

St. Stephen's Parish Weekend at Shrine Mont

Friday, June 24-Sunday, June 26, 2016



All Things Bright and Beautiful *Celebrating Joy in God's Creation* *Reclaiming Original Blessing*

We live in a busy and polarized world. Our lives are crammed full of things to do, tasks to complete, and places to go. Sometimes we miss each other and the joy that comes from simply being present to the gifts we have to offer. Even when we observe the Sabbath at St. Stephen's, it can be challenging to pause and deeply appreciate the bright and beautiful ways we are made.

Rabbi Abraham Heschel said, "Just to be is a blessing. Just to live is holy." Just to be, seeking and finding God in all things, loving God in all things and all things in God, means celebrating each other and all of God's creation. Celebrating joy and realizing God's original blessing for us-to know and experience that we are made "good"-is both challenging and an essential part of our life together. Once we locate ourselves within God's blessings for us, can we separate God from what God loves so much, the world? Can we respond to God's love without this response being expressed in the care of all God's creation?

Weston Mathews will guide us as we explore scripture, tradition, and our experience of celebrating joy in God's creation and reclaiming our original blessing. Sarah-Keel Crews and Jan Locher will lead programs for children and youth. Saturday's session will conclude with an intergenerational "Holy Hike" around Shrine Mont embody elements of our Celtic service.

St. Stephen's Parish Weekend at Shrine Mont

Orkney Springs, Virginia

June 24-26, 2016

Registration deadline: May 20

What is Shrine Mont?

Shrine Mont is the home of the Cathedral Shrine of the Transfiguration—the cathedral of the Diocese of Virginia. It is “a place where people give thanks to God for his creation — from the beauty of the streams, flowers and wildlife which are at home here, to the people who come to this place to celebrate being part of the family of God,” as beautifully stated on Shrine Mont's Web site, www.shrinemont.com. St. Stephen's annual parish weekend at Shrine Mont is designed to bring us together in different forms of fellowship in this lovely setting.

Shrine Mont is in the mountains of northwestern Virginia and is located at an elevation of about 1,600 feet. It is surrounded by other hills and mountains that reach nearly 3,000 feet above sea level. There you will find wildlife, fresh air, blue skies, springs, and friendly people. As one can imagine, the environment is much different from Richmond with its elevation less than 200 feet above sea level.

The property features a spring-fed swimming pool; hiking trails for various skill levels; tennis courts; large fields for soccer, volleyball, softball, etc.; and plenty of porches with rocking chairs.

Who should come to Shrine Mont?



Shrine Mont is a special place for all people—individuals, couples and families. It is a restful place apart from the hustle and bustle of daily life. Once you arrive, everything is taken care of, and you can do as much or as little as you desire. Activities are organized for Friday night, after dinner, and Saturday morning. After lunch Saturday, various leisure activities are available: hikes, tennis, swimming, reading, napping, conversation. Saturday evening activities bring everyone together. Our Sunday morning worship service is held at the outdoor cathedral, a natural setting where God's presence can easily be felt.

Those who experience Shrine Mont enjoy treasured memories. With a church the size of St. Stephen's, attending the parish weekend at Shrine Mont helps both new people and longtime members connect and reconnect, forming relationships that last.

What to bring

Bug repellent is a good idea. Also consider guitars or other musical instruments, alarm clocks, flashlights, rain gear, fishing poles, cameras, puzzles, a sweater or sweatshirt (it might be cool), hiking boots, walking shoes, casual clothing, outdoor games, etc. There are no locks on the doors, so valuables either should be stashed in cars or left at home.

You might want to bring a fan, as there is no central AC. Sheets and towels are provided; you may want to bring extra towels and/or an extra pillow for your bed. Cell phone coverage is not good; there is one spot overlooking a playing field that sometimes yields service. WiFi Internet can be accessed in the Virginia House (“the hotel”), but we encourage you to leave electronic devices in the trunk of your car!

