The Big Day: 02022020
By The Rev. Ian Delinger, Rector

Candlemas, Groundhog Day and the Super Bowl are all on the same day this year, and the date is a palindrome: 02/02/2020.

Candlemas is the day in the Church’s calendar on which we remember Jesus’ Presentation in the Temple as an infant. Recounted in the middle of Luke chapter 2, Joseph and Mary bring Jesus to the Temple. This would have been Mary’s first opportunity to enter the Temple because, according to Leviticus 12, a woman who bears a son shall not be “clean” until 33 days after the boy’s circumcision, which is 8 days after he is born, which, for Jesus, is January 1. In a few countries, great celebrations will take place. In Mexico, it is one of the days on which tamales are eaten, as I learned when producing a radio piece on tamales. We will celebrate Candlemas with a regular Sunday Holy Eucharist. (If someone wants to host Coffee Hour with tamales, I’m sure that would be appreciated by everyone!). The largest seems to be in Puno, Perú, on the coast of Lake Titicaca.

Groundhog Day is huge deal in Punxsutawney, PA. Over 20,000 people will descend on the town to see Punxsutawney Phil emerge from his home at Gobbler’s Knob. This form of weather prediction comes from the Pennsylvania Dutch as far back as 1840, but has much earlier roots in Germany itself. Phil has taken on a kind of demigod status, and his big day is big business. It even spawned a film in 1993 starring Bill Murray, which is watched every year around this time. Being part of the 20,000 fans to stand in the cold to see if Phil sees his shadow or not is only a small part of a much bigger program.

If you are a member of the Groundhog Club, you are invited to a whole host of events: The Groundhog Ball, special seating at Gobbler’s Knob, the Dueling Pianos event, the Annual Groundhog Banquet, and Brunch (Continued on page 10)
Our New Vestry

At the Annual Meeting on January 19, 2020, Bill Crewe, Kathryn Marshall and Craig McCollum were elected to 3-year terms on the Vestry. They join the current Vestry:

Gail Taylor (’20) Senior Warden
Bob McCorkle (’20)
Jennifer Sayre (’20)
Lee Hollister (’21)
Diane Levison (’21)
Roxanna Shaheen (’21)

Alison Preston is the Vestry Clerk.

The Vestry will meet for dinner on Friday, January 31, and meet for an all-day Retreat on February 1. The next Vestry Meeting will be on Sunday, February 9, 2020 at 12:00 in the Boydston Room. The Junior Warden will be elected at that meeting.

Hands on Stewardship at St. Stephen’s

Thank you to Lynn Hollister, Kathleen Pennington and Gail Taylor for teaching Sunday School in January.

Thank you to everyone who donated non-perishable food to Grass Roots If through our Sunday School kids’ Souper Bowl of Caring Food Drive.

Thank you to Shannon Larrabee, Clark Lewis, Jim Murphy for their service on the Vestry, and for organizing the Annual Meeting. Lee and Lynn Hollister for hosting the Newcomer’s Welcome Reception. Skip Parks for carrying the St. Stephen’s Banner during the consecration of Bishop Lucinda. Rosey Parks for lending her voice to the Consecration Choir.

Thank you to all the volunteers that have helped in the office this last month. Thank you to all of the contributors for the articles for this issue.

Our New Delegates

At the Annual Meeting, we also elected the following Delegates to Convention:

Liz Frost, Bruno Giberti, Rosey Parks

And Alternates:

Gail Taylor, Kathryn Marshall

Our Delegates will represent St. Stephen’s at the annual Diocesan Convention on November 6 & 7, 2020.

Come Sing With Us And Feel Good

According to lifehack.org* singing releases endorphins which are hormones that increase feelings of euphoria and pleasure. Singing also releases oxytocin, also known as the "cuddle hormone" because it is released when people snuggle up. It is known to decrease stress and anxiety. Both of these hormones can make you feel better in general and decrease any pain you might be feeling.

You can feel better by joining us in leading a Sing-Along of Love Songs at Bella Vista Care Center, 3033 Augusta Street, on Saturday February 15th from 10-11am and at Sydney Creek Memory Care, 1234 Laurel Lane, on Sunday February 16th from 3-4pm. We’ll be leading the residents in singing songs you probably already know, like "You Are My Sunshine", "Bicycle Built for Two", and "Oh Susanna".

We practice in The Shire (room at the end of St. Stephen’s Education Building closest to the parking lot) on Tuesday afternoons from 5:15-6 p.m. Attending practice isn’t required, but you’ll feel better if you do.…… Bring your voice and/or ukulele, drum, finger cymbals, etc. to The Shire February 3rd and 10th to go through the music together, or just come to Bella Vista or Sydney Creek to sing along and be happy. If you’d like directions, a copy of the word sheet or music ahead of time or have questions see, call or email Kathleen at 805-546-0880 or kapennington@netscape.net.

*https://www.lifehack.org/288228/11-amazing-benefits-singing-you-may-not-know
Notes from the Treasurer…..

