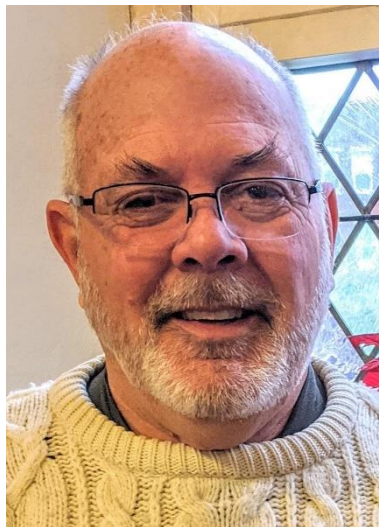


The Senior Warden's Report from the Senior Warden, Mike Davis

Already, we've probably heard enough about how trying these times are, and how we can't wait to get back to 'normal'. The next phase appears to be 'how do we maintain our working and spiritual relationships without the hugs and handshakes and sight gags?' We're learning pretty fast. 'Zooming' and 'teleconference' are now like bread and milk on a shopping list. Reading books and listening to new music are rediscovered pleasures. And worshipping virtually has become part of the new normal, so much so that we are even critiquing it... 'the audio and video weren't in sync'; was that Zoom or Facebook live?'; 'Saint Whatchamacallit has a really nice studio set up for their live stream'.

Your Interim Team and Vestry are working hard to meet the established - as well as the new normal - needs that we have, and that the Church has traditionally met. From recorded music performed by parishioners, to live streams of prayer services, to Godly Play for the children, to the Adult Ed series, all are working hard to maintain connections. Sometimes the technology balks, sometimes the 'ready-fire-aim' learning process takes more than a few shots to get it right, but we are learning. By the time you read this we hope to have established a regular 'calling cycle' from Clergy and Vestry members to all households, just to ensure that we are not missing any needs or concerns that you care to share.



As for the regular business of the Church, it goes on. The MDT, led by Paul Horn, is finalizing all of the content for the Portfolio, which when published will initiate the search process. We are seeking a full-time Rector, hired under a contract identical to the Priest-in-Partnership model (which has now reverted to the 'Priest-in-Charge' language), and selected from among several candidates rather than one at a time. Pretty much what we had hoped for. Church maintenance, covered elsewhere by Tom, is on hold for now but we are still in the queue for the

important repairs and projects already begun. Plans that were being made for off-site worship during the main summer construction phase are now on hold, and the pandemic will clearly determine whether such plans are even needed.

None of this is to say life is hunky-dory – we know that some parishioners are deeply and negatively affected by what's going on. If you have ideas that you think could mitigate some of the life stresses that we are experiencing, please share it with any IMT or Vestry member. And while you're at it, offer to help facilitate any work implied by your suggestion, if you can. Every effort, large or small, is appreciated.



Greetings from the Interim Ministry Team *by the Rev. Carole Wageman*

Many of you have probably been receiving our new “Monday Meet-up” as well as our regular Thursday email communication so I will try to not repeat what you can find there. I do want to call your attention to a succinct **“Preview of Coming Attractions”**:

Sunday Godly Play: 10:00 a.m. led by our indomitable Beth Davis. There might be more information on this in our current Parishscope, but here is the Zoom link again just in case: <https://zoom.us/j/274986029?pwd=UUIGLy9Sa3kwOXpYMVNIz3o0V3ZzQT09> Password & ID (if needed) Meeting ID: 274 986 029 Password: 133907

“St. Stephen’s at 4” is a new program that is just getting started with three different offerings scheduled: Use this Zoom link for all “St. Stephen’s at 4” programs by clicking on: <https://zoom.us/j/360635588> If you need assistance with starting up on Zoom, contact Rev. Carole Wageman or Eric Davis for start up assistance only.

- ✦ Sunday worship at 4 – a 30 minute time for hearing the collect, scripture reading, reflection, prayers of the people, benediction or blessing. Please note: the service bulletin for each week will be attached to your regular Thursday email. The weekly lectionary can also be downloaded for printing @ <http://www.lectionarypage.net>.
- ✦ Mondays and Thursdays Meditation at 4. Please see Diane’s fuller article for details. Use the same Zoom link as above.
- ✦ Tuesdays Adult Ed at 4. Please see Larry’s fuller article for details. Use the same Zoom link as above.

