



The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

July 2024



BONHOEFFER

A colleague and dear friend of mind recently reminded me of one of my favorite quotes from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's "Life Together." If you have not heard of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, he was a German Lutheran pastor and theologian who was imprisoned and eventually executed for taking part in a plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler. His life and legacy is a fascinating one!

In "Life Together," Bonhoeffer explores what authentic Christian community looks like. The quote I was reminded of is as follows: regarding the sin of a fellow Christian, "will not his sin be a constant occasion for me to give thanks that both of us may live in the forgiving love of God in Jesus Christ." Bonhoeffer continues saying "Thus the very hour of disillusionment with my brother becomes incomparably salutary, because it so thoroughly teaches me that neither of us can ever live by our own words and deeds, but only by that one Word and Deed which really binds us together the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ."

This quote from "Life Together" hit me in a powerful way. Take a moment and look at the world around you. We live in a world full of brokenness and sin. We are surrounded by headlines about the climate crisis and environmental damage, corruption and scandal in government, violence infecting politics, war in the Middle East, strife all over, hunger, poverty, and disease.

And those are just recent headlines! We don't even have to go so far afield to see brokenness. Take a moment to reflect upon your life and actions. We can be acutely aware of our own sinful natures. When we are truly honest with ourselves we have to acknowledge our own selfishness, self-idolatry, and sin. We naturally look out for our own interests and make decisions that keep us safe, and don't really care for our neighbors beyond how they can benefit us.

As we look around at the brokenness that surrounds us...that is inside of us, it can be easy to give into despair and fear. It is at times like these that the road of faith can get pretty rocky. It is at times like these that Bonhoeffer's words offer us strength for that road of faith. The reason that quote hit me is because it offers us such a different way of looking at the world.

As we look at our imperfect, broken world we need to hear of God's grace more than ever! May the brokenness of the world draw us closer to God. May the sin manifest around us strengthen our faith in God's activity in our lives and claim upon us. May the words of Bonhoeffer, and the words of Romans 8:38-39 give us strength in our journey of faith and life together.

In Christ,
Pastor Jon

Romans 8:38-39 "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CONGREGATION COUNCIL



The June Council meeting was held on June 11, 2024.

In attendance: Pastor Jon Nelson, Julie Meeks, Jeffery Berry, Nancy Egloff, Pam Buckley, Paul Reier, J.R. Lyons, Corey Knestrick, Sandy Croushore, Susan Kauffman, Lou Rossiter, Brandon Cave, Alison Carney

- Approved a motion to recommend to the congregation spending up to \$550,000 under contract with Cox-Powell for HVAC replacement project.
- Proceeded with nominations for the June congregational meeting elections.
- Wrapped up contractor estimates for the installation of automatic accessible front doors.
- Our Reconciling in Christ (RIC) team has begun the process; some in the group have completed training from the national organization.
- With Pastor Alex Sheppard-Witt's departure, Pastor Jon invited John Wertz, Assistant to the Bishop, to meet with Council at the next meeting (date to be determined) and discuss/consider plan options for staff.
- Our new insurance company/policy provides needed, improved coverage, with an increase in cost.
- Scheduled several building maintenance items, including floor waxing, building power-washing, and dishwasher repairs.
- Our Music and Worship team has hung a new banner.
- Council expressed appreciation to **Julie Meeks** for completing her term leading and faithfully serving as Council president, and to departing Council members **Corey Knestrick**, **Pam Buckley**, and **Susan Kauffman** for their dedication and faithful service.

Alison Carney, Secretary, Congregation Council

JUNE 16

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



Several actions were approved at the June 16 Congregational Meeting. **Bill Dichtel**, **Beth Grant** and **Terri Larsen** were elected

to their first terms on Congregation Council. Outgoing Council members **Pam Buckley**, **Susan Kauffman** and **Cory Knestrick** were recognized for their service on Council. **Jim Weilmuenster** was elected to a first term on the Endowment Committee, and **Paula Agor** was elected to a second term. Also recognized was **Diana Tiller-Dichtel** for her service as Parish Nurse, and **Pete Davis**, who is stepping down as Treasurer – **Brian Agor** will be our new Treasurer. An upgrade of our aging HVAC system was approved, and you will find more details on page 3.

A SECURITY REMINDER FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY:

All checks for the church should either be placed in the locked black mailbox located outside the side entrance door or put in the offering plate on Sunday.

NEW DINING GROUP SIGN-UPS ARE NOW OPEN!



