

# THE VOICE

*of St. Stephen's*

February 2026 Volume 154 Issue 2



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## Inside this Issue

Reflections from Pastor Barry.....2-3  
Voice of the Saints.....4-5  
Social Ministry Corner.....6-8  
Finance Page.....9  
Birthday /Anniversaries.....10  
Activities.....11-14  
Worship Assistants.....15  
Church Council & Committees.....16

## Services

Sunday, February 1  
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany  
10:45am

Sunday, February 8  
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany  
10:45am

Sunday, February 15  
Transfiguration of Our Lord  
10:45am

Wednesday, February 18  
Ash Wednesday  
7pm

Sunday, February 22  
First Sunday in Lent  
10:45 am

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## Reflections from Pastor Barry

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Dear Friends at St. Stephen's,

As I sit down to write my reflection for the newsletter, it is difficult for me to not be consumed with the events of these last days. The protests in Minneapolis, the marches happening there, and the deaths that have occurred there are ever before us and certainly heavy on our hearts. There are countless narratives as to what transpired. In this modern day, with cell phone cameras everywhere, you and I have the opportunity to see for ourselves. Still, it is difficult to “see” as we come to every scene, every frame before us with a particular bias. We are you we are. I am, who I am.



As a people of faith, we are called to set aside our personal bias and view the world and the events that unfold before us through the lens of Christ and in particular through the cross of Jesus. Our God, revealed in Jesus, walks among us, shares our sufferings, stands with the oppressed and marginalized and wounded and alienated, heals division, calls out hypocrisy, demands mercy- even for our enemies, and calls us to walk in the light of the power of love. Sometimes I wonder how it is that anyone would want to follow Jesus.

What I do know is that the Jesus revealed to me in the scriptures and by the power of God's most Holy Spirit, is that we are not to kill or defame or rush to judgment or to exclude or to stereotype. But then it seems to me that is all too often our human nature and the power of sin.

I find it difficult to believe, but with the arrival of February, we look to the season of Lent. Of what do we need to repent? What faults in our own lives do we need to work on? I never seem to have trouble coming up with a list of my sins! (And maybe a few of yours as well?!) Primary among them is how to love those who see the world in such a different way than I do.

## Reflections from Pastor Barry– Continue

Lent is many things. first among those things is the need to walk. Yes, walk- walk with those whose lives are different from our own. It is when we actively choose to walk with the other that we gain understanding and grow in empathy for our fellow siblings, created in the same image of God as you and me. Lent is the season to remember the walking of the people of God out of bondage in Egypt through the wilderness to the promised land. 40 years is a lot of walking! In fact, it is a lifetime of walking. Maybe Lent reminds us that we are to walk with Jesus each and every day of this life we have been given and especially when we feel that it is only wilderness that surrounds us. It is only when we walk with Jesus that we truly understand the discipleship to which we have been called. Of course, Jesus walks with us every day whether we “see” it or not.

For the victims of violence and those who perpetrate that violence I pray, Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy. And all the more as Lent approaches I pray that God have mercy on me and remind me to ever walk with Jesus.

In Christ,  
Pastor Barry

# Voices of the Saints



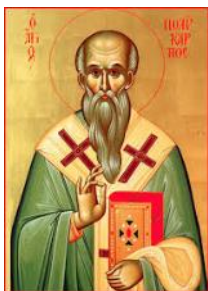
**Ansgar-(c.AD 800-865)** Ansgar was born a son of a noble Frankish family. He entered the Benedictine abbey, where he was educated. By 823 he was teaching in the monastic school at Corvey. Here he began his pastoral work. When Harald, an exiled Danish king, appealed to the Carolingian emperor [Louis I](#) for support, Louis dispatched Ansgar to accompany and assist the king in evangelizing [Denmark](#). In 826 Ansgar began missionary work in Schleswig. Harald's downfall in 827 and the death of his assistant, Autbert, were blows to the mission.

In 829 Ansgar returned to the Franks. With the help of Witmar, a monk from Corvey, Ansgar began his evangelization of [Sweden](#). Ansgar was cordially received by King Björn to preach the Gospel. The king made Ansgar the bishop of Hamburg. There, Ansgar founded a monastery and a school and in 834 the King endowed him with the Turholdt Abbey as the center of his activities.