Although Shrine Mont is a generally “sleepy” place compared to Richmond and is a wonderful place for children, it is not child-proof. We love having children at Shrine Mont and we want them to be safe. There are ponds, pools, stairs, high balconies, forests, snakes, spiders, and cars—so every child **must** be accompanied by a parent or other adult who will be responsible for him or her.



What **not** to bring

Shrine Mont does not allow pets, nor does it allow smoking in its buildings or on porches. Skateboards, scooters, and roller blades are to be left at home. Plan to leave electronics, such as iPads, mobile phones and video games, in your car.

Questions?

If you have questions about the parish weekend, please contact Weston Mathews or Sarah-Keel Crews in the parish office, or Ben Emerson or Andy Luke of the Shrine Mont project team.

What people say about St. Stephen's Parish Weekend at Shrine Mont



“The spiritual component of the parish weekend makes it easier for me to establish a relationship with people who I may not have known before and it enables me to get to understand a little better those I already know.”

“I love the free time and not having to be responsible for preparing meals, cleaning up, etc. Everyone in my group loved the atmosphere of the place and being able to talk to people that we only briefly see at church.”

“I enjoy some of the smaller groups where discussions are held. Any opportunity to meet other parishioners and get to know them is wonderful.”

“We love lots of ‘down time’ and time to just enjoy the beauty of Shrine Mont. It is an opportunity for us as a family to put away our phones and our computers and our other ‘stuff’ and just be together.”

“We talk about Shrine Mont throughout the year. We look forward to the bonfire, hayride, children’s activities and games on the lawn!”

Registration and costs are on page 4.

At Shrine Mont, people are more important than things; cell phones don’t work too well; the beauty of God’s creation beckons our full attention; delicious meals are shared family style; and we have the gift of time and space for simply being—with ourselves, with one another, and with God. It’s the perfect setting for a weekend retreat to consider ways to practice stillness in our daily lives.

Registration and costs

Registration, including payment, is due by May 20. Online registration is preferred; go to www.saintstephensrichmond.net/shrinemont. If you are unable to register online, please use the registration form below, and return with your payment by mailing to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 6000 Grove Avenue, Richmond, VA 23226, or dropping it in any of the black boxes found on the tables in the parish house at church. Some scholarship assistance is available; please contact Mary Sulerud.

Shrine Mont accommodates a number of parish weekends so there is a limit on the number of rooms available to us—don't delay! Should sufficient space not be available for all, it will be allocated to registrants in the order of receipt of registration forms and payments. Any who cannot be accommodated will be placed on a waiting list.

Costs for the weekend, including two nights' lodging and six meals (Friday dinner to Sunday lunch), are:

Adult (age 13 and up) \$175.00 per person double occupancy
Adult (age 13 and up) \$195.00 per person single occupancy *if available*
Children 4-12 years of age: \$ 65.00 per person
Children 3 and under: no charge



Special offer for young adults! The first 10 young adults (age 35 or under) who register may do so for the discounted rate of \$100 per person (double occupancy). If single occupancy is available, you may request it and pay \$125. Please check the box on the form indicating you are a young adult.

Sign me up! | St. Stephen's Parish Weekend at Shrine Mont
Registration, including payment, is due by May 20, 2016.

Is this your first time at Shrine Mont? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Register online at www.ststephensrva.org/shrinemont (or scan the code above with your mobile device or smart phone). *If you're not able to register online, please use this form and return it with your check to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 6000 Grove Avenue, Richmond, VA 23226.*

Adult Name(s) _____

Additional family members attending with you (please list age for each child)

Total number of adults _____ @ \$175 per person = \$_____ (double occupancy)
Total number of adults _____ @ \$195 per person = \$_____ (single occupancy, if available)
Total children ages 4-12 _____ @ \$ 65 per child = \$_____
Total children age 3 and under _____ (no charge)
Donation to help sponsor someone else \$_____

Total amount enclosed: \$

- ☐ I am a young adult (age 35 or younger).
☐ I would like to speak with someone about scholarship assistance.
☐ I am willing to serve as a volunteer during the weekend.



YOUNG ADULT
REGISTRATION

Contact information | Home Phone: _____ Cell or other phone: _____

Mailing address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email address _____