Wednesday Weekly Noon Prayer 12:00 – 12:45 PM – Beginning Wed. April 1, led by Eric Davis. An order of service for these services will be available on the St. Stephen’s Web site by Tuesday of each week and will be updated weekly to include the readings from the Lectionary Page for each particular Wednesday. The Zoom link for the services will be on the Web site as well. You can join this Zoom meeting by clicking on: <https://middlebury.zoom.us/j/808605341>

Worship: During this time, we are encouraging parishioners to continue to tend to your spiritual life, and remember how beloved we all are in the eyes of God, by tuning in to one of two live-streams (that means it is being broadcast in “real” time as it happens).

The first is: our Bishop Shannon who is doing a number of things daily (8 a.m. Morning Prayer and 8 p.m. Compline) and on Sunday (worship at 11:00 a.m.). Go here:

<https://diovermont.org/2020/03/15/online-prayer-with-bishop-shannon/> to access the various Zoom links as well as the order of services that are also downloaded there.

The second is: Washington National Cathedral (WNC). If you didn’t know this tidbit, the WNC is an Episcopal Church. They are also in isolation right now but they really have it together technologically. Go here to access their site: <https://cathedral.org/online/> and there will be clear directions re: accessing a number of daily worship services online.



Yes, these are indeed unusual times but the good people of St. Stephen’s are faithful and resilient. We will weather this time together and while we have to be apart in order to care for each other, we are truly one in the Spirit, one in the Lord. Let us give thanks and praise to our Creator who journeys with us through all things. Our center is always the Holy One who loves us with blazing perseverance and relentless constancy.

“May the Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from another.” Blessings!

A Report from Your Junior Warden

I would like to update you on current issues affecting church facilities. As of this writing, all planned projects are on an indefinite hold due to



the "stay at home" order. All contractors are now only permitted to work on projects that are linked to essential services. Our bell tower will likely

not fall into that category. I am exploring the option of whether it could be considered an emergent repair, which would allow Silver Maple Construction to proceed in June. For example, should the bell tower start leaking water inside causing further damage, it could be considered a necessary repair as we are mandated by the state to maintain the building in perpetuity due to the fact that we now house two columbaria. Also, the locking gate project clearly does not fall within the provisions of the Governor's order.

On a positive note, I completed the Columbarium surround a couple of weeks ago. I was looking forward to calling everyone's attention to it at the next Sunday service but alas, that was the first one to be cancelled. I have

interred two sets of ashes to date, and built a good relationship with Stephen C. Gregory & Son Cremation Service in South Burlington. We are beginning work on creating a professional brochure to promote our Columbarium. Our goal is to have these available at St. Stephen's and placed in all funeral homes and cremation services in the tri-county area. At an appropriate time, we will ask the Addy Indy to do a follow up story now that it is complete.

Peter has reduced the heat settings in the building while it is unoccupied. One of us will be going over periodically to check on the facilities and make sure things are in order. We've also installed a temporary exterior mailbox.

Many of you have recently brought ideas or suggestions to the Facilities Committee regarding the building, and I appreciate every one of them. As we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic, feel free to remind me of your ideas so I can address them at an appropriate time. As always, if any of you have questions or concerns, or just want to chat to feel less isolated, I am available via phone, text or email.

Much love and God's peace, *Tom*

PIANO REFLECIIONS

During this time of social distancing, the arts can feed our souls

Rebecca Mitchell is sharing audio recordings of a trio of her performances.

Installment #1 – “[Les cloches de las Palmas](#)” from Six Etudes, op.111, no.3 (1899) Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) — *click on the title above to reach audio* For Rebecca’s program notes, and images visit: <https://tinyurl.com/Les-cloches-de-las-Palmas>

Outreach Committee News

Grants made in 2020, using Peasant Market 2019 Profits

The Outreach Committee met in February to grant the 2019 Peasant Market profits to applicants seeking financial support. We received requests totaling \$23,100 from 13 organizations. Applications were sent to many organizations, and were also received from organizations who learned of us through ads in the Addison Independent, or by word of mouth.