After King Louis died, his empire was divided and Ansgar lost the Turholdt Abbey. The Danes unexpectedly raided Hamburg, destroying all the church's treasures and books. Through this political turmoil, Ansgar continued his northern mission building a church north of Hamburg.

Ansgar died in Bremen in 865. He is known for being the monk who helped bring Christianity to Scandinavia. He was named a bishop of Hamburg. He is remembered on February 3 for his love for poor people.

# Voices of the Saints



**Polycarp-(AD 69-155)** Polycarp was orphaned at an early age, but at the direction of an angel, he was raised by the pious widow Kallista. After the death of his adoptive mother, Polycarp gave away his possessions and began to lead a chaste life, caring for the sick. He was very close to St. Bucolus who ordained Polycarp as deacon, entrusting to him the preaching of the Word of God. Soon after, Polycarp was ordained to the holy priesthood.

The emperor Marcus Aurelius came to the Roman throne and started persecution against the Christians. The pagans demanded that the judge search for Polycarp. During this time Polycarp, at the persistent urging of his flock, stayed in a small village in Smyrna. When the soldiers came for him, he went out to them and invited them in to eat. He asked for time to pray, in order to prepare himself for death.

Polycarp was brought to trial and confessed his faith in Christ, and was condemned to be burned alive. The executioners wanted to nail him to a post, but he declared that God would give him the strength to endure the flames. The flames encircled Polycarp but did not touch him, coming together over his head in the shape of a vault. Seeing that the fire did no harm to him the pagans stabbed him with a dagger. Tradition has it that so much blood flowed from this wound that it extinguished the flames. His body was then cremated. He is remembered on February 23.

# Social Ministry Corner

## Past Events



Thank you for your generous donations for the Mitten Tree. We collected socks, gloves and hats. Childrens' items were taken to Marvine Elementary and to Thomas Jefferson Elementary. Adult items were taken to the Bethlehem Emergency Shelter.



14 volunteers from St. Stephen's prepared and served a hot meal to 55 guests at BES on January 17. The meal consisted of meatloaf, potatoes, green beans, applesauce and pound cake. A Thrivent Action Team card was used to purchase the food. In addition to preparing and serving the food, St. Stephen's members helped clean up after the meal and serve as shower monitors.

Saturday March 28 is the next date we will be helping at the shelter. Following are the shifts we need to fill:

**Prep Meal & Kitchen for service shift—3pm to 5pm**

**Serve Meal and Clean up shift—5pm to 8:30pm**

**Female Shower Monitor— 2 shifts— 5pm to 7pm, 7pm to 9:15pm**

**Male Shower Monitor— 2 shifts— 5pm to 7pm, 7pm to 9:15pm**

If you are interested in helping by donating items or filling a shift at the shelter, contact Jeanine Siegfried 610-392-3274 or Linda Reese 610-704-9444.

# Social Ministry Corner

## Upcoming Events

**On February 9th** the Social Ministry Committee will be hosting its annual **Souper Bowl of Caring** luncheon during the fellowship hour. A variety of soups and chili will be available to choose from and free-will offerings are appreciated. We are also collecting cans of soup in the Narthex. Help us build up our Soup Tower!



**Sunday March 1st** – Social Ministry Meeting following the worship service. Come join us!



**Saturday March 28th** – Prepare and serve a hot meal at the Bethlehem Emergency Shelter.

## KHCI Update



The founders of Kenyan Healthcare Initiatives (KHCI), Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Stroup, are unsure if they will be shipping any items to Kenya this year. Therefore we are no longer collecting school supplies and other items for KHCI. We will provide an update to the congregation if this changes. *Thank you* for your past support.

# Social Ministry Corner

## Ongoing Needs

We continue to collect items year-round in support of Operation Christmas Child (OCC) and the West End Food Bank. There is a donation bin and shopping cart in the Narthex where you can place donated items.



**Operation Christmas Child**– Collecting toys, clothing, school supplies, combs/brushes, toothbrushes and stuffed animals that are small enough to fit in a shoebox.