As of this writing we have 48 pledging units for a total of $181,033 ($25,620.08 was prepaid pledges). If you would like to pledge for 2020, please let me know and I can get a pledge card to you.

Our Fair Share calculation deadline is January 31, 2020. This is our “gift” to the Diocese and has a very clear method of calculation. Last year we submitted a recalculation around the middle of the year to lower our Fair Share to $1,817/month.

Here are the current donation totals in our various Restricted Funds:

RSVP Demo: $9,970
Wood Siding: $19,000
Painting: $11,090
Jean’s Building Fund: $6,910

The funds for the new doors are in the Endowment Checking Account. The new glass doors add an inviting feel to the church.

Here are the Mechanics Bank balances as of January 18, 2020:

Operating: $96,636.28
Money Market: $46,185.88
Endowment Checking: 20,235.88

Faithfully Submitted,
Katie Arndt, Treasurer

Supporting Sundays

Prayer Intentions

It is the role of the Church, as individuals and corporately, to pray for those in need and to give thanks for the goodness of God. To offer a prayer intention, you can scribble a name or cause in the Prayers of the People binder at the back of church, with the Ushers. The Prayers are written out as they are to be read on Sunday mornings; simply write your intention under the relevant petition. There are also cards in the pews, or you can call or email the office. It will be included with the existing ones, typed up into the prayers the following week, and remain on the list for 4-6 weeks.

Memorials through Candles and Flowers

You will notice that the flowers and candles on Sunday mornings are given in memory of loved ones. If you wish to remember your loved ones in this way, you can sign up on the sheets in the Parish Hall, or contact a member of the Altar Guild. Choose the Sunday you would like to have your loved ones remembered (or an anniversary, birthday or other commemoration), and give a check or cash to Katie Arndt for the appropriate amount. Suggested donations for Candles: $15 Flowers: $45.

Coffee Hour

Some of you like to serve your brothers and sisters in concrete, physical ways. Hosting Coffee Hour is a fun and very social way to do that. There is a sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall, or you can contact Sophia Agbo. She will guide you through what you need to bring, what time to be at church to set up, who is available to help you, how much fun you can make Coffee Hour, and when to know when all is cleaned up and it’s OK to close up shop (usually the last one out). Gail Taylor is stepping down from the Hospitality Team as she assumes the role of Senior Warden. If you would like to join Sophia in sharing the responsibilities of Hospitality, please see Father Ian.

Sexton’s Report

February 2019

More Lights…

On Christmas Eve, I deployed 18 solar LED walk lights along the sidewalk from the parking lot to the front door for safety and ambience. Christmas morning before 9AM when Katie and I ushered, I retrieved them for next year. They have been disassembled, the batteries removed, and stored in the red barn for the next night event or service.

Oven

I repaired the left oven in the kitchen, and, when I was finished, all burners, both ovens, and both sides of the griddle worked.

Three panels of the fence between the classrooms and ASN have blown down against our building during a storm. ASN was notified, and the fence has been temporarily propped up. No update on a permanent repair or replacement is available yet.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Arndt, Sexton

St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church invites you to support our music program!

Your generous donation makes it possible to have great music every week at St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church.

Your tax-deductible donation helps to:

- Purchase music, tune and maintain the piano, and enable the Choral Scholar Program.

YES! I would like to donate to St. Stephen’s Music Program!

Amount: ____________________________

I would like to help support the Choral Scholar Program:

- Sponsor-a-Sunday: $90
- Sponsor-a-Season $650
- Christmas/Advent, Epiphany, Lent/Easter, Pentecost
- Sponsor-a-Scholar: $1500

Gift made in honor/memorial (circle one) of: ____________________________

Checks can be made to: St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church Music Program

Thank you for supporting sacred music in our community!
## Mark your calendars and keep a look out for notices in your Sunday Bulletins and in The Witness for more information!

### PARISH ACTIVITIES IN THE FIRST PART OF 2020

As you start to look at your calendars and how your home and family life will take shape throughout 2020, here are some activities that will be taking place at St. Stephen’s outside of our normal Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday worship and our monthly lunch serving at 40 Prado.

There are a variety of activities, some of which are worship services to put in your calendar to attend (A), and some are community activities for which you may consider being the organizer (O) [see Fr Ian] or being a volunteer (V) [see Stephanie if an organizer has not yet been decided].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/1/2020</td>
<td>Vestry Retreat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9/2020</td>
<td>Vestry Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/10/2020</td>
<td>Opening Doors of Interfaith Understanding (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/25/2020</td>
<td>Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at 5PM (O,A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/26/2020</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday Services at 12:15PM &amp; 5:30PM (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/1/2020</td>
<td>Endowment Committee Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/14/2020</td>
<td>Agape Community Workshop by Kelsey Davis (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/29/2020</td>
<td>Sayre/Pillow Early Music Concert (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5/2020</td>
<td>Palm Sunday (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/9/2020</td>
<td>Maundy Thursday Service at 5:30PM (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/10/2019</td>
<td>Good Friday Service at 12:00PM (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/11/2020</td>
<td>Holy Saturday Sanctuary Cleaning Day (V)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/12/2020</td>
<td>Easter Sunday Service at 8AM &amp; 10AM (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/19/2019</td>
<td>Low Sunday/Quasimodo Sunday with possible Eucharistic Brunch (A)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Bible Selections for February

