



Saint Stephen the Martyr PNCC PARISH NEWSLETTER



20 ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH LANE, READING PA 19607 - NOVEMBER 2024

All Saints Day, Veterans Day, First Communion and Confirmation Services Set

Heading into the holiday season, the month of November gets ushered in with a full-slate of special parish services and activities.

ALL SAINTS SERVICE

Fr. Sr. Donald E. Wunderlich will celebrate Mass commemorating All Saints Day, Friday, November 1 at 7 pm.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

Edgar Aviles will receive his First Holy Communion, Sunday, November 3 at 9:30 am Mass. Please join Edgar, Kenneth and Keila, members of our parish family, as we celebrate this special occasion.

VETERANS SERVICE

A Special Veterans Service and Breakfast will be held Sunday, November 10 in the Fellowship Hall after the 9:30 am Mass.

We are privileged to have Captain Brandon Sweeney, Executive Officer, 2nd Squadron, 104th Cavalry Regiment of the PA National Guards to be our keynote speaker at the breakfast this year.

Capt. Sweeney is headquartered in Reading, PA. He also has oversight of the other state facilities that fall under the unit to include Chambersburg, Hamburg, Easton and Hazelton Readiness Centers.

His awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal (2nd Award), Army Commendation Medal (4th Award), Army Achievement Medal (2nd Award), Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (3rd Award), National Defense Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, and Armed Forces Reserve Medal with M Device.

CPT (P) Sweeney and his wife, Shannon have three children, Bradley, Cole, and Beau and currently reside in Womelsdorf.

The captain will honor us with his address on the subject of Veterans and Veterans Day.

All veterans, members of the parish and their families are invited to attend a special breakfast in the Fellowship Hall after the 9:30 AM Mass. There is no charge for the breakfast. Please sign-up in the vestibule to establish the amount of food to be prepared.

CONFIRMATION SERVICE

Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky will celebrate Confirmation for Scarlett Sadowsky, Sunday, November 17 with a Mass at 9 am. Please show your support by attending this celebration as the Prime Bishop confirms Scarlett, and she receives this blessing of the Holy Spirit. Thank you!

MESSAGE FROM FR. SR. DONALD E. WUNDERLICH



PARISH COMMITTEE REPORTS SEPT.



UPCOMING EVENTS, PRAYER LIST & CALENDAR



News You Can Use!



Celebrating the Sacraments here at St. Stephen's!

The PNCC recognizes seven sacraments. They are: 1) Baptism & Confirmation 2) The Word of God 3) Penance 4) Eucharist 5) Holy Unction (Anointing for Health) 6) Holy Orders and 7) Matrimony.

This month two young members of our parish family will be recipients. Edgar Aviles will receive First Holy Communion (Eucharist) and Scarlett Sadowsky will be Confirmed.

As members of the PNCC, we believe that Christ's body, blood, soul and divinity is completely present under the appearance of the sacred host and wine. We show proper reverence, awe, and belief in Christ's real presence among us.

The Body of Christ in the form of a host is dipped into the Blood of Christ in the form of

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Synod Report, Church Painting & Other News

The Parish Committee held its monthly meeting Sunday, October 20 in the Fellowship Hall. Here are some of the highlights of that meeting:

- ✓ PNCC DIOCESAN SYNOD was held Saturday, Oct. 12 via Zoom. Mike Traczuk gave a report on the Synod and other than reports, most of it centered on the Enlivenment Program. The program will continue until at least 2028. Mike explained that St. Stephen's was ranked fourth of the 33 parishes in the Central Diocese.

Fr. Sr. Don reported that he and Tom Schalata submitted a report detailing our parish's projects since the inception of the Enlivenment Program, and have used about \$52,000 of the funds available to attract new members to the parish.

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Busy Calendar Gets us in Gear for the Holidays!

Heading in to the holiday season, the parish calendar continues to be very active for members of St. Stephen's.

