



The St. Stephen's Senior Newsletter

Spring 2021

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church – Edina, Minnesota

Dear Beloved Senior Members of St. Stephen's!

HOW ARE YOU??? With vaccinations complete and the weather improving, we are all probably looking forward to leaving our homes and visiting family or simply enjoying a meal somewhere besides at our kitchen table. It may not qualify as "getting back to normal" but we'll take it. We are not announcing a Senior Luncheon just yet, but we are confident that day will come. When it does, it will help us feel like we are (almost) back to "normal".

The Properties Committee has been busy. They have made great strides in **rebuilding the Minnehaha Creek Wall**. They also took a critical look at the **state of the pews** and decided to have them refinished. See the reports and photos beginning on page four.

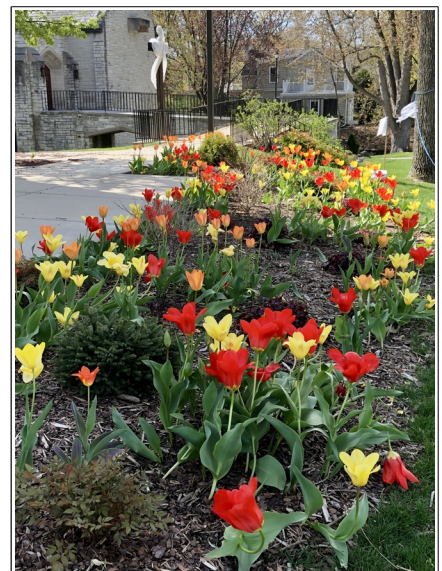
Did you know **St. Stephen's has its own resident saints**? Perhaps you have been a recipient of a card or gift beginning at Christmas from one of them. We sat down with Sue Bizal to ask about this group and how they got started.

We are fairly sure that **William Shakespeare** was never a member of St. Stephen's, but we have included him among those who had spring birthdays to celebrate his contribution to our language. We thought you might enjoy a list of his quotations we found that sound like they were written in the 21st century rather than the 16th century. We hope you are as surprised as we were.

Finally, the tulips in the garden have announced, "*Spring is here!*"

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CELEBRATING SPRING

CONGRATULATIONS TO ANN SCOGGIN



Happy Birthday to Ann, who celebrated her **95th birthday** on April 9. With the exception of five years in Chicago, Ann has lived all her life in the Twin Cities. She grew up in the Kenwood neighborhood of Minneapolis, attended West High and the University of Minnesota where she majored in Fine Arts and minored in History.

Growing up her family attended Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church where she met a nice young boy in Sunday School by the name of Jim Scoggin. After college Ann and Jim married in 1949 at St. Stephen's where his family had transferred after moving to Edina. It was winter and Ann distinctly remembers changing into her dress in the undercroft then going outside through the snow to get to the front door of the church. There was no other way to get to the entrance. There was no addition to the church yet, nor had the Narthex been added. The main door simply entered directly into the church.

Ann and Jim raised four children in Edina and she feels fortunate that three of them still live in the area, plus one in California. Although Jim died in 2008, they enjoyed 50 years on Oaklawn and Ann says Edina is a wonderful city in which to live. For the past 12 years she has lived at Vernon Terrace. Ann finally gave up driving but still enjoys reading and especially enjoys playing Trivial Pursuit with her daughter.

She says the coronavirus reminds her of the polio epidemic in the 1950s when movie theaters closed and people, especially children, were isolated at home.

With all the residents at Vernon Terrace getting vaccinated, life is gradually opening up. Furniture in gathering areas, which had been removed, has been moved back, the dining room is now open and *Movie Night* is back — including popcorn!

If you think some things don't last, consider the quotations below from William Shakespeare.

Happy birthday to the Bard who was born April 1564 and died 405 years ago on April 23, 1616.

Check the phrases below and see if you used any of them today.

THINGS WE SAY TODAY, WHICH WE OWE TO SHAKESPEARE:

"KNOCK, KNOCK! WHO'S THERE?" "HEART OF GOLD"
 "IN A PICKLE" "SET YOUR TEETH ON EDGE"
 "FAINT HEARTED" "SO-SO" "GOOD RIDDANCE"
 "LIE LOW" "FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE" "BAITED BREATH" "SEND HIM PACKING"
 "COME WHAT MAY" "THE GAME IS UP"
 "WEAR YOUR HEART ON YOUR SLEEVE"
 "NOT SLEPT ONE WINK" "FULL CIRCLE" "OUT OF THE JAWS OF DEATH"
 "TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING"
 "WHAT'S DONE IS DONE" "NAKED TRUTH" "BREAK THE ICE" "WILD GOOSE CHASE"
 "LAUGHING STOCK" "BREATHED HIS LAST"
 "HEART OF HEARTS" "VANISH INTO THIN AIR"
 "SEEN BETTER DAYS" "MAKES YOUR HAIR STAND ON END"
 "DEAD AS A DOORNAIL" "FOR GOODNESS' SAKE" "LOVE IS BLIND"
 "FAIR / FOUL" "OFF WITH HIS HEAD"
 "GREEN EYED MONSTER" "PLAY / PLAY"
 "THE WORLD IS MY OYSTER" "BRAVE NEW WORLD" "BE ALL / END ALL" "A SORRY SIGHT"



Congratulations to NANCY WOOD who in May completed 35 years keeping the books for St. Stephen's and says she has no plans to stop. Aren't we lucky?! Best wishes, Nancy!