We had \$15,088 to disburse. \$5,000 was already earmarked for Addison Central Teens as part of a 3-year commitment. The remaining \$10,088 was granted to the following: ACTR, Guatemala Youth Initiative (an Episcopal related organization), Housing Solutions, John Graham Shelter, Mary Johnson Rural Fun Delivery, Midsummer Lunch and Recreation Program, Camp Ubuntu, Open Door Clinic, Rock Point Camp, and ERD.

2019 - Year One of the Commitment to Addison Central Teens:

The Teen Center commitment grew out of a task force recommendation to select fewer programs for greater grants and deeper congregational engagement. This is a pilot program where success has been mixed.

ACT was hoping to offer breakfast before school for those students whose parents went to work too early to provide breakfast for their kids. We were asked to provide and prepare food for after school snacks, and Friday night dinner for LGBTQ kids. Many church members bought and provided food for a while, but the effort, as structured by ACT, was not sustainable.

Ed McGuire and the boatwrights built a boat with some of the teens, which the center raffled off to raise funds. Ed took the kids to visit the Maritime Museum as a special treat.

In year two of this relationship our funding is expected to be used mainly in their meals programs. As we engage in our direct liaison with ACT, we will learn more about their plans.

Other Outreach News:

Last year we began a liaison program with our grantees. Chree Perkins, Sharon Tierra, Jane Reilly, Sharon DeHaven and Barb Wood all spent time with different programs and participated in their activities. If anyone in the congregation is interested, almost all the recipients would be delighted to have volunteers.

Dee Hodges sought volunteers to become Representative Payees working with Housing Solutions. If you are interested in this valuable service, Dee will gladly help you become involved.

We collected socks during Lent for homeless, towels for Camp Agape, provided bags of food for kids qualifying for subsidized school meals at home during Christmas vacation and provided Christmas gifts for needy children delivered by HOPE. These are annual efforts that will continue in 2020. The sock drive is underway now and your participation is appreciated.



Short Doesn't Mean Shallow

from your editor Mike Davis

As Kitty and I have endeavored to assemble a Parishscope appropriate to these trying times, the sharing of good writing – in any format – makes sense. With possibly more time on our hands than normal, those of us who don't already have a stack of books to read might be looking for some enlightened recommendations – and who more enlightened than our own John McWilliams?

About a week ago we approached John for some ideas about writing that would be a quick read, and in some way uplifting. In John's words 'all of these hold out tempered hope in one form or another'. We asked for poetry, short stories, or essays, and what follows is a paraphrase of his response.

'All of these selections are short, highly readable, and inexpensive'. One is even a mini-series, which I found on both Amazon Prime and on Apple TV (HBO). The first are short books, both novel and non-fiction;

- Julian Barnes, *The Sense of an Ending*
- Jill Lepore, *This America: the Case for the Nation*
- Marilynne Robinson, *Gilead*
- Elizabeth Strout, *Olive Kitteridge* (and a sequel, *Olive Again*)



Olive Kitteridge is the mini-series, a four-part presentation on HBO.

Although I don't know how many players are on a poetry 'Dream Team', these three would probably be starters. John recommends Emily Dickinson ('always Emily Dickinson'), Robert Frost, and T. S. Eliot. In the past, at John's recommendation, I have found such authors on poetry websites like poets.org, and there are others that might have a fuller or more diverse collection of each of these authors. By and large, they are free.

As a parting shot John also offered a Wallace Stegner novel, *Crossing to Safety*, at about 370 pages. For you technophiles it is available on all the eBook sites at a very reasonable cost.

As our time in solitary drags on into the future, we will continue to publish Parishscope and share reading recommendations, among other things. Remember to check in on your friends, share good books (*not sure how to sanitize a book but assume there's a YouTube for that*), and keep your spirits up. We will be back shaking hands and hugging before you know it.