Joining a dining group is an easy and fun way to meet new people at St. Stephen, share a meal together, and build community. All are welcome! Each group will have about eight people, who will decide what works best for them for time and place. Brunch, potluck, dinner, picnic . . . the group chooses what to do. The new groups will be organized in late July, and are asked to meet three times before the end of January 2025. Sign up now on the bulletin insert or call the Church Office.



HEATING VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM (HVAC)

Exciting News on Our HVAC System and Capital Campaign

The Congregation Council Meeting on June 16 yielded some significant news regarding our church's HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning) system, plus a financing and capital campaign to fund the project. Maintaining a comfortable and welcoming environment in our church is essential for our worship services, community events, and daily operations. To this end, we have embarked on a major project to upgrade our HVAC system. To avoid disrupting the Preschool, and allow time for equipment to be ordered, the work will be done in the summer of 2025.

HVAC System Upgrade

We have partnered with Cox-Powell Corporation to replace our existing hydronic heating and cooling equipment with a state-of-the-art Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) system. This new system will significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our climate control, ensuring a comfortable environment throughout the church. Here are some key details of the project:

- **Engineering and Design:** Comprehensive engineering and drawings will be prepared for the entire building, excluding the Gathering Space.
- **Equipment:** We will be installing Daikin VRF equipment, including two air-cooled heat pumps, a Heat Recovery Unit, and an Outside Air Processing Unit.
- **Installation:** The project involves removing the old air-cooled chiller, seven hydronic air handling units, and the hot water boiler. New fan coil units will be installed in various locations, including the Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Offices, and other key areas.
- **Ductwork and Piping:** New copper ACR piping and insulated ductwork will be installed,

connecting the new equipment to the existing ductwork.

- **Electrical Work:** New electrical circuits and disconnects will be installed to power the new equipment.
- **Control Systems:** A digital Daikin wall controller will be installed for each fan coil unit, along with a master I-Touch Manager Display for centralized control.

The total cost of this project is \$423,596, and it includes all necessary permits and inspections. The work will be carried out during normal working hours to minimize disruption.

Capital Campaign

To fund this critical upgrade, a financing and capital campaign was approved at the Congregation Meeting on June 16. Approximately half of the funds will come from existing church fund balances. The remaining funds will come from a **Three-Year Capital Campaign starting July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2027** (this gives donors four calendar years for contributions). Request for pledges will be sent out in July, 2024. All contributions should be designated for "HVAC Project" to be set aside in a separate church fund.

Your generous contributions will help us cover the costs of the new HVAC system and ensure that our church remains a comfortable and welcoming environment for worship and community activities.

Thank you for your continued generosity and commitment to St. Stephen Lutheran Church.

Lou Rossiter



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

JULY

2	Lindsey Phipps Napier	
3	Pam Anderson	Alison Carney
6	Kathie Eichfeld	Diana Tiller-Dichtel
8	Edith Haecker	
11	George Vonderheide	
13	Margaret Bleck	Rosemary Stimson
14	Ginny Cummings	Janice Svendsen
16	Janell Nickols	
19	Cooper Bailey	
21	Linda Baumgarten	
22	Vee Nelson	
23	Edward Delehanty	Karen Schlicht
	Joanne Shue	
24	Doc Anderson	Caroline McKenna
	Dan Shoenfelt	
25	Katy Peterkin Wood	
27	Carl Stauffer	
29	Sebastian Sulouff	



MEN'S & WOMEN'S BREAKFASTS

- **July 2** – Women are invited to join together for breakfast the first **Tuesday** of this month.
- **July 11** – Men are invited to join together for breakfast the second **Thursday** of this month, due to the July 4th holiday.

Both gatherings take place at **8:00 am** at the Colonial Pancake House, at the corner of Page Street and Penniman Road, Williamsburg, VA. The get-togethers promote conversation and friendship in a casual setting.

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

We have moved to our summer schedule of one joint worship service. We will have coffee at **9:00 am** and worship at **9:45 am** on these Sundays. This worship service will be live-streamed as well. We hope that this joint service will help foster connections between "8:30 folk" and "11:00 folk" as well as give our worship leaders a lighter Sunday morning for these weeks of summer.

Our final joint service will be on "God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday" on **September 8**, which will give us some extra time for a service project that morning.





Thank you for choosing to support enCircle. Your gift of \$700 received on 5/31/2024 ensures that those who need help can get help. We are grateful for your generosity and commitment to the important work enCircle is doing.

Your support goes a long way toward ensuring that everyone in our community feels empowered. Your gift impacts Minnick School students, children and families in counseling, adults in group homes and family care homes, foster children and families, and immigrant and refugee children. With your help, our programs can sustain, grow, and expand, allowing enCircle to extend a loving hand to more folks who need it. We could not help others without you!