November kick's off with All Saints Mass, Friday, November 1 @ 7 pm.

First Holy Communion (Nov. 3) and Confirmation (Nov. 17) will be held this month, as well.

A Veterans Day Service and breakfast is set for Nov. 10. Please joins us and invite your friends or family, especially veterans to this event.

Thanksgiving leads us into the Advent season and you know the rest of the year just gets busier!

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LOOK!

*Advent Approaches
*Christmas Time

NEXT MONTH

News from the ANS/Ladies' Adoration Society

The Ladies Society for the Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament sponsored two events in October.

The group sold Boscov's Friends Helping Friends Coupons. With a \$5 donation participants received a coupon good for 25% off their purchase at any Boscov's store or online on Tuesday, Oct. 22.

The ANS also held a Make-Your-Own- Sundae on Sunday, October 13. It was a great morning to get together after Mass, and was well-attended.

The next meeting for the society is set for Sunday, Nov. 10 after the 9:30 Mass in the Library. Women of the parish are encouraged to join this very important organization within the parish. See Sally Traczuk or any member for more info!

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Picnic Volunteers, Workers Celebrate Success with Party

POST PICNIC PARTY

It's been 10 weeks since the pierogi and golumpki were dished out, the beer was tapped and the Eddie Foreman Orchestra played it's last polka at our annual picnic, but now it was time to celebrate another successful event.

St. Stephen's held it's post-picnic party Sunday, Oct. 27 in the Fellowship Hall.

As mentioned in previous parish newsletters, while the annual fund-raiser was not without issues, problems and set-backs, the members of the parish, the volunteers and all those who worked that day, managed to push through those bumps in the road. They weathered the storm with a new location, a new way of doing things and a little mis-direction from a local flea market, but in the end, they came through for the good of the parish.

Now, those tireless workers had some time to kick back, have a little fun, eat some good food, and enjoy a little polka music at the same time. About 30 or more of the crew got together for the special celebration.

On the menu that day was plenty to eat including: smoked bbq chicken, beef bbq, shrimp, s/kraut pierogi, kielbasa and kraut, macaroni salad, pasta salad, baked beans, ice cream, cakes and cookies, and other snacks and delicious desserts!

**St. Stephen's Picnic
2025 Info:**
DATE: Sat. 8/9/25
TIME: Noon to 6 pm
Place: Willow Glen Park
Sinking Spring, PA

From the St. Stephen the Martyr Photo Album



(ABOVE & LEFT)
ANS SUNDAY
"MAKE YOUR OWN
SUNDAE"
EVENT WAS A
BIG HIT ON
SUNDAY, OCT. 13!

MESSAGE
FROM FR. SR.
DONALD E.
WUNDERLICH



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wine and is placed on the recipients tongue.

In the Prime Bishop's blog in July of this year, he notes, "For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." (John 6:32-33) We are reminded that in a very special way we also can receive Christ Himself when we gather for the reception of Holy Communion. In receiving the Holy Eucharist, we receive the same Christ Who died on the Cross for the forgiveness of our sins and rose from the dead to bring us new and everlasting life."

The Prime Bishop also noted that the miracle of the loaves and fishes was one of Jesus' first at providing the bread of life to His followers.

Baptism and Confirmation are included as one sacrament since Confirmation is the completion of baptism.

These are the sacraments that initiate us into the life of the church. Baptism makes us a part of Christ's Church. Confirmation strengthens our faith and gives us the courage necessary to defend Christ in the face of the world.

At Baptism the Priest, and the child's sponsors recite the Apostles Creed as they approach the Baptismal Font. It is a public declaration of faith on behalf of the child that is about to be Baptized.

At Confirmation, the confirmand recites the Apostles Creed as part of their public 'Declaration of the Confirmed.'

Every Sunday, we as a congregation, recite the Nicene Creed as a public declaration of our personal faith, beginning with "I believe."