From the Stewardship Ministry Team

*We are your stewards, O God.
Guide us with your grace.*

Those words we prayed so often last fall continue to resonate in my mind and heart. We could not have imagined then what we are now called to be and do as God's stewards in the midst of a world pandemic crisis. And, we're all learning what that means with each new day.

Four years ago, dozens of members of the Middlebury community came together at St. Stephen's to share ideas and hopes for protecting our community during the railroad construction project, now about to enter its most intense phase.

Neighbors, Together, a volunteer community action group, was one outgrowth of these energizing and inspiring meetings, and St. Stephen's members are a vital and active part of its present leadership. It's in our interest, of course, because we are at the center of the construction!

I propose that we consider our stewardship of our neighborhood – our community — as one important way we serve as God's stewards in the coming months. The pandemic certainly has accelerated the needs of our neighbors! As you may know, there are many ways to shop and to stay in touch locally, but I offer three critical sites to get connected to if you aren't already.



www.experiencemiddlebury.com/quick-list-business-directory: For an up-to-date list of businesses that are open and what services they are providing (you can also access this at tinyurl.com/udn82zw).

So many of our local businesses are completely refashioning ways we can continue to shop local and stay safe. Think about one of those before you order online from one of the biggies!

www.middleburybridges.org: For Jim Gish's weekly blogs about the construction, road closures or detours, etc. You can also sign up to receive this via email at www.townofmiddlebury.org

www.addisonindependent.com: Our local newspaper is beginning a coronavirus newsletter, delivered to your email inbox with up-to-date information. Initially free to all, though in time there will be a subscription fee if you are not already a subscriber to the paper

It's not easy to believe that simply staying at home is being God's steward, but for most of us right now, it just is. Let's all remember our neighbors as we do so, in prayers, thoughts, through phone calls and emails, and by learning new ways to support our local community. We are indeed your stewards, O God, and we need the guidance of your grace.

Amy Hastings, for the Stewardship Ministry Team



A note from your Treasurer

During this time of uncertainty, I wanted to let you know that as of now, St. Stephen's is in strong condition financially and that we are on target with our year-to-date budget. Of course, that may change as the days and weeks progress. Most of our parish's financial commitments are to payroll and regularly occurring fixed or semi-variable operational expenses. We need your annual giving payments to continue as planned – and thank you for your continued support (as they say on public television). Annemarie requests that you mail checks rather than drop them off. Other options are to use your bank's bill pay or to give on-line via St. Stephen's website: <https://www.ststephensmidd.org/giving/donate-online/>



Most of us don't know how the coronavirus may affect our personal finances. If you find that you cannot meet your annual giving goal, please don't feel guilty or beat yourself up. But please do let Beth Stanway know.

Blessings to each of you. *Be well, Barbara Stratton*

Giving



The needs of our church and all that we support through the ministries of our church are ongoing. A reminder that your gifts to our church may be made:

- By mail: 3 Main Street, Middlebury, 05753
- Online: <https://www.ststephensmidd.org/giving/donate-online/>. The donate form provides a way to designate your gift, e.g., for Giving Goal gifts, select "Annual Fund".
- Online banking/Bill-Pay: please set this up directly with your banking institution

If you have questions or concerns about your giving, please contact our Pledge Secretary, Beth Stanway.

Adult Ed—An invitation to join online sessions with St. Stephen's at 4.



Through the remainder of Lent, Larry will pick back up with the Bible Study on Repentance and Reflection he began Ash Wednesday. The sessions will be held on Tuesday afternoons using the online program Zoom. To join the sessions please use the following link: <https://zoom.us/j/360635588>

The first online session will be Tuesday, March 31 at 4. After a review of earlier sessions to bring everyone up to date, the discussion will focus on Luke 18:9-14. The Adult Ed committee will be exploring other offerings after Lent. If you have suggestions, please let Larry or one of the Adult Ed leaders know.

From the Meditation Group A Poem

Gary Margolis is a member of the meditation group. He writes: Sitting in our Thursday meditation and bringing awareness to our breath—breathing in, breathing out—bringing awareness to our passing thoughts. It is somewhat like following, from line-to-line, in a poem, where the poem is leading us—the reader and the writer.

