn Hower
May 24	Loretta Blakely
May 31	Leslie Hatch
June 7	Nancy Gates
June 14	Sunday School Class
June 21	Susanne Johnson
June 28	Sunday School Class

Lesson Reader and Prayers of the People

May 10	Sandra, David Kirkpatrick
May 17	Dolly Rabelais, Mimi Stoner
May 24	Kendall, Marshall Lloyd
May 31	Dawn Mahaffey, Evie Cox
June 7	Lea Tilbury, Nancy Gates
June 14	Rain, India Eguiguren, Amy Jones
June 21	Ted Hower, Susan Stubbs
June 28	Ellen Kirby, Bill Kirby

Eucharistic Minister

May 10	Ellen Kirby
May 17	Rocco Tricarico
May 24	Lotetta Blakely
May 31	David Kirkpatrick
June 7	Nancy Gates
June 14	Lea Tilbury
June 21	Ellen Kirby
June 28	Rocco Tricarico

Coffee Hour Hosts

May 10	Rocco Tricarico
May 17	M. Kilduff & KK Crowther
May 24	Lea Tilbury & Rick Skelton
May 31	Mimi Stoner
June 7	Ron & Anne Silver
June 14	Tal & Barbara Day**** <i>Can someone switch with them?</i>
June 21	M. Lloyd & J. Travis
June 28	Tom & Betsy Sue Scott