Thank you for making the world a more loving place!

DeHanza Kwong, Philanthropy Coordinator



On behalf of Housing Partnerships, Inc., I would like to thank you for your donation of \$100. We are very happy to have your support, and with your donation, we will be able to keep our neighbors safe, warm, and dry.

Again, thank you, and know that your generosity will make a difference for our neighbors.

Brandie V. Weiler, MBA, Executive Director



Thank you for your in-kind donations of 196 pounds of food to the Williamsburg House of Mercy. In 2022, we received 184,725 pounds of in-kind donations and rely on these to supplement our costs in providing to the most vulnerable in our community.



Thank you for your compassion towards our neighbors in Ukraine. Your generosity is making possible housing, healthcare, and hope for those who otherwise would have none. I am so grateful for your partnership.

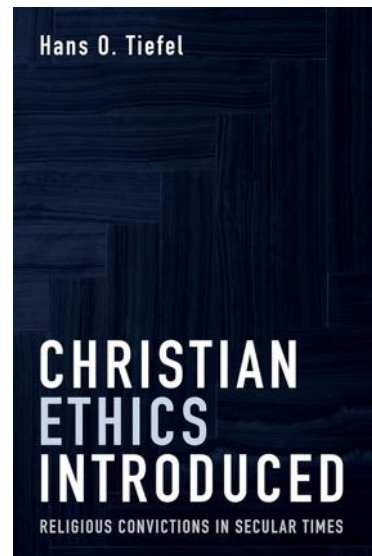
Emma Wagner, Senior Advisor,
Congregational Engagement



THE CHURCH MOUSE HEARS

... that **Hans Tiefel** has published his first book – *Christian Ethics Introduced: Religious Convictions in Secular Times*. Here's the link to Amazon for more information:

[Christian Ethics Introduced: Religious Convictions in Secular Times: Tiefel, Hans O.: 9781666765489: Amazon.com: Books](https://www.amazon.com/Books/dp/9781666765489)





ST. STEPHEN FALL 2024 WOMEN'S RETREAT

"WALKING THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY"

- Evening social **Friday, September 27.**
- Day retreat **Saturday, September 28,** led by our own Christina Nelson.
- **Sunday sermon, September 29,** by Kristen Berkey-Abbott.

Venue: St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Outreach project: School kits for Lutheran World Relief

Plan to come (and bring a friend!) for part or all of the retreat weekend. A light continental breakfast and box lunch are provided on Saturday. Registration opens early August.

UPCOMING SHARED MINISTRY EVENTS FOR WOMEN

VSWO 2024 Convention. The 2024 Annual VSWO (Virginia Synodical Women's Organization) Convention will be at **Our Saviour's Lutheran Church-Norge, July 26-27, 2024.** There will be three Awareness Sessions, an activity for non-Voting Members, fun, fellowship and a little business. The Rev. Dr. Phyllis Blair Milton, Bishop of the Virginia Synod, will deliver the opening worship sermon and bring greetings from the Synod Office. **The cost for both days is \$100, and the cost for one day participation is \$70. Grants are available. Please contact Pam Buckley for more information or info@vsw.org.**

In addition to the WSWO Convention, there is an All-Lutheran Women's Retreat planned for **November 7-9, 2024** in Glen Allen, VA. The retreat leader will be Author Jacqueline Bussie. I will post a flyer for anyone interested.

Pam Buckley



2024 SUPER SCHOOL SNEAKERS FOR GROVE!

This is the 19th year that St. Stephen members have the purpose-filled opportunity to provide sneakers for Grove community students so they can start school this fall in style! If you like to shop, please buy GIRLS sneakers in any size from 6 to 11 or BOYS sneakers any size from 6 to 12, including half sizes for both—these are the most needed sizes but any size will do! Deliver them to the Gathering Space by Sunday, July 28, and we will take them to Grove. If you would prefer to make a monetary donation, please make the check out to St. Stephen Lutheran Church with SHOES FOR GROVE on the memo line. Cash is also accepted. Put envelopes with checks or cash in the offering plate or in the mailbox outside the church by July 28 the as well, and Grove will use our monetary donations to purchase sizes that are still needed. If you have any questions, please call **Jim Ivey** at 757-608-8990 or **Nancy Egloff** at 757-293-8547.

FROM HIS HANDS AND MEALS ON WHEELS.