Letters and Spaces

Think of yourself as living
in someone else's body
if you have to.
If you have to imagine
a path into the woods

ending by the river.
Where a boat's waiting
for you and the you
you walked away from.
Without rancor.

Without regret.
Take any open seat
that doesn't ask
for permission.
Any identification.

Enjoy the pleasure
of not knowing
the names of the birds
and plants, the anonymous
stones. The nameless

fish. The shadows of those
other bodies.
Where the river empties
into the ocean. A sea
of letters and spaces.

Meditation by Zoom Mondays & Thursdays at 4 p.m.



Our parish meditation group has discovered a depth of community in the surprising experience of Meditating on Zoom. You're invited to join us. It's rather simple and straight forward and the delight of being together virtually is profound. It's often said that meditating is the simplest, most difficult thing to do! Simple, because all you do is sit up straight with your eyes gently closed and your hands gently folded on your lap on lying softly on your knees. You breathe normally and repeat a sacred word. Centering Prayer teaches that you choose a sacred word and repeat it when you discover you have wandered from your silence. While Christian Meditation teaches you say your word consistently. You may choose a sacred word yourself or we recommend "Mara natha" which is Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke and means "Come Lord". It is simple because that's it, it is difficult because you will discover that we all get distracted very easily and can very soon feel we are failing very badly at this rather simple exercise. In fact, that's part of the invitation; to experience in the midst of our weakness the unfathomable depth of God's unconditional love for us. Do consider joining us, our time will consist of an opening reading, a 25-minute sit in silence and then a short time of checking in with each other.

Use this Zoom link for all "St. Stephen's at 4" programs: <https://zoom.us/j/360635588>

A New Chapel *by Mike Davis*

Not really new *new*, but with the recent completion of the Columbarium St. Stephen's chapel has taken on a fresh, new look. New paint, new flooring, and intriguing icon art all come together to refresh a popular quiet space in our building. Changes have occurred over time as maintenance needs, heating, and cooling, and sound system upgrades have impacted the space. These most recent changes have made the space feel warmer and more inviting to those seeking a respite from whatever is going on, or to have a (quieter) place to take a little one who is not enjoying the sermon.



Junior Warden and accomplished cabinetmaker Tom Klemmer, along with Sexton Peter Dempewolff, have made the most transformative change, that being the Columbarium wall, purchased from Eickhof Columbaria in Crookston, MN. The main components and granite faces were installed by Eichhof in November of 2018, followed by the custom cherry surround created by Tom. The individual chambers, called niches, can each house two urns of remains, and the granite faces are to be engraved with the names of those resting there, in peace. A few niches have been sold, and urns have already been placed in a couple of them. The Facilities Committee, as always led by the Junior Warden, has plans for finishing the space with a moveable altar, a book of memories containing short bios on the deceased who are interred there, and possibly other finishing touches.

Most recently, examples of icon art have been donated by parishioners Catherine Nichols and Susan and Ben Anderson-Ray. In time the book of memories will also feature an explanatory for each piece of art, pictured here with their donors.



This committee is always looking for motivated parishioners to be part of the 'nuts and bolts' side of maintaining our building, as well as making upgrades that enhance functionality, appearance, and durability. This group is also responsible for the maintenance of the beautiful gardens around the church, the most recent of which is the new bed along the north side. Many of the plant materials there were moved from the south side, where this summer's construction would have damaged or destroyed them. This is a labor of love for an old and deeply meaningful building, one that will continue to serve our future spiritual needs as we endeavor to keep it healthy.

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

by *Linda Horn*

Emily Sunderman says she is feeling hopeful, though zombie tired, at the end of her first full week teaching all her violin lessons via Zoom. She also reports that it is super nice to have **Carter** home from school. They are playing lots of music and ping pong, and thankfully, **Betty**, the dog, is getting them outside. **Michael** is happily entertaining their meal requests and cycling here there and everywhere.

Mary Jane Simpson says **Jack** learned to ski in February (but she and **Michael** still can't ski well enough to take him up the lift).