I hope you join on these very special days for each of these young members of our Christian Community, as they celebrate their important journey following of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. God Bless!

Fr. Sr. Don



PARISH
Committee
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ONE

✓ **WOODPECKER REPAIR PROJECT:** Kevin Grossman reported that most of the repair work and painting of the stucco on the rectory and church building are complete. He noted that the birds have created new holes in the wall since the painting, but was optimistic that once a second coat of the repellent paint applied and it dried, the issue would resolve itself. He also hoped the woodpeckers would be discouraged from repeating the process in time.

✓ **ALTAR REPAIR COMMITTEE** is still on hold.

✓ **CEMETERY NEWS:** Kevin reported that the grave opening charge for cremation burials should be increased to be in line with other burial services.

The committee passed a motion to increase the cremation charge to half of that of a standard grave opening. Currently, the standard is \$800, which would result in cremation internment charge of \$400.

In a related matter, the committee also confirmed that grave lots can only be purchased by parish members. Anyone wishing to purchase lots must be vested members of the parish for three years.

Interested individuals can, however, pay the \$235

per year minimum donation for three years (or \$705) plus the \$1,000/lot, at one time.

✓ **RECTORY REPAIRS:** Kevin Grossman will look into the issue with the leaking trap in the bathroom.

✓ **WATER FILTER ISSUES:** It was reported that there are still issues with brown water in the kitchen sink and in several restrooms. The parish committee approved a motion to have the water filter company and/or a plumber to assess the situation to determine if the problem stems from the filter system, the well or the plumbing itself. It was also suggested that six of the toilets in the church building should be replaced as part of the project. Raised seats meeting township codes and pressure flushing units are needed, as well. Once the issues at-hand, the recommended solution and costs are established, the committee will submit a proposal and budget estimate for the Annual Parish Meeting in 2025.

✓ **HALL RENTAL REQUEST:** Janet Katinowsky brought a matter before the committee that a local home-schooling parents' association requested to rent the Fellowship Hall for a weekday craft show, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 11am-4pm. The motion passed to allow the rental pending a minimum donation and other details to be submitted by the group.

PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING: The next Parish Committee Meeting will be held on Sunday, November 24 at 11 AM in the Fellowship Hall.



ANGEL TREE IS BACK AGAIN

The St. Stephen's traditional "Angel Tree" which features gift donations for local Senior Citizens will be back again this year. This is a special program set up by the Berks Co. Office of Aging. More information will be announced in the weekly bulletin. Watch for details.

NEW FEATURE...GRAPEVINE!

The St. Stephen's Monthly Newsletter is always looking for new features and stories. Check-out below "Parishioner News & Notes from the Grapevine." If you know someone who could use a note, or someone celebrating a birthday or anniversary or other milestone, please let us know, so we can include it. Also, we need ideas for our regular Parishioner "Spotlight feature." Inform Tom Schalata of your ideas. Thank you!

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

When "News You Can Use" was started earlier this year we hoped to have some workshops on tax help, restaurant reviews, prescription plans, etc. Let us know what info YOU can USE! Please let Tom Schalata know.

Thanksgiving: a Time to Give Thanks!

If nothing else, Thanksgiving is a time to eat a variety of dishes we rarely enjoy the rest of the year. Do you agree?

It all starts with that delicious roasted turkey and accompanied by a multitude of menu items such as: stuffing (or dressing, if you prefer), yams, cranberries, squash, gravy, pumpkin pie, and other traditional veggies, etc.

Did you know that 90 percent of Americans eat turkey on the holiday in one form or another?

In 1621, the Plymouth colonists from England shared an autumn harvest feast with the Native American Wampanoag people.

The Pilgrims celebrated at Plymouth for three days after that first harvest in 1621. The exact time is unknown, but James Baker, the Plimouth Plantation vice president of research, stated in 1996, "The event occurred between Sept. 21 and Nov. 11, 1621, with the most likely time being around Michaelmas (Sept. 29), the traditional time."