"Summer Meals for Kids 2024" needs our help each Tuesday this Summer from **June 18 through August 20** to help prepare lunches for local children. It is estimated that 300 lunches per day will be prepared between 8:30 am and 10:30 am at the WISC (Williamsburg Indoor Sports Complex), 5700 Warhill Trail. Please review the available slots on the SignUpGenius link to Make Sandwiches, Pack Lunches, or Bake Cookies (deliver cookies between 8AM and 11AM). Sign up at this [link](#). If you have any questions, please contact **Jim Ivey**, 757-608- 8990, or **Randy Punchard**, 757-870-8410.



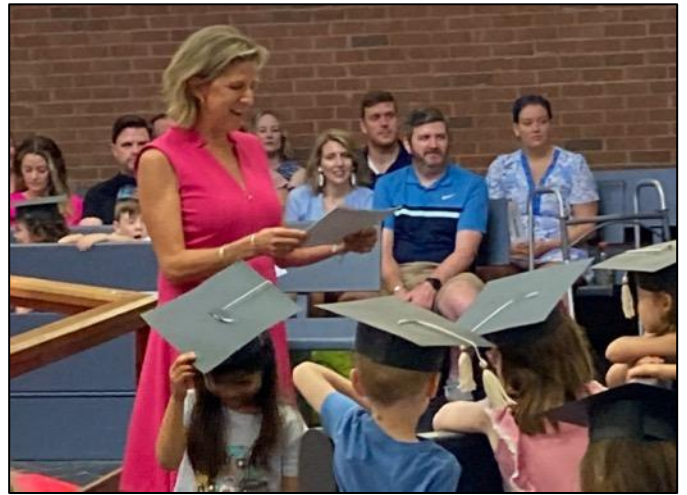
ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

We ended the school year with a very sweet Giraffe moving up program and a celebratory graduation ceremony for our Hippos, Bears, and Frogs! Our teachers along with Mrs. Ready, have truly made this a wonderful school year – Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Mrs. Wolf, Mrs. Reeves, Mrs. Ruane, Ms. Napier, and Mrs. Kelly were the dream team and we want to give them a huge thanks for all their hard work.

On June 3 Jessica Kimball was welcomed as our new Preschool Director and she has been having a wonderful time learning, training and transitioning into the role these first two weeks of Summer Camps. Our first week “Under the Sea” and our second week “Tell Us a Tale!” were successful. Our summer campers had a great time exploring, learning, playing, and engaging in lots of crafty projects.

We look forward to week 3 “Jungle and Safari” and week 4 “Blast Off into Space!” coming up in July.

Jessica Kimball, Preschool Director



STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. STEPHEN



What About When It's *Not* Good?

I love Jesus, my husband, family and friends, dogs, horses, kayaking, sunshine, laughter, coffee, sweets, and more. I am grateful for this life, God's everlasting love and forgiveness, God's incredible, awe-inspiring creation, and so very, very much more.

"It's all good," as they say.

But what about when it's *not* good? When I'm really hurting? When there is estrangement in our family? Divorce? When I struggle in my faith? When I am heartbroken about a terminal diagnosis? When I just need someone to listen and pray for me?

These difficulties are all part of life, I know. Yet, that knowledge doesn't necessarily make them any easier. I was comforted when I learned that it's okay for a Stephen Minister to have a Stephen Minister!

We all have times in our lives in which we just need someone to listen without judgement, be present with us, and pray for us, while keeping our confidences. This need is perfectly normal, and aligns well with the offerings of Stephen Ministry. A Christ-centered and confidential listening presence is exactly what Stephen Ministry offers.

Our congregation has a team of Stephen Ministers standing ready to provide support; each individual Stephen Minister is a "care-giver" trained in Christ-centered care. While a Stephen Minister walks beside you through your difficult time, it is our loving God who lifts you up, providing you with healing, hope, and strength.

If you are curious about or feel moved to request a Stephen Minister, speak confidentially with **Pastor Jon** or **Stephen Leader Bill Dichtel**. Then, if you would like to take the next step, you can be matched with a Stephen Minister and begin a one-to-one, confidential relationship.

The time commitment for meeting with your Stephen Minister is an hour each week. You meet at a location that makes sense for you and your Stephen Minister,

whether that is in your home, at a café over coffee/tea, outdoors, or another place. This relationship may last a few months, closer to a year, and sometimes longer, coming to a close when mutually determined by you and your Stephen Minister.

We all need someone to listen without judgement, be present, and pray for us, while keeping our confidences.

