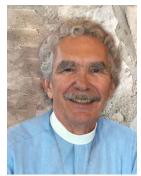


February 7, 2020

ENEWS



LETTER FROM YOUR RECTOR

Fr. Phil Mason

Dear Friends,

It seems that just yesterday we celebrated a wonderful Christmas together and now it looks like Ash Wednesday is just three weeks away--the beginning of Lent. Lenten season is a time in which I

take it upon myself to repeatedly remind everyone that we are not really "miserable sinners." Someone might actually be miserable, but I think it likely be a very small number of us if any at all.

Maybe I should share some of my thoughts on sin. For me sin is characterized by some kind of separation. In my eyes, anything that we do that separates us from one another or from God could be called sin. Here is the problem; human beings are hard wired to be separate from one another. This is not a bad thing, in fact it is quite the normal thing. From a very early age we develop egos and a sense of "self" that is different from others. We are a culture that can and sometimes does function very well, acknowledging our differences with each other.

We also are a culture that longs to connect through friendships, working relationships, and loving partnerships. So, if I am seeing things clearly, it looks like a paradox. First of all I have so often claimed that we are essentially all created the same and yet we quite naturally become separate from one another. This would clearly support the claim that we are all sinners and the idea of "original sin" is real. The metaphorical story of Adam and Eve is a story of two human beings--the "original couple"--who knew no differences; then developing "original egos" thereby committing the original sin. The rest of the story is history. The sinning progeny, unable to make constructive use of their differences became the original "miserable sinners."

So, yes, I might be wrong, maybe more of us that I thought might be a little miserable from time to time for having separated ourselves from one another and from the love of God and our neighbor by thought, word, or deed and or things done or left undone. I think we tend to think of sin as some egregious act or shortcoming when it might be the little things that we say or do to one another that, having built up over time, can

create a little misery--occasionally more than a little misery. Maybe Lent can be a time when we can open our hearts to possibility that we truly are all the same and joy can replace misery by treating one another with compassion and loving-kindness.

We might begin to contemplate more carefully the confession we say together each Sunday which simply states that we have not loved God nor have we loved one another, and we are sorry and we intend to do better.

At the end of the season, if we are feeling a little less miserable, I offer the following:

The Anti-Confession

Most loving God
We most humbly declare that
we have drawn closer to you
in thought, word and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have loved you with our whole heart;
we have loved our neighbor as ourselves.
We are truly blessed
and we humbly will continue in these ways.
For the love of your Son Jesus Christ,
pour out your love on us and sustain us;
That we may continue in your will,
and walking your ways,
to the glory of your name. Amen

Peace and love to all, Phil+

SENIOR WARDEN NEWS

Nancy Cooke-Jenkins

Hello, Everyone,

For those unable to attend the annual meeting on Sunday, January 26, I am using my report as the column for this newsletter.



As part of my acceptance to serve as Senior Warden for the past year, was the stipulation by Bishop Reed that I would serve until a new rector is in place. It has been my sincere honor to fill that request, and I do, indeed, think that we have been adapting to our "Advent" with little disruption, following our usual routines.

Our year started with the knowledge that our leader, Sandy Casey-Martus, was retiring. We did and do wish her well.

The next step after Sandy announced her impeding retirement was to find an interim rector. The book, *Rector Transitions*, by Van Sheets, describes an interim as "filling a key pastoral role. The transition naturally arouses feelings of uncertainty in the

congregation, and the interim must be a non-anxious presence with the personality to connect with many parishioners quickly, the wisdom and intellect to preach and teach at a mature level, the energy to meet unpredictable needs of the congregation and the experience to understand and lead or support all the ministries of the church." I believe Fr. Phil Mason possesses all of these traits and for that we are a grateful congregation.

At the Diocesan level, we welcomed Arch Deacon Mike Besson who has been invaluable in helping the Search Committee in their efforts. He was instrumental in structuring our "Parish Profile" as a tool in our search for a new rector.

During the annual meeting, Fr. Phil walked us through the new programs and ministries that are in place, many that were begun this past year. These additions will help present to a prospective rector a well-oiled, streamlined, and efficient working parish.

In addition to Fr. Phil's list of programs, I'd like to add the following: Jackie McFadden and her son Hunt Sparra, have updated our website, and we now have a space that is user-friendly and inviting to those surfing the web, looking for a church. We also owe them thanks for publishing our newsletters, e-blasts, and social media posts.