**Food Cart to benefit West End Food Bank-** Nonperishable food items such as canned soups, fruit, vegetables, peanut butter, jelly, rice, cereal, mac & cheese.



# Finance Page

## CHURCH FINANCE PAGE

### Operating Fund Report

Below is comparison of Operating Fund income and expenses for the 2024 and 2025 calendar years.

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Operating Income	\$ 181,378	\$ 193,839
Operating Expenses	<u>(\$ 325,367)</u>	<u>(\$263,507)</u>
Net Difference	(\$ 143,989)	(\$ 69,668)
Preschool Income	<u>+\$ 64,514</u>	<u>+\$ 64,700</u>
Net Difference	(-\$ 79,475)	(-\$ 4,966)
Roof Replacement Income	\$ 58,663	+\$21,469
Operating Fund Balance December 31	\$ 248,459	\$ 264,960
Property Maintenance Fund Balance	\$ 20,352	\$ 11,228

### ROOF REPLACEMENT REIMBURSEMENT

In the event you missed earlier communications, final payment on the roof was received on Christmas Eve. Paying off the cost of the roof in one year was a remarkable accomplishment, and the membership of St. Stephen's can be proud of this achievement.

### 2025 CHURCH FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Contribution statements will be distributed to church attendees on January 18 and 25. On January 26, all remaining statements will be mailed to members.



Kathy Bielinski  
Kym Ohmacht  
Helene Longacre  
Gordon Maule

Lisa Levick  
Eleanor Harte  
Debra Perry

## **Birthdays for February**

9-Carol Haring  
10-Marc Israel  
10-Craig Spangenberg  
11-John Phillips Jr  
16-Joann Spangenberg  
18-Daniel Macon  
18-Linda Reese  
21-Elizabeth Lopez  
23-Maria Bevan  
23-Brenda Henriques  
26-Kevin Mitman  
28-Jason Siegfried



## **Anniversaries in February**

17-Richard & Sherry Israel  
21-Dave & Beverly Looker





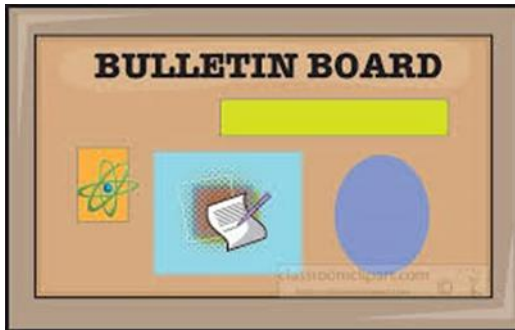
If you get up on Sunday morning and your road is covered in snow or ice and you are wondering if we have Worship Service, please check WFMZ Channel 69 for update. You can also check our Facebook page or our web page for an update



We are collecting breakfast bars for a local elementary school.  
We will have a bin in the Narthex



**Come join us for Fellowship on  
Thursday, February 19  
at 9:30am  
at 418 3rd Ave  
Bethlehem, Pa 18018**



**We have a Bulletin Board  
next to the  
Resource center  
Please check out the activities  
in our neighborhood.  
If you would like to add to board, please put in the  
office.**



**Ash Wednesday  
February 18  
7 PM**

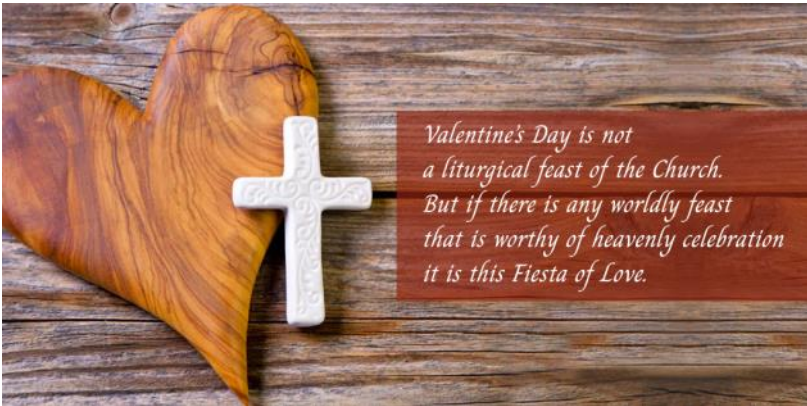


**Spaghetti Dinner  
February 14  
5pm  
Must have a ticket  
Age 13 & over -\$8  
Age-5-12-\$5  
Free-Age 4 & under  
No Walks Ins**



**February 2, 2026**

Lets all hope that the groundhog does not see his  
shadow so  
we can have an early spring.