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation/Candlesmas</th>
<th>Epiphany 5A</th>
<th>Epiphany 6A</th>
<th>Epiphany Last</th>
<th>Ash Wednesday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd READING</td>
<td>Hebrews 2:14-18</td>
<td>1 Corinthians 2:1-16</td>
<td>1 Corinthians 3:1-9</td>
<td>2 Peter 1:16-21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tending the Flock

Sometimes a person indicates that they would like to see me, but know I am “very busy”. My primary responsibility is the care of the good people of St. Stephen’s!! I am always ready to meet parishioners one-to-one or in groups, in my office, in your home, or out for coffee or a glass of wine. You can always catch me when you see me…as long as you see me put the date into my calendar!!! or call or email me. We can talk about the more serious issues of your life, the good times that you are experiencing, and everything in between. Home Communions can be arranged in the same way.

As in the past, I hope to arrange times to meet with parishioners informally. I haven’t worked out the dates or the format, but that will come soon. As the Rector, and I have Cure of Souls at St. Stephen’s, and my mantra is: People are my

CREATION CARE REFLECTIONS

Several people who read my Creation Care article in the January issue of The Witness have indicated an interest in exploring the possibility of this new ministry, and I hope many others will join us.

Lent, which begins February 6 with Ash Wednesday, seems an especially appropriate time for beginning our exploration of the topic. I suggest an organizational meeting after the 10am service on a Sunday in early March, to be determined. At that meeting, in addition to getting ourselves organized, we could review some of the national Church’s resources for Creation Care, which would include some suggestions for personal or group Lenten reflections.

Please see me at coffee hour on Sundays, call me (805-709-0840) or send me an email (kathrynB@mail.fresnostate.edu) to let me know of your interest. If you didn’t have an opportunity to read my January article, I will have copies of it at coffee hour.

-Chrystal Beckett

Chocolate Factory Opens March 23rd!

Once again, St. Stephen’s Parish Council’s delicious and fun outreach fundraiser will take over the parish hall for the two weeks before Palm Sunday. It’s as much fun to make the chocolate eggs as to eat them, so consider signing up to help. We’ll be making up to 400 eggs again this year and will be offering two sizes, ½# and ¼#. Priority in filling orders will be given to “chocolate factory workers” and remaining orders will be filled by date received.

Sign-up sheets for “factory workers” will be on the bulletin board in Ramsden Hall around March 3rd and order forms for these beautiful, and delicious chocolate eggs will be in the March Witness, on the bulletin board, inserted in bulletins and at the web site in early March.

MUSIC OF PEACE AND UNITY

The internationally renowned Yuval Ron Ensemble will present a 3-day program of unique Middle Eastern music at Congregation Beth David, in San Luis Obispo, March 13-15. The highlight of the weekend will be a concert on Saturday evening, March 14, that features work from the group’s newest album “Unity of the Heart”.

An Oscar-winning, Grammy nominee and peace activist, Yuval Ron formed his Ensemble in 1999. The group includes Jewish, Christian and Muslim artists who seek to bridge racial, religious and cultural divides by uniting the music and dance of the people of the Middle East into a unique mystical, spiritual and inspiring celebration.

They have performed peace tours around the world, imparting the ancient inter-cultural connections between Arabic, Jewish and Christian traditions. Featuring ancient as well as modern instruments, songs, stories and dance, the Ensemble offers a performance that “creates light and hope through music”.

Tickets for the Saturday concert are $45, and are available from 805tix.com. Ticket price includes a pre-concert workshop at 6pm and a dessert reception at 6:45pm. The concert follows at 7:30pm. St. Stephen’s is proud to be a local sponsor of this event.

Congregation Beth David is located at 10180 Los Osos Valley Rd., San Luis Obispo. For additional information, call 805-544-0760 or visit cbdslo.org. You may also call me at 805-709-0840 or kathrynB@mail.fresnostate.edu

-Chrystal Beckett
PEACE Program: Providing Education & Community Engagement about Public Safety. At the San Luis Obispo Police Department, we understand how important it is to have a trusting relationship with our community, and believe we must take ownership in creating those relationships.

Launched in 2017, PEACE (Policing Education And Community Engagement) provides education about what the police department does, why we do it and how the community can share responsibility for our safety and success.

PEACE is a series of 2-hour discussions focusing on topics such as police protocols for use of force, police body cameras and mental health resources. During the discussions, members of the public will hear from and ask questions of different police professionals. The talks are limited to the first 120 people. Sign up here. For questions, email Christine Wallace at cwallace@slocity.org.