The areas that we have been rejuvenating include *Newcomers*, the future of our church. Lydia Baese, who is also our new Church Administrative Assistant, is the Newcomer Coordinator. Veronica Erwin and Carla Daws will head-up the committee to make the ministry one of welcome and motivation for guests to stay and become a part of our family.

After much uncertainty concerning our Youth during the interim, Elisa Webster has already begun to grow the Youth and Family programs and has generated interest in their involvement in our community.

As Fr. Phil mentioned in the annual meeting, we also welcomed the publication of a pictorial church directory which will be distributed shortly. (See the separate photo directory article in this issue for more details.) Judy Holmes has worked tirelessly to bring all parishioners data up-to-date. It's a very positive move and gratifying to know we are growing and needing help in identifying some of our new family members.

In an effort to further a untied relationship with the school and church, we are planning a Church & School Picnic for Saturday, May 16. There will be something for everyone to enjoy. Please mark your calendars, and we will have details in the near future.

In looking forward in this period of transition, which is much like a separate Advent, waiting and watching for what is to come, we will not be idle. There is much we are doing to go forward into 2020. When we met for our 2019 Vestry retreat, we put forth our goals and ambitions for the coming year. Granted, much time was spent with Bishop Reed as he instructed us in the steps of searching for a new rector, the negotiations that would be taking place, and finally, the acceptance for that person to be our new leader.

We also learned what would be needed during the year to keep our ship on course. This goes for all of us in this congregation to have:

strength for the journey

- patience
- perseverance
- cohesiveness
- confidence
- much prayer and scripture reading.

Unfortunately, there is not enough opportunity to thank all who contribute to the workings of this wonderful institution. Just know you are appreciated, and we realize that without each of you, we would not be "we."

It is with deep gratitude from your Vestry for your faithfulness and loyalty during this time of transition, and as we await, we work to contribute our time and faith that our next venture awaits us with richness and stability.

Thank you and blessings, Nancy

"My religion is kindness." - Dalai Lama

FROM YOUR TREASURER

Roy Buckley

As we move into a new fiscal year and begin 2020's first quarter, it is a good time to look back and reflect upon the prior year and gauge our actual financial performance at the conclusion of the year in relationship to our expectations at the commencement of 2019.



In 2019 we anticipated a total of \$502,117 in total income, while actually taking in \$537,436. Income categories included:

	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>
Pledge Income:	\$465,967	\$485,093
Non-Pledge:	\$25,000	\$22,872
Other Income:	\$11,150	\$29,471

Our 2019 total expenses were budgeted at \$556,961, leaving an anticipated budget deficit of <\$54,844> at the end of the fiscal year, while actual expenditures came in at \$519,998, resulting in ordinary income of \$17,438. Major expense categories in the 2019 included:

	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>
Operating Expenses:	\$129,518	\$116,873
Staff Expenses:	\$285,198	\$267,087
Apportionment:	\$107,400	\$107,004
Ministry:	\$21,772	\$20,106
Other:	\$13,073	\$8,928

Rather than being left with an anticipated deficit of <\$54,844>, SSEC saw an actual surplus of \$17,546, which can be explained in large part by (a) lower than anticipated operating and staff costs (due to our Rector's departure at the beginning of the 2nd half of the fiscal year), and (b) actual Pledge and Fundraising revenues exceeding our income expectations by \$31,000 +/-. From a financial perspective, SSEC left 2019 in a strong position.

Looking forward to the fiscal 2020 period, we have again projected a deficit position in our annual budget (<\$55,550>). Additions to Parish Staff: Administrative Assistant and Youth & Family Minister comprised 95% of the projected deficit, but these two new positions are considered vitally necessary and critical to the performance of both Parish Administration and Family Life Ministry. The Vestry is confident that these two additions will add considerable value to St. Stephen's ministries and to the effective function of Parish Administration.