**February 14, 2026**






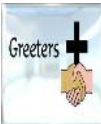

*St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran  
Church*



**February 2026**

*Worship Service Assistants*

**Altar Care: Joann Spangenberg**

Worship Service					
<b>Feb 1 10:45am</b>	<b>Noah Yonney</b>	<b>Scott Albanese Suzanne Bachman Aiden Hanley Ed Acevedo</b>	<b>Jeanine Siegfried</b>	<b>Ron &amp; Mary Jo Reed</b>	<b>Hoysan Family</b>
<b>Feb 8 10:45 am</b>	<b>Noah Yonney</b>	<b>Scott Albanese Ron Reed Todd Siegfried Mary Jo Reed</b>	<b>Ron Reed</b>	<b>Ron &amp; Mary Jo Reed</b>	<b>Social Ministry</b>
<b>Feb 15 10:45 am</b>	<b>Brody Zuber</b>	<b>Scott Albanese Aiden Hanley Maddy Zuber Jeanine Siegfried</b>	<b>Todd Siegfried</b>	<b>John &amp; Donna Pierog</b>	<b>Ron, Janice, Freya, RoseAnn</b>
<b>Feb 18 7pm</b>	<b>Maddy Zuber</b>	<b>Scott Albanese Brody Zuber</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Feb 22 10:45am</b>	<b>Noah Yonney</b>	<b>Scott Albanese Ron Reed Mary Jo Reed Ed Acevedo</b>	<b>Brody Zuber</b>	<b>Ron &amp; Mary Jo Reed</b>	<b>Donna &amp; John Pierog, Joan Neff</b>

## CHURCH STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Barry J. Harte  
Secretary: Christine Baylor

Organist: John Phillips Jr  
Sexton: Shawn Barger

## CHURCH COUNCIL

Suzanne Bachman	610-428-7021	suzbach756@aol.com
Kim Bluder– VP	610-888-0365	kimberlybluder@gmail.com
Pam Hartzell	610-865-2648	psh726@verizon.net
Rich Israel	484-894-3345	rwisrael@outlook.com
Denise Lopez– President	610-462-1278	dlopez76@ptd.net
Mary Jo Reed-Secretary	610-867-6276	reed2x@ptd.net
Linda Reese	610-704-9444	the-reeses@rcn.com
Craig Spangenberg	484-767-3384	jlsparenberg@juno.com
Todd Siegfried	610-392-8940	jtsiegfried@msn.com

## CHURCH COMMITTEES

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Suzanne Bachman (Chair), Bonnie Gerber, Michelle Hoysan, Carla Perry, Bev Carson.

### EVANGELISM

Suzanne Bachman, Bonnie Gerber, Pat Handlovic , Dennise Lopez (Chair), Joan Neff

### FINANCE

Kim Bluder, Tom Hartzell (Chair, Treasurer), Mike Hosfeld, Michelle Hoysan, George Klose, Charles Miller, Ron Reed, Barbara Seifert-Sigmon , Mary Jo Reed

### PROPERTY

Ed Acevedo, Dwayne Gaumer, Pam Hartzell (Chair), Linda Reese, Todd Siegfried, Craig Spangenberg, Joann Spangenberg, Herb Shellenberger

### SHARED MINISTRY

Bonnie Gerber, Todd Siegfried, Lauren Morton , Mike Hosfeld (chair)

### SOCIAL MINISTRY

Suzanne Bachman, Kathy Bielinski, Kim Bluder, Bonnie Gerber, Pat Handlovic, Jeanine Siegfried, Joan Neff, Linda Reese

### WORSHIP & MUSIC

Sandra Beahm, Kathy Bielinski, Cheryl Hosfeld (Co-Chair), Mike Hosfeld, John Phillips Jr (Co-Chair), Evan Reese, Linda Reese, Mary Jo Reed, Jeanine Siegfried.