THE ST. STEPHEN'S SAINTS



Who are the St. Stephen's Saints? (Inquiring minds want to know.)

Last fall the **Community Building Committee** was looking for fun activities for the congregation during the upcoming holidays. Most of the ideas were virtual activities accessed via computers. But they realized that there are some parishioners, mainly seniors, who are without the technology to participate. The brainstorming shifted to what could they do for those seniors?

They finally decided to create three **holiday gift bags** to be delivered over a period of three weeks. The first delivery went to 45 households. The contents of the holiday gift bags were not liturgical, but fun, holiday items such as hot cocoa, a gingerbread cookie, a candy cane, chocolate treats, and a small Christmas tree. The **New Year's Eve bag** included sparking cider, a hat and a noise-maker.



The items were not as important as the idea of connecting with the seniors and conveying the message that they were missed and were in the hearts and minds of the congregation.

The word was put out — “We need volunteers, some to deliver gifts and some to send out cards.” **Sixty-five people said, “Sign me up.”**

The project was very well received both by the recipients and the volunteers and resulted in an outpouring of love and new friendships. The committee decided to expand the program for Lent.

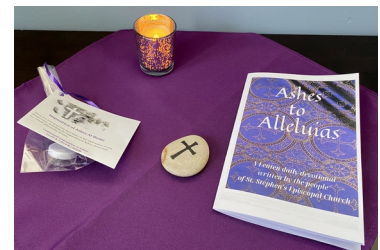
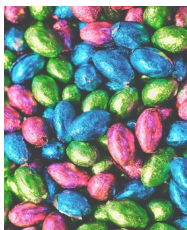
The **Lenten gift bag** was more liturgical in nature with a Lenten Guide and items to set up a home altar, a place to worship in one's home when you can't go anywhere.



The **Holy Week bag** contained a Holy Week Guide, palms, a candle, and an olivewood cross from the Holy Land. The **Easter bag** was more like an old fashioned Easter basket with Easter candy, bunny ears, and a plant, among other things.

Thus, was formed **THE ST. STEPHEN'S SAINTS**, a parish-wide project to keep in touch with seniors who may feel disconnected because of health, COVID, lack of technology or other reasons. There are three key people leading the “Saints”:

- **Sue Bizal** describes herself as the person in charge of the “nuts and bolts”. She finds and purchases the gift items and oversees assembling and delivery of the bags.
- **Molly Reichard**, Minister for Community Engagement, manages the administrative needs and communication.
- **The Rev. Amelia Arthur**, Assistant Rector, provides advice on what should go into the liturgical bags. Amelia also came up with the name, **The St. Stephen's Saints**.



The committee wants to continue the program in some form, although it may change over time. But, whatever the form, the “St. Stephen's Saints” are here to stay.

CREEK WALL PROJECT UPDATE

IN THE FALL ISSUE OF THE SENIOR NEWSLETTER JONATHAN STRAND REPORTED ON THE PLAN TO REPAIR AND SHORE UP THE MINNEHAHA CREEK WALL ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE COMMONS ROOM THAT WAS THREATENING TO FAIL. MOST OF THE WORK IS NOW COMPLETE. THE NEW PROPERTIES COMMITTEE CHAIR, TOM WEIGEL, PROVIDED THIS SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT.

BACKGROUND

The current retaining wall, which runs along the Chapel wing bordering Minnehaha Creek, is a stacked stone wall that has protected our building and outdoor patio area since the mid-1960s. Over the years the foundation of this wall has eroded. This is due to age and, more recently, the very strong currents and rising seasonal waters.

The Properties Committee determined the best course of action was to strengthen the defense against creek flooding in the future. The planning and design phases of this project took place over the last year. Our Vestry approved the final project plans in September of 2020 and Atlas Foundation was selected to construct a new wall.



THE PROCESS

After receiving the necessary approvals from the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board and the City of Edina, construction began Thursday, February 25, 2021, and took approximately two weeks to complete. The process started with the thawing out of the creek bed adjacent to the existing wall in preparation for the installation of the sheet piling that forms the new wall. Next, the crew removed the top courses of the stone wall and set them aside to allow heavy machinery to move in and operate from the creek bed. While removing the stone, the original stone began to fail and bulge out just below the Commons Room patio. The Atlas Foundation crew used their backhoe to push the stone wall back in place, preventing it from disassembling into the creek. Needless to say, installing the new wall has been extremely timely!