Several unknown variables impacted our 2020 budget formulations, principally our need to fill the most critical of leadership positions at St. Stephen's--Parish Rector. At Rev. Sandy's departure in July 2019, a Rector Search Committee was formed, and they have been working diligently and tirelessly in forming a method and procedure to identify, seek, and select a Rector that is the perfect fit for St. Stephen's and that will provide the guidance and leadership so necessary to the Parish's growth and prosperity at this point in time. Compensation assumptions (salary and benefits commensurate with Parish size and demands of the position) were made and applied to the 2020 budget commencing at the 2nd half of the fiscal year. The Rector Search will, of course, place additional financial burdens on the budget in the form of travel (both outgoing and incoming) as the Committee researches, identifies, and interviews candidates that it has vetted to the Vestry. In formulating a budget for this task, we have assumed that the Rector search will carry at least 6 months of travel and associated costs into 2020, and possibly beyond. To date, the Rector Search Committee has brain-stormed and found ways to defray quite a bit of search costs by utilizing current technology in researching and communicating with Rector candidates. Believe us when we tell you that our Rector Search team is disciplined, creative, and totally focused in finding the perfect Parish Rector to lead and guide us to delight in His will, walk in His ways, to the glory of His Name.

As the new Treasurer for St. Stephen's, I would like to invite all parishioners to reach out to me with regard to any concerns or questions they may have regarding Parish finances by dropping a note to me in my McArthur Hall mail box.



FRIDAY COFFEE & TEA FRIENDS

Friday, February 7 & 21 @ 9:30 a.m.

OFFSITE: Wimberley Cafe, 101-A Wimberley Square, Wimberley

Co-leader, Marsha Acock, reports that, "We are still going strong--there's always a good size group of various folks, and the Wimberley Cafe (where the ministry meets) has been a hit."

If you would like to join Marsha Acock and Ann Robertson for Friday Coffee & Tea Friends, head on over to the Wimberley Cafe every first and third Friday, except for holidays, beginning at 9:30 a.m. All women are invited to share this time of fellowship and conversation.

For more information, contact: Ann Robertson, <u>annrobertson95@gmail.com</u> and Marsha Acock, <u>marsha.acock755@gmail.com</u>.



2019 Contribution Statements Have Been Sent

The 2019 SSEC Contribution Statements have been sent out electronically for those with e-mail addresses on file. If you did not receive your statement, please contact: Jeannetta Watson, jwatson@ststeve.org.





CAMP SUNDAY THIS WEEK

Sunday, February 9, 2020

St. Stephen's will participate in Camp Sunday on Sunday, February 9. On this day we will be invited to donate money toward camp scholarships and to share stories of the transformational love and community that takes place at our diocesan camping programs (Camp Capers, Duncan Park, and Mustang Island Family Camp) or Camp Good Sam. Donation envelopes will be in your Sunday bulletin.

Also, this Sunday, February 9, Youth & Family Minister, Elisa Webster, will be available to take your early registrations for Mustang Island Family Camp. Spots fill up quickly, so plan on registering this Sunday. Those registering are invited to choose the same session to be together on July 24-26, 2020. Be sure to look for Elisa at the camp registration table in McArthur Hall this Sunday.



FEBRUARY NEWS

With Youth & Family Minister Elisa Webster and heroic volunteers at the helm, we're off to a great start for 2020.



Thank you for eating all those breakfast tacos at the annual meeting! We had around 80 people in attendance and at least twice that amount of breakfast tacos snatched up. Your generosity with this food fundraiser helped the Youth add \$700 to their mission trip fund.

Did you see the load of firewood and Souper Bowl Sunday donations? (See more photos in "Life at SSEC" section of this newsletter.) Yes, we did manage to get the mountain of supplies safely delivered to the Wimberley Crisis Bread Basket. The Youth are grateful to their St. Stephen's family for the use of trucks, trailers, and all the well wishes to help this

PHOTO CREDIT: Joe Blanford of trucks, trailers, and all the well wishes to help this community project create comfort to local families in need during the winter months.

Next up for the Youth is babysitting on *Friday, February 21*. If you've got little ones that need watching while you enjoy Mardi Gras Masquerade, the St. Stephen's School annual Extravaganza, your kiddos will be in great hands. The Youth have some extremely fun activities planned for this childcare-watching fundraiser.

Did you miss the Youth and Family Planning Meeting on Tuesday, February 4, yet would like to know how you can be a part of this energetic and happening ministry? No problem. Elisa Webster, elisamkraft@gmail.com, can connect you with your area of interest whether that be: Faithful Families, Family Celebration Sundays, Youth fundraisers, Orange and Godly Play teacher training, or summer mission trips.



WIMBERLEY AREA CANCER SUPPORT

Wednesday, February 12 @ 11:30 a.m.