Did you know that Virginia claims to have celebrated their own Thanksgiving in 1619, not for a bountiful harvest, but for safely setting foot on shore in the Americas?

Seventeenth-century accounts do not identify the Plymouth celebration as a Thanksgiving observance, rather it followed the harvest. It included 50 people who were on the Mayflower (all who remained of the 100 who had landed) and 90 Native Americans.

Did you also know that lobster and swan were on the menu in 1621? Other dishes likely prepared for that first celebration would have been: wild turkey, fish, eels, shellfish, and a Wampanoag dish called nasaump, which the Pilgrims had adopted: boiled cornmeal mixed with vegetables and meats.

The feast was celebrated for two centuries but

Abraham Lincoln proclaimed Thanksgiving as a National Holiday, in November 1863.

You may familiar with the tradition that the president of the United States has "pardoned" one or two Thanksgiving turkeys each year, sparing the birds from slaughter and sending them to a farm for retirement.

Parades have also become an integral part of the holiday in cities and towns across the United States. Presented by Macy's department store since 1924, New York City's Thanksgiving Day Parade is the largest and most famous.

Sources say that the annual the parade typically attracts 2-3 million spectators along the 2.5 mile route. Happy Lobster Day? Happy Nasaump Day? Or do prefer Turkey Day?



NEWS FROM THE Y.M.S. OF R. - MEN'S GROUP

The Y.M.S. of R. met Sunday, Oct. 13 and voted to transfer \$15,000 of the proceeds from the annual parish picnic, held on August 11, to the general fund of the parish.

The world famous semi-annual Egg Sandwich Sale of the YMS of R will be held Sunday, December 15 after each Mass. Penitential Service will be on Sat., Dec. 14.

The men's group also sponsored the Post-Picnic Party, Sunday, October 27 and the Veterans Breakfast, set for Sunday, Nov. 10. All men are welcome to join the group.

Parishioner News & Notes from the Grapevine:

Joe Faranda is recovering from recent surgery. Wish him well when you see him, or drop him a card. Address: 11 Scotland Drive, Reading, PA 19606.

TOM SCHALATA will be giving two lectures on his book, "The Bloody Bucket," at Keystone Villa in Douglassville on Veterans Day, November 11.

The presentation at the Personal Care facility will be at 10

am in the Activity Room and the Independent Living session will be at 1 pm in the Community Room. Both are located on Ben Franklin Hwy E. (Rt. 422) See Tom for details.

**If you know of anyone in the parish that could use a friendly note of cheer or have news we should know about, please let us know. We'll share it with the rest of our St. Stephen's family. Just like any other family would do!*

✓ SPECIAL NOTE ON THE PARISH FINANCES

The Y.M.S. of R. recently donated \$15,000 from the picnic proceeds to the general fund.

However, remember, if you are financially able, please continue to add to your weekly, monthly etc. contributions. Your donations to the general fund goes toward your Annual Vested Membership records. It is still incumbent of the parish to replace those funds

from the elimination of annual dues. These funds are needed to keep pace with the everyday expenses of running the parish, plus our mandated obligation with the main PNCC church.

As reflected in this year's major painting project and the anticipated water repairs in 2025, the building fund will still require capital to complete these much needed projects. The committee's goal is to oversee the expenses in a conscientious manner.

Thank you for your support!



Upcoming EVENTS

Meetings

✓ **Y.M.S. OF R.** (Men's Group)

To be announced if necessary

✓ **ANS : LADIES ADORATION SOC.**

Sunday, Nov. 10 after the 9:30 Mass

PICNIC COMMITTEE

Nothing Scheduled

✓ **PARISH COMMITTEE.**

Sun., Nov. 24, 11am in the Hall

✓ **MISSION COMMISSION**

None Scheduled

BOOK CLUB

✓ To Be Announced. "Jesus Behaving Badly," by Mark Strauss

✓ **UKRAINIAN RELIEF**

To be Announced in the future

SUNDAY MASSES

Sun. Nov. 3, 10, 24 @ 8 & 9:30 am

Sun. Nov. 17 (1 Mass) @ 9 am

*unless otherwise noted!