A huge backhoe drove the 15-foot sheets into the creek bed immediately adjacent to the original stone wall. This action not only stabilizes the original wall, but also projects church property and grounds while keeping the creek in place. Following the installation of the new sheet piling, the Atlas crew used surveying equipment to chalk in and scribe the wall profile closely watching the original wall height, so as to allow the steel to accommodate plantings, landscaping, and a stone cap finish layer along the length of the wall.



Creekbed being cleared around current wall.



Top 2-3 courses of stone removed from current wall.



Sheet piles being driven into the creek bed.

THE NEW WALL

The wall, designed by civil and structural engineers, consists of a set of vertical steel "piles" (or plates), interlocking tightly with each other. These piles were driven into the creek bed directly next to the existing stone wall. This wall design is typically used for rivers, lakes, and harbors, although our wall is on a much smaller scale than many other projects. The work was scheduled during the winter when the water flow is very low or completely stopped, and the ground is frozen.



FOLLOWUP WORK

The Properties Committee met with Loftus Iron to discuss the design of a new steel railing. The railing, required by city and watershed code, has been installed on the inside of the new steel wall and will be painted a glossy black. It will closely match the look of the existing railing along the asphalt walk leading to the Commons Room, as well as the railing and steelwork in the Memorial Garden area. The railing will extend from the area used for creek baptisms downstream to the end of the wall.

Later in the season plants will be added that will cascade over the wall, providing a "softened" appearance to the new installation and a more natural look. The steel sheet piling will be visible and will age gradually to develop a brown-orange color.

PEWS IN SANCTUARY TO BE REFINISHED

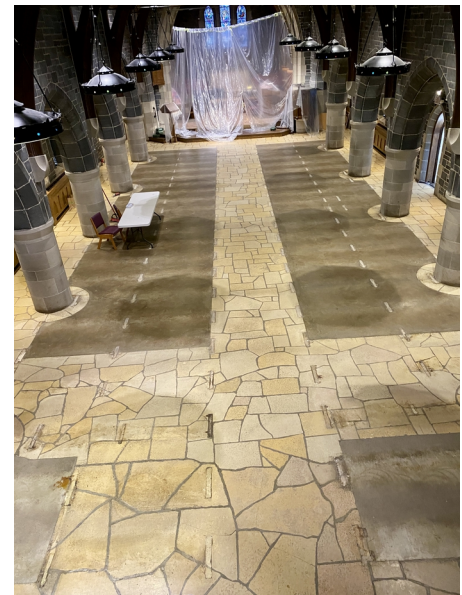
While the sanctuary is not being used for services at this time, the vestry decided this would be a good opportunity to look into having the pews refinished. It is a **huge job** but the pews are over 80 years old and in serious need of refinishing. The Properties Committee reviewed three bids and chose a firm experienced in church restoration work.

The pews were disassembled in late April and shipped to the restoration firm in North Carolina. There they will be stripped, sanded, sealed, sanded again and finally have two coats of hard lacquer applied. The process is expected to take three to four months but when finished, the pews will look like new — like they did when they were first installed.

While the space in the nave is empty of pews, the flagstone floor will be polished and buffed so a refinished floor will be ready when the refinished pews return.



The last view before the pews were disassembled.



A view of the Nave without pews.

Our 80-year-old pews are proof that it pays to aim for quality. The vestry minutes of October 27, 1938, regarding the choice and purchase of pews and other furniture state, *“Architect Hills presented designs and made suggestions and recommendations on furniture design...He emphasized the desirability of having a few well designed pieces of good construction rather than complete furnishings of poorer design and construction. ... Vestry approved.”*



TWO MORE VIEWS OF THE PEWS BEING DISASSEMBLED

OTHER THINGS YOU MAY WANT TO KNOW.

- The clergy are vaccinated and willing to make brief and careful **pastoral visits** in residences where there is no sign of COVID. The best way to contact them is to call the church number (952-920-0595) and leave a message on the voice mail.
- **Attention Friendship Village:** The clergy plans to reinstitute monthly worship in May having received approval from Friendship Village (unless COVID rises beyond manageable levels).
- If you do not have a copy of the new **2021 Church Directory** and want one, you can pick one up at the church office or call Deen Hubin (952-920-0595) to have one mailed to your home.
- Our rector, **Tom Cook**, will undergo hip replacement soon so will be stepping (hobbling) away for a few weeks of medical leave in early May. In Tom's absence, feel free to contact Rev. Amelia for pastoral matters (952-920-0595) or Sr. Warden Jim Korslund jrkorslund@gmail.com (320-260-8911) for other matters pertaining to church life.
- **IN REMEMBRANCE: JOHN SCHWARZ**, age 89, died April 13, 2021.



EASTER 2021



Celebrating outside at sunrise.



Celebrating inside. Social distance seating was required whether you were a long time member or this was your first Easter.



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Instances where punctuation and
proofreading might have been
helpful.