OFFSITE: Wimberley Chamber of Commerce

The Wimberley Area Cancer Support Group sponsored by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. in the Chamber of Commerce's members room. Each participant brings a brown bag lunch. All who have been diagnosed with cancer now or in the past are invited to attend and share a time of relaxation and conversation with others who share their experiences.

For more information, contact: Sharon East, <u>sharoneast@verizon.net</u> or Dave Boyd, <u>davemarcyboyd@anvilcom.com</u>.



TED TalkersWednesday, February 12 @ 12 noon

McArthur Hall

Please join us Wednesday, February 12 at 12 noon for the viewing of "How to defend earth from asteroids" by Phil Plait.

<u>Please note: there will be no TED Talkers held on Ash Wednesday, February 26.</u>

On TED Talkers days, we watch a pre-selected TED Talk video at 12 noon, eat our brown bag lunch, and discuss the topic in a non-judgmental setting with coffee and water provided. It all wraps up by 1:00 p.m. You are encouraged to bring a friend, neighbor, and join in the next sure-to-be-lively, mind-stimulating discussion. We'll save you a seat!

TED TALKERS SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY 12, 2020

MARCH 11, 2020

For more information, contact: Jo Bourke, jobourke33@gmail.com, 512-468-1267.



AV Techs for New Team (Volunteer)



We are looking for a team of volunteers to run the sound and video at St. Stephen's Church. Members will be on a rotating schedule for the 10:30 Sunday morning service. Other times include Christmas Eve and as needed for special events held at St. Stephen's.

To perform these duties, the AV tech needs to be proficient in the use of Presonus software and sound board technology, ProPresenter software, PowerPoint software, and other software to facilitate the production of photo and video stories to be projected. That software includes: Audacity, Word, and others. The tech must be proficient on Mac laptops and Mac iPads.

See the church website, <u>ststeve.org/jobs</u> for a full description. If interested, contact: Jeannetta Watson, <u>jwatson@ststeve.org</u>.

Part-time Church Sexton Wanted (Paid)

Lonnie Brown will continue as our Water Tech. *Thank you, Lonnie!*What we are currently seeking is a part-time Sexton at 15 hours per week. If you have someone that you would like to recommend, please, see our Parish Administrator, Jeannetta Watson, or e-mail her, jwatson@ststeve.org.

This position will work under the general direction of the Parish Administrator and the Junior Warden and will be responsible for the maintenance and general upkeep of the St. Stephen's Church campus. We are seeking just the right person who can work both indoors and outdoors and will have an eagle eye with constant awareness of any special needs or attention needed to be addressed with our buildings and grounds.

PHOTO DIRECTORY UPDATE

The first proof of the St. Stephen's photo directory has been submitted to us by Lifetouch, and we have made corrections. Thanks for your patience during the editing process. We will keep you updated and let you know when to anticipate having the directory in your hands.





SSES ANNOUNCES NEW PROGRAM

St. Stephen's Episcopal School filed its paperwork to the State of Texas to add a new program for 2-year-olds to their campus in 2020. Head of School Amanda Ebner announced at the January church annual meeting that the school had been approved and will start scheduling tours soon. Currently, the school serves children from ages 3 through 6 grade.



FAITHFUL FAMILIES PRESENTS Kid's VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY & Parent's Date Night

Hey, Parents!

You are invited to drop off your children, ages PK4 through 4th grade, in McArthur Hall for a Saint Valentine's Party while you enjoy a date night dinner. Prop off begins at 6:00 p.m. and pickup extends until 7:30 p.m.

- ✓ Light Supper
- ✓ Kids Sing Along
- ✓ Arts & Crafts
- ✓ Outside Hide & Seek



- ✓ Cookie Decorating
- ✓ St. Valentine Story
- ✓ Fellowship
- ✓ Halftime Band

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14

6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Church, McArthur Hall



FEBRUARY MEETING

Sunday, February 16, 12 noon *Meeting Room 1*

For His Sake, the Daughters of the King will gather for prayer and discernment. We welcome you to be with us. Please contact Sue Wright, <u>wright5212@sbcglobal.net</u>, to learn how you can participated in this ministry!



OFFICES CLOSED

Monday, February 17

Both the school and church offices will be closed all day on Monday, February 17, for the Presidents' Day holiday. Offices will open on Tuesday, February 18 at regular hours.

