

# the SPIRIT

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2024 | THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

## Three-part series in Sunday Forum wraps up today

TODAY AT 10:10 A.M.

No images capture our religious hopes and fears more than heaven and hell, and no contrasts offer a more energetic basis for discussions of faith. But where do the themes of heaven and hell come from and why do they touch us so deeply? What truth do they hold for us as followers of Christ? If you missed either of the previous presentations in this series (one with the Rev. Dr. Sam Adams speaking about scriptural references to heaven and hell, and another of Prof. Gardner Campbell presenting images from literature) you can watch them at [ststephensRVA.org/video](https://ststephensRVA.org/video).

Today we wrap up with "Getting Saved in American Religion." The Rev. Bill Sachs, associate rector, will draw together the themes we have discussed and his focus will be on what "salvation" means for American Christians now. Does being a Christian center on going to heaven rather than being condemned to hell? The influence of evangelical religion has stamped faith and life for millions of people. What might this mean for us as Episcopalians today? Must we think in terms of heaven and hell to define who we are? Bill's presentation will bring this series home. Join us in the fellowship hall.

## Coming soon: familiar faces during a celebration of women in the priesthood

FRIDAY, APRIL 26-SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2024

Next weekend St. Stephen's Church will mark the 50th anniversary of the first ordinations of women as Episcopal priests with special activities that welcome back women who have served St. Stephen's Church in the past: **the Rev. Margaret Austin, the Rev. Weezie Blanchard, the Rev. Claudia Merritt, and the Rev. Penny Nash.**

On July 29, 1974, eleven female Episcopal deacons became the first to be ordained as priests in the Episcopal Church. The service, which took place at the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia, was the culmination of a prolonged effort to break the "stained-glass ceiling," and this summer marks the 50th anniversary of that historic event. These ordinations were considered "irregular" since the General Convention of the Episcopal Church had not yet opened the priesthood to women, but these women—who came to be known as the "Philadelphia Eleven"—and the retired bishops who ordained them helped lead the way for the convention to open the priesthood and episcopate to women two years later.

Our weekend-long celebration will include the screening of a documentary about the Philadelphia Eleven on Friday evening, a morning retreat and lunch for women on Saturday; and guest preachers and speakers on Sunday. In addition to Margaret, Weezie, Claudia, and Penny, our events will include **the Rev. Cate Anthony**, associate rector, and **the Rev. Whitney Edwards**, vicar of Varina Church and a former chaplain at St. Christopher's School.

All events are free, but advance registration is needed. For details, pick up a flyer at Information Central outside the church office, or visit [ststephensRVA.org/womens-ordination](https://ststephensRVA.org/womens-ordination).

## Newcomer reception this Thursday: you're invited

THURSDAY, APRIL 25 | 5:30-7:00 P.M.

The rector and staff of St. Stephen's host periodic receptions for those who are new to this community of faith, and the definition of "new" is up to you. If you've recently joined St. Stephen's, or you have been away for a season, or you have visited but have not yet decided whether to make this your church home, please come to the next reception, to be held this Thursday. RSVP at [ststephensRVA.org/newcomers](https://ststephensRVA.org/newcomers).

## Are you new to St. Stephen's? Visiting?

We'd love to welcome you personally. It helps us get to know you better if you fill out a visitor card. If you prefer to do this digitally (or there's no visitor card near your seat), just scan the code and take it from there. If you take this newsletter home (we hope you will!) you can scan the code and complete the form later.







## Help our farmers market get to first place

Did you know that the Farmers Market @ St. Stephen's was voted the #2 best market in the city by readers of Richmond Magazine last year? Voting time has come again, and you can vote for St. Stephen's as your favorite market by scanning this QR code and going to question 181. Help us make it to #1!



## Rebuilding Together Richmond is this Saturday

SATURDAY, APRIL 27 | 7:30 A.M.-5 P.M.

Take part in an annual opportunity to make repairs to ensure that everyone in Richmond has access to safe and healthy homes. You do not need to be skilled in home repairs to participate—but if you are, please let us know! The team will meet outside the Café @ St. Stephen's at 7:30 on Saturday morning to caravan to the work site together. Lunch will be provided. Bring a water bottle and wear sturdy shoes. Contact Anna Jones to sign up or ask questions, [ajones@ststephensRVA.org](mailto:ajones@ststephensRVA.org).



## Quarterly Ministry Night: all are welcome

THURSDAY, MAY 2 | 5:15 P.M.

Once a quarter, the standing committees of St. Stephen's vestry gather in the fellowship hall for supper, fellowship, and to hear from parish leaders about what's ahead. Then the committees move to individual meetings to plan for the ministries they coordinate. Quarterly Ministry Night is a great way to meet others whose interests are similar to yours, and to find out how to be involved in specific areas of ministry. Supper is donation-based. We ask you to let us know if you plan to come simply to ensure that we prepare enough food for the meal. Go to [ststephensRVA.org/ministry-nights](http://ststephensRVA.org/ministry-nights) to learn more about these ministry nights, the standing committees of the vestry, and how to sign up to participate.

## Sunday offerings for young adults

This spring, young adults are invited to get together twice a month on a schedule alternating between morning and evening gatherings. No registration is needed; come when you can. The next opportunity is Sunday, May 5, between the 9 and 11:15 a.m. services.



## Bishop Stevenson visits May 5

Each year St. Stephen's Church receives a visit from one of our bishops. This year the Rt. Rev. Mark Stevenson, our diocesan bishop, will visit on Sunday, May 5, to preach and celebrate the Eucharist at the 9 and 11:15 a.m. services, and to confirm, receive, or reaffirm adults and youth. This will be a moving celebration. Join us!