Alison Carney, Stephen Minister

*"Be merciful to me, O God; be merciful to me,
for in you my soul takes refuge;
in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge,
until the destroying storms pass by."*

Psalm 57:1

*"Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run
and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."*

Isaiah 40:31

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

When former pastor Andy Ballentine retired in 2019, a special fund was established to honor him and provide future financial assistance to staff, congregation members/families, and LSA students pursuing higher education in ministry or related professions. We recently received an update from the first recipient of this scholarship, Kirsten Berkey-Abbott, daughter of Ina and Tom Berkey:

"I continue to work steadily towards my goal of an MDiv at Wesley Theological Seminary. I've gotten to take interesting classes, and this year, I've started doing some fieldwork. I'm an intern for the Southeastern Synod of the ELCA, and I just created a six-week Bible study for Lent, a Bible study based on the Lectionary readings. I am also a Synod Appointed Minister at Faith Lutheran in Bristol, Tennessee Every Sunday I drive across the mountain to lead worship. I am hoping to finish my MDiv by May of 2025, and am grateful for the scholarship that you granted me."

Students and member families who have questions or would like to be involved with this program can contact **Peter Raquet** or **Emily Rossiter** for more information. Let's keep Kirsten and her family in our prayers.



JULY BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

The significance of baptism, Luther teaches in the *Small Catechism*, is “that the old creature in us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned and die through daily contrition and repentance, and on the other hand that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.”

Your baptismal anniversary is an opportunity to light a baptismal candle and to give some prayer time to reflecting on your experiences during the past year on your journey in faith!

Pastor Jon Nelson

1	Rita Kristiansen	Sandy Reed-Bryant
2	Nicholas Brisson	Brenda Lee- Allen
5	Noah Delehanty	
14	Ruth Fenstermaker	
16	Theo Bergh	
24	Kylen Saunders	
29	Stephanie Judy	

Others who were baptized in July:

Becky Pittman	Regina Root
Lou Rossiter	

Were you baptized in July but your name isn't on the list above? Let us know!

YOGA



We are trying a new time for our yoga class. Join us on **Wednesdays at 9:00 am in the Fellowship Hall**. This class will be led by Lee Saxton. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall. If you have a yoga mat, please bring it with you. We will be asking for donations of \$5-\$10 rather than a set fee. We hope to see you there.

PRAYERS



Join your prayers for healing with God's desires **Trudi Arnold, Karen Bailey, Ed Brown, Steve Bushman, Kristin Carter, Jack Harris, Sharon Jacobs, Jim Mayfield, and Helen Nelsen.**

Pray for those unable to come to worship: **Martin Bleck, Ed Brown, Birdie Burton, York Doerr, Bob and Angie Groom, Edith Haecker, Pat Janot, Marilyn Johnson, Jeanne Nelson, Darlene Simon, and Kay Wasaff.**

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Bob Alt , Donald and Carol Baum, Rose Baumgarten, John Black, Sally Blackburn, Linda Bonfiglio, Mary Bloom, Debra Brown, Amy Carl, Karin Cavanaugh, Judy Craun, Sophia Czajkowski, Judy Drezek, Ginny Mauney Fox, Joanne Gaskins and family, Karyn Grinstead, Joel Gillespie, Joan and Frank Goodhart, Deanna Harbison, Nick Havola, Bradley Kim Joan and Laurie Heintzelman, Char Henry, Lisa Hill, Jaxon Ireland, Linda Jackson, The Jacobs Family, Brian Johnson, Don Johnson, Connie Kendrick, The Kennedy family, Marnah Lund, Trish and Matthew Macerelli, Laura Margolin, Doug Mayes, Jack Mayfield, The Keith Meins family, Liz Montalvo, Brian Moore, Becky Murphy, Ed Moninger, Bob Myers, Silvana Oderisi, Denise Ogborn, Lori Ogborn, Paula Rega, Kathy Reynolds, Clarice Rohling, Marci Ries, Sharon Rogers, Betty Roth, Kurtis Schultz, Lou Schuster, Gayle Scitney, Inge Seiter, Kelsey Slay, Vasili Soutoukis, Chad Strausbaugh, Charley Underdahl, and Caleb Winig.



Virginia Lutherans

FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING

Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



**St. Stephen Lutheran Church
612 Jamestown Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185**

The Quill www.saintstephenlutheran.net July 2024

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<i>Vice President</i>	J.R. Lyons	757-920-5355
<i>Treasurer</i>	Brian Agor	757-561-5889
<i>Financial Secretary</i>	Karen Nester	757-869-2949
	email	Finsec@
<i>Congregational Secretary</i>	Alison Carney	703-819-6607

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Church Staff:

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	email	Pastorjn@
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<i>Director of Music</i>	Karen Ives	MusicDir@
<i>Preschool Director</i>	Jessica Kimball	Preschool@

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