

# ST. STEPHEN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

65 E. Street Road, Feasterville, Pa. 19053 215.357.8138

JANUARY 2020

## Welcome Pastor Gwen



We welcome to St. Stephen's The Rev. Gwendolyn S. King, who will serve as our Interim Pastor during our time of transition and discernment, as we explore our future and God's calling. Rev. King would say that she is first and foremost a baptized child of the living God. An ordained Lutheran minister and native of Philadelphia PA, Pastor Gwen is a graduate of Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania and Howard University School of Divinity in Washington D.C. Having been in the Lord's service for over 35 years, Pastor Gwen most recently served as Interim Pastor at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church in Secane, PA., and is currently offering "a pastoral presence" to students on the Philadelphia campus of United Lutheran Seminary.

Committed to issues of justice and women, Pastor Gwen served for six years on the Churchwide Executive Board of Women of the ELCA, and currently serves on the Board of "Feast Incarnate", a local church community outreach meal program to those dealing with HIV and/or AIDS, the homeless and those who are food insecure. A current member of the SEPA Synod Church Council, Pastor King is also a member/trainer on the SEPA Synod Anti-Racism team.

Pastor Gwen considers herself to be a blessed woman, who enjoys life, the outdoors, traveling, loves music, singing, and the theater. She also appreciates time with family and friends, likes to relax by water, enjoys' sailing and canoeing, and flying her kite by the ocean.

*I look forward to meeting and getting to know the members of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church as we begin this time of transition and discernment. I invite prayers for all of us and for the Spirit's presence as we journey together*

***God is good, all the time! All the time, God is good!***

*. Pastor Gwen King*



*Just a Thought for the  
New Year*

By Charlotte Koch

**I need to listen well so that I can hear what is not said.** - T. Madonsela

## **Annual Congregational Meeting** **January 19, 2020**

St. Stephen's Annual Congregational Meeting will be on Sunday, January 19th, immediately following the 10:00 AM service which will be the only service for that day.

Annual Reports will be received, and the 2020 Budget will be reviewed and voted on. All members have a voice and a vote in the decisions of our church. Please plan to attend this very important meeting.

## **His Unfailing Presence**

Author Unknown

Another year I enter  
Its history unknown;  
Oh, how my feet would tremble  
To tread its paths alone!  
But I have heard a whisper  
I know I shall be blest;  
"My presence shall go with thee,  
And I will give thee rest."

What will the New Year bring me?  
I may not, must not know;  
will it be love and rapture,  
Or loneliness and woe?  
Hush! Hush! I hear His whisper;  
I surely shall be blest;  
"My presence shall go with thee,  
And I will give thee rest."

## **St. Stephen's Lunch Bunch** **Thursday, January 16, 2020**

Our meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m., January 16, 2020, in the Fellowship Hall. (Can you believe we are nearing 2020?) Please remember that our parking spots are limited to 20 spaces next to the church in the lower lot.

Following the business meeting, we will be entertained by Ruth Pfeffer, a world traveler and photographer, who will make a presentation on some of our national parks. Ruth began her photography of the natural world several years ago and has produced calendars featuring her photos. Her photos have also appeared in Bombay Hook's brochure, Gwynedd Preserve's brochure and on the cover of Eastern Shore Bird list. Ruth's photography from her travels forms the basis of her slide presentations.

Our luncheon will be held at Hong Kong Buffet, so there will be no need to choose an entrée.

Please mail your check in the amount of \$16 per person made out to St. Stephen's Lunch Bunch and mail to:

Elaine Bohanan  
531 E. Pine Street  
Feasterville-Trevose, PA 19053

**No later than January 10<sup>th</sup> please.**

If the roads are snowy or icy, and Neshaminy School District is closed, we will cancel the meeting.

## **Book Discussion** **February 6, 2020**

**W**e will meet in the church library at 11 AM to discuss **Sisters First** by Jenna and Barbara Bush. **This should be a light and fun discussion and good for new members to join in.** *Following the discussion we will be having a lunch adventure at Suburban Diner. Mark your calendar and invite a friend. New Book Lovers Always Welcome!*

## Sunday School News

Happy New Year!  
Welcome to 2020



Sunday School starts again on January 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

On January 19, Sunday school will be held at 10 a.m. The Congregational meeting is at 11 a.m. Please pick up your children and go back into the church for the meeting. (Our teachers need to be able to attend the meeting.)

January 26, Sunday school is at 10:00 a.m.

## Youth Group



**Youth Group and Friends** caroling with some homebound members. "Hold on a minute, the end of the game is on!"

## President's Message

We are pleased to start the new year on a good note. We have hired a new choir director. Vasily Kifyak is an extremely talented musician who will join us on Jan. 1, 2020. We also have signed a 12 month contract with an interim pastor.

Rev. Gwendolyn King will start on Jan. 6, 2020.

Vasily will start with the vocal choir and then in September will also direct the bell choir. Holly Donato will continue with bell choir until Sept. We appreciate all the work that Holly has done during this period of time when we had no choir director. Thank you. We also thank Alison Graham for helping with the vocal choir.

It often takes 18 to 24 months to call a new pastor but council opted for a 12 month contract with a month to month extension possible. We have a strong and dedicated congregation and council has already started much of the work necessary to nominate a call committee. There are 50+ seminarians expected to graduate this year but there are 24 congregations in transition. There may be other pastors seeking a move also. We need to complete our congregational profile and be in position to start interviewing as early as possible. Pastor Gwen is the chaplain at seminary so is in a good position to know who might fit our needs.

We have made a final contact with the Director of Transportation in Harrisburg to express concerns about the safety issues with the proposed Wawa construction. It appears that there will be no changes or work stoppage.

Our Congregational meeting will be held on Jan.19, 2020. Hope to see you all there.

Respectfully submitted  
Carol Merchiere, Council President

## New Choir Director -



We are pleased to announce St. Stephen's has hired a new choir director. Mr. Vasiliy Kifyak will be on board as of January 1, 2020.

Mr Kifyak has prior experience as a choir director, and a piano and organ accompanist and is currently teaching piano at Settlement Music School in Philadelphia.

Vasiliy holds a Master's degree in Conducting, Piano Accompaniment and Music Theory from Professional Music School in Kishinev, Moldova, and studied at Music Academy of Moldova. As Conductor of the Philharmonic Society Doina Chorus, he traveled and presented concerts at halls throughout cities in Spain and Italy. He has taught at independent schools and in other community venues throughout Philadelphia.

Please join us in welcoming Vasiliy to our St. Stephen's family.

## Neshaminy HS \$20 Challenge



Given \$20 to do something good, students Gabby and Ava made up Birthday bags (cake mix, icing, candles decorations, plates, etc) for our Food Bank children. *What a "sweet" idea. Thank you.*

## FOOD BANK CHRISTMAS PARTY



**Bringing Christmas cheer  
to the little ones**

**Special Thanks to all who  
participated and contributed.**





**Christmas Tree by  
Catherine Hahn and Friends**

## ***Christmas at St. Stephen's***

**So much to be thankful for**



**Our Bell Choir and Vocal Choir concert and reception**



**Lunch Bunch Luncheon**



**Families  
Lighting the  
Advent Candle**



**Altar Elves**



**Our Sunday School  
Children**