Generations

GREAT GENERATIONS GATHERING

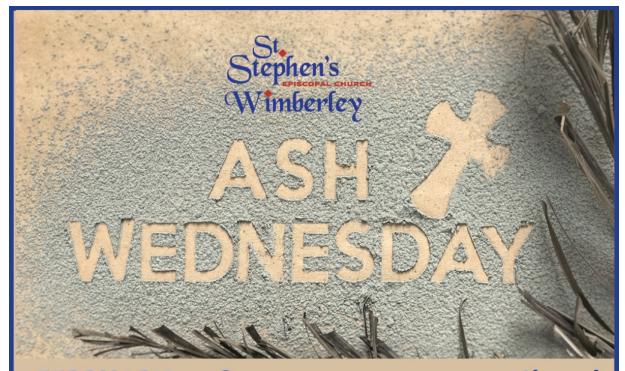
Wednesday, February 19, 11:30 a.m. *McArthur Hall*



This month's Great Generations Gathering is an important one, maybe even a life-saving one. To help us prepare for an emergency, Ken Strange, Wimberley EMS Director, will instruct us on how to use our St. Stephen's AED, Automated External Defibrillator. Did you know we are soon to have two on campus? Know where they are located?

All are invited to hear this important AED and Wimberley EMS information. Along with our program, we will be enjoying food, fun, and fellowship.

For more information, contact: Carroll Dolezal, <u>carrolldolezal99@gmail.com</u>.



FEBRUARY 26 @ 8 a.m, 12 noon, 6 p.m., Chapel St. Stephen's invites you to a Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes 6000 FM 3237, Wimberley, TX 78676

Tuesday, February 25: Youth Shrove Pancake Dinner Fundraiser, 5:30-7:30 p.m., McArthur Hall, St. Stephen's Church



DEER CREEK FEBRUARY SERVICES

Wednesday, February 26 @ 3:00 p.m.

OFFSITE: Deer Creek Wimberley, 555 FM 3237, Wimberley

Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month St. Stephen's gathers at Deer Creek in Wimberley to share in a Holy Eucharist service with the residents. Please join us and help us share this wonderful gift with others.

All are welcome to attend.

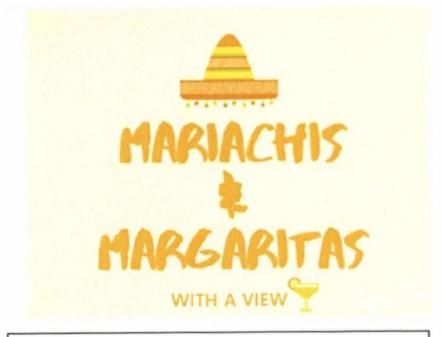
For more information, contact: Sharon East, <u>sharoneast@verizon.net</u> and Connie Maverick, <u>joemaverick@verizon.net</u>.



MARK THOSE SUMMER CALENDARS!

Saturday, July 11, 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Wimberley Community Center

BIG SCOOP is having a birthday. In 2020 this St. Stephen's ministry celebrates its 5th year supporting Camp Good Sam Wimberley and the at-risk children of the Wimberley Valley. Richard and Darelle Jordan raised our awareness of the need for a summer experience for our kids and Dorothy Mahon conceived and executed BIG SCOOP to meet the challenge of involving St. Stephen's and the community in raising funds to make camp a reality. This old-fashioned ice cream festival, held at the Wimberley Community Center, has quickly become a Wimberley summer tradition. Mark your calendar and get involved with the Fifth Annual BIG SCOOP.



Purchase your tickets at:

http://ow.ly/girr50xYu1F or call us and we will help you to register. 512-393-9996 or 210-434-5531

Save the date for February 23, 2020!

This event benefits
Camp Good Sam
Wimberley and is
hosted by Dodie and
Dick Scott at their
home located at
11030 Mt. Sharp
Road, Wimberley, TX.

Tickets are limited and available on line at the link provided. Hope to see you there~





KITCHEN ANGELS MARCH SIGNUP

Great news! We've got our January and February Kitchen Angels. Thank you!! Do we have any March Kitchen Angels out there? If so, please sign up in the church kitchen on the chart inside the kitchen door. For those of you that especially enjoy company, why not find a "partner angel" to share the March time. It is not necessary to do an entire month.

"Times of service are totally free and open for your own schedules," assures Evie Martin.