*Please refer to the weekly bulletin for new announcements, changes in dates, times, etc. Thank you for your cooperation!

Events/Activities

✓ **VETERANS BREAKFAST**

Sunday, Nov. 10 @ 10:45am

Veterans Breakfast in Fellowship Hall - All veterans, St. Stephen's Parish Members and their families are invited to a FREE breakfast following the 9:30 am Mass. Please join us in honoring those who served our country!

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT MONTH

● Saturday, Dec. 14 - Penitential Devotions

● Sunday, Dec. 15 - YMS of R semi-annual Egg Sandwich Sale after each Mass in the Fellowship Hall. Cost \$5.00 each

● Sunday, Dec. 15 @ 11 am Parish Committee Meeting (following the Egg Sandwich Sale)

PARISH ORGANIZATIONS & CONTACTS

The following parish organizations are always seeking new members to assist with projects and to offer new ideas. These include:

Altar Flowers Donations

Carole Urban

The ANS (Ladies' Adoration Society)

St. Stephen's Book Club & Mission

Commission: *Sally Traczuk*

Bishop Hodur Choir:

Cheryl Heckman

Financial Sec.: *Lynn Dowd*

Knight's Closet Reading HS Program

Sally Traczuk & Janet Katinowsky

Picnic/Fund-Raising

Committee: *Jay Rowe*

School of Christian Living:

Janet Katinowsky

Special Mass Intentions & Memorial Contributions

Fr. Sr. Donald

Ukrainian Relief

Donations & Newsletter

Tom Schalata

YMS of R (Men's Group):

Fran Golembeski

PARISH INFO & RESOURCES

The Very Rev. Donald E. Wunderlich

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PARISH COMMITTEE:

Tom Schalata 610-780-5035

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FIND US ON FACEBOOK:

www.facebook.com/ststephenspncc

MASS SCHEDULE:

8 AM & 9:30 AM *Unless noted



Please remember all those on our prayer list. Check the Weekly bulletin or the St. Stephen's website for an updated list. Please let Fr. Sr. Donald know if any additions or deletions are needed for the list. Your devotion to prayer is a valuable tool for those in need! Thank you!

November 2024 - Calendar of Events & Special

Sunday Donuts Downstairs ARE Back!	Tune in each month to THE POLISH AMERICAN CONNECTION with Tom Gajewski on BCTV on First Tuesday of Month - 7:30 pm; First Wed. after First Tues. - 7:30 pm; First Fri. after First Tues. - 1:30 pm; First Mon. after First Tues. - 10:30 am, & Second Tues. - 3:30 pm on Comcast Reading Channel 15, Comcast Southern Berks CH. 965, Service Electric CH. 19 & Streaming on youtube channel!						1 All Saints Mass 7:00 PM	2 All Saints' Day						
Sunday Masses 8 & 9:30 AM First Communion Edgar Aviles All Souls Remembrance	3	4	5	6	7	8	9							
Sunday Masses 8 & 9:30 AM Veterans Breakfast in Fellowship Hall ANS Meeting Library	10	11	12	13	14	15	16							
ATTENTION ALL VETERANS & FAMILIES... Please make every effort to attend this year's VETERANS PROGRAM & BREAKFAST, Sun., Nov. 10. Special Guest Speaker!!!!								17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Sunday Mass 9:00 AM Confirmation Scarlett Sadowsky	17	18	19	20	21	22	23							
Sunday Masses 8 & 9:30 AM Parish Committee Meeting @ 11:00 AM in Fellowship Hall	24	25	26	27	28	29	30							
SAVE THIS CALENDAR Put it on Your Fridge !!!				4	Thanksgiving greetings.									