Clare Groby's big news is that aside from working from home, is that she was officially cleared by ortho as fully recovered from her femur fracture and so no more trips to Dartmouth Hitchcock.

Jessica Hoagland reports that her grandson, **Will Sommer**, of Charlotte, NC, was accepted at the University of Montevallo, Alabama, where he will play lacrosse.

You may know that Vero Beach, Florida is considered "Middlebury South" because there are so many Addison County people who live or visit there for the winter. They report that Middlebury folk wintering in Vero remain steadfast in their clan loyalty, and appreciate the frequent calls to check-in. Communications from St Stephens are timely and welcome.

Beth Stanway's news is that **Suzie Klemmer** is home for the summer (early!) and is hoping to do an English course in June at The Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Stratford Ontario. (Keep your fingers crossed!) Some way, somehow **Jacob Klemmer** will graduate from McGill in June.



Nathaniel McVeigh is mitigating his disappointment at losing out on his first crack at playing on the MUHS ultimate frisbee team. He and his father **Joe McVeigh** play a daily round of frisbee on the relatively untraveled road in front of their Chipman Heights home. Meanwhile, after putting in her time as President of the Ilsley Library Board of Trustees, **Catherine Nichols** has stepped down and **Joe McVeigh** has taken on the role of President. **Catherine** still serves on the board for two more years. They had the sad job of supporting the library director's decision to close the library in the face of the COVID-19 virus. Still lots of eBooks available!

Catherine and husband **Robert Borden** broke off a planned trip to Texas and spent a week at a quiet retreat in North Carolina.

Amy Hastings and **Larry Yarbrough** returned to Middlebury from Alabama earlier than anticipated due to the pandemic. **Amy's** parents are quarantined to their residential community in Montgomery and are doing well. The weeks in Alabama provided good times with family as well as solitude, frequent walks and lots of rain. Lake Martin went from winter levels to a nearly full pool in a matter of days. They are glad to be home and to join everyone else in adjusting to our new reality.

We send our condolences to **Steve Snider**. His dad died in Ohio on March 14th.

Picturing the Word (#3) *By Jennifer Nelson*



Robert Campin and workshop The Merode Altarpiece (or Annunciation Triptych) 1427

It is Lent. I imagine you would have expected a Lenten picture. But March is the month of the Annunciation and I can't pass up a chance to talk about an Annunciation scene!

March is nine months before December, so it is the time when Mary is visited by Gabriel and told she is (or soon will be made) pregnant with God's child. This scene, the Annunciation, was a very popular one among Renaissance artists.

This one was intended as a private devotional object, rather than a church setting. It is in three parts (that is, triptych), a central panel with wings (or doors) on either side. The central panel shows Mary sitting in a domestic interior reading a book. She hasn't yet noticed the angel who is visiting her, nor the tiny naked baby clinging to a cross who is sailing down on light beams toward her. The left panel shows the donor and his wife kneeling and looking into the interior scene through an open door. The right panel is Joseph (who was a woodworker) in his workshop crafting mousetraps, oblivious to the world-changing event happening in the next room.

Almost everything in the picture is a symbol of something. Mary sits on the floor, suggesting her humility. The recently extinguished candle on the table hints that the Holy Spirit is coming or going from the scene. The three lilies on the table in the vase symbolize Mary's purity. The fact that she is holding the book she reads carefully in a white cloth shows her to be educated. She is humble, but not common. The white towel hanging symbolizes Mary's innocence and purity. The clean and empty vessel also refers to Mary—she is a chaste, pure vessel for the Son of God.

There are other things to question. Why the interior domestic setting? Most often Annunciations take place outdoors, often in a walled garden, or on a porch or balcony. Joseph's workshop with its clean and orderly bench and good, well maintained tools. The mousetraps? Lots to think and puzzle over.

The copy deadline for the next Parishscope is
Wednesday, May 13, 2020

Send copy to Kitty Davis, kittychurchstuff@yahoo.com
To submit article ideas or to discuss recent content, talk to Editor Mike
Davis, windmikevt@gmail.com or 802.989.9820
Submit News from the Pews to Linda Horn, lindahorn14@gmail.com

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