If anyone is curious as to the angel duties, there is a small red stand with "Kitchen

Tips" posted by the sign up sheet. Feel free to check it out next time you snag a snack or a cup of coffee in McArthur Hall.

Community of Hope Ministry



Do you need someone...

To listen, without judgment, to what is weighing on your heart? To recognize your needs and respect your rights to your feelings? To honor any conversation with complete confidentiality? To support you as you take steps of change on your journey? To just walk with you and let you be you.

Each one of us, at some point in our lives, could use a "companion" to walk with us during the challenges of our journeys. A Community of Hope Lay Chaplain is someone who cares about you, will not promise miracles, will not decide for you what you should do, will not take steps for you, and will not rescue you. He or she will be available to you, support you, pray for you, and assure you that you are God's beloved. Please, if you are walking alone, invite one to join you on your path.

For more information during FEBRUARY, contact:

Becky Denton, dentonrebecca1@gmail.com or Dot Green, dotgreen@anvilcom.com.



TAIZE MONTHLY SERVICE

1st Wednesdays @ 6:00 p.m. in the Chapel

Expect the beautiful TAIZE service to include:

- 30 minutes of worship and reflection
- prayers
- music
- readings
- brief periods of silent meditation

Musicians include: Anne Jones, Tom Dawson, Carroll Dolezal, Carroll Wilson, Joe Blanford, and Will Webber. Prayer benches, cushions, or other informal seating methods are encouraged. Each monthly service will feature a different theme. This month is: JOY!

TAIZE is a candlelight service and an excellent vehicle to calm the racing mind. For a photo see "In the Life of SSEC" section of this *eNEWS*.



EVENING EUCHARIST & PRAYER

featuring the Half-time Band

2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th Wednesdays @ 6:00 p.m. in the Chapel

All are welcome to join us in the Chapel on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. for eucharist, prayer, and contemporary music. On the first Wednesday of the month you are invited to a new service, TAIZE. See related article in this *eNEWS* for more details.



UPCOMING SUBMISSION DEADLINES

The *eNEWS* is published on Fridays generally every two weeks and delivered straight to your e-mail's in-box. If you have an e-mail address update, please make sure to send these to the church office, office@ststeve.org.

With more than 25 ministries and groups here at St. Stephen's Church, we've got a lot happening! Help us cover your event by submitting articles, photos, and artwork to: *Communications Manager*, *Jackie McFadden*.

UPCOMING DEADLINES: 12 noon Wednesday or earlier

February 19 March 4

IN THE LIFE OF SSEC

As a Jubilee Parish, St. Stephen's is grounded in outreach as we work to lift the brokenhearted, restore the dignity of all people, and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. This winter we have collected firewood, food donations, and shared a beautiful restorative TAIZE service with our community. And, there's so more to come!









FRI, FEB 7 & 21

Friday Coffee & Tea Friends (OFFSITE), 9:30 a.m., Wimberley Cafe

SUN, FEB 9

Quiche, Coffee & Choir, McArthur Hall, immediately after 8:00 a.m. service

SUN, FEB 9

Camp Sunday

WED, FEB 12

Wimberley Area Cancer Support (OFFSITE), 11:30 a.m., Wimberley Chamber of Commerce

WED, FEB 12

TED Talkers, 12 noon, McArthur Hall

WED, FEB 12

Deer Creek Eucharist (OFFSITE), 3:00 p.m., Deer Creek Wimberley

FRI, FEB 14

Faithful Families Saint Valentine's Party & Parent's Date Night, 6:00 p.m., McArthur Hall

SUN, FEB 16

Daughters of the King Meeting, 12 noon, Meeting Room 1

SUN, FEB 16

Confirmation Class 5 of 6, 12 noon, Rector's Office

MON, FEB 17

PRESIDENTS' DAY, Church & School Offices Closed all day

WED, FEB 19

Great Generations Gathering, 11:30 a.m., McArthur Hall

TH-SAT, FEB 20-22

Diocesan Council (OFFSITE), Corpus Christi

Are you on Facebook? St. Stephen's is!

<u>Click here</u> to visit our Facebook page and don't forget to <u>LIKE</u> and <u>SHARE</u> us!

Please contact the church office at 512.847.9956, Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and 8:30 a.m. - 12 noon Fridays if you have any questions.

Join Our Mailing List!