## Spring music gala: 'A Musical Bouquet'

FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 17

We had such a wonderful time at the first spring music gala last year that we're doing it again! The concert features the many talents of St. Stephen's wonderful staff singers in ways we don't normally get to experience in worship. This year's spring-themed program, "A Musical Bouquet," includes music both serious and fun across a variety of genres. The evening begins with a reception outside Palmer Hall at 5:30 p.m., which will provide an opportunity to register for the silent auction and peruse its offerings. The 6 p.m. concert is followed by a festive supper in the courtyard. All proceeds from the evening support the upcoming choir pilgrimage to England. Tickets are available at [ststephensRVA.org/spring-gala](http://ststephensRVA.org/spring-gala). If you would like to donate an item for the auction, please contact Brent te Velde, [btevelde@ststephensRVA.org](mailto:btevelde@ststephensRVA.org).



## Ways to stay in touch

The very best way to know what's happening at St. Stephen's and how to connect is to sign up for one or more of our email newsletters; scan this QR code to do that. We will never give your email address to any outside party and you may unsubscribe at any time. All of these newsletters are free and are available to everyone, not just to members. And please take the newsletter you're reading, the **Spirit**, home with you.



## Support Dogwood at Blossom Bash

MAY 9 | TICKETS ON SALE NOW

The halls of St. Stephen's have been filled with joy this year as we welcomed Dogwood Preschool to our church and community. On May 9, Dogwood will host its annual fundraiser, Blossom Bash, in St. Stephen's courtyard. This adults-only event features live music, food from FiftyOne Pizza, and a fabulous silent auction.

This year, Dogwood is fundraising to fulfill student financial aid requests, support teacher and staff compensation, and—of particular importance to our congregation—to improve the playground. You can show your support by participating in this wonderful event. Tickets are available at <https://givebutter.com/c/blossombash2024>.

## Events for graduating seniors and families

SACRED PAUSE: APRIL 30 | 6-7:30 P.M.

SENIOR RECOGNITION: MAY 5 | 9 AND 11:15 A.M. SERVICES

We are excited to offer two events to celebrate and honor our graduating high school seniors. **Sacred Pause** provides a unique and intimate way for families to share this sacred moment before the crunch of exams, graduation gatherings, and parties. **High school seniors will be specially recognized**, presented with gifts, and formally blessed by the congregation at both the 9 and 11:15 a.m. liturgies in the main church on **May 5**. For more information and to register for these events, visit [ststephensRVA.org/seniors](https://ststephensRVA.org/seniors). Questions: Caroline Harris, [charris@ststephensRVA.org](mailto:charris@ststephensRVA.org).

## St. Stephen's youth going to Kings Dominion

SATURDAY, MAY 11 | 10:30 A.M.-4:30 P.M.

We're headed to Kings Dominion for the last youth group gathering of the school year. We will meet at St. Stephen's at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 11, and will be back at the church at 4:30 p.m. Registration is open now and closes May 6, or when we reach our capacity of 30, whichever comes first; the form is linked on the youth page of our website, [ststephensRVA.org/youth](https://ststephensRVA.org/youth). Tickets are \$60 per person and include admission to the park and a meal. Financial support is available; if needed, please contact Caroline Harris, [charris@ststephensRVA.org](mailto:charris@ststephensRVA.org), to make arrangements.

## Vacation Bible School: register now!

JULY 21-AUGUST 1 | 9 A.M.-NOON

We're making plans for this summer's Vacation Bible School, focusing on the theme "Seekers in Sneakers: Discover Jesus." This journey of discovery has many twists and turns which will give children the opportunity to grow through asking questions, working together, shining their light in the world, gaining insight from the Bible, and trusting Jesus.

When you register your child, please indicate how you will support VBS as a volunteer. We need plenty of adults to help during the week. There are also opportunities for parents who

work outside the home during the day to support VBS in other ways; you'll find those on the registration form as well.

VBS is also supported by youth volunteers and many adults of all ages in our parish (not just parents). VBS is truly an inter-generational undertaking. If you are a young person or adult who is not registering a child, you can indicate your interest in volunteering using a different form.

VBS at St. Stephen's is for children age 3 (potty trained) through grade 5. Registration closes May 19 (or sooner, if we reach capacity). The cost is \$50 for one child and \$25 for each additional child in the same family, with a family cap of \$100.

Registration for children and the volunteer form are both linked at [ststephensRVA.org/VBS](https://ststephensRVA.org/VBS).

## Dogwood staff openings for 2024-25

Dogwood Preschool at St. Stephen's Church is looking for your help. After a successful start in our new space, we are planning ahead for 2024-25 school year. We will need **lead teachers, assistant teachers, and substitute teachers** as we continue to grow.

We serve children from 16 months old to 5 years-plus. Our goal is to nurture a child's creativity and self-confidence using a dynamic, age-appropriate curriculum in small classes. We are a half-day program. We have positions ranging from two days a week to five days a week. If you are interested in joining our team, contact Elizabeth Sykes at 804.665.4902 or [programdirector@dogwoodpreschool.org](mailto:programdirector@dogwoodpreschool.org).

## Shrine Mont waiting list available

RETREAT DATES: FRIDAY, JUNE 26 TO SUNDAY, JUNE 28

The annual parish weekend at Shrine Mont, our diocesan retreat center and camp, has filled up more quickly than usual, and we've started a waiting list. If you would like to attend, visit [ststephensRVA.org/shrine-mont](https://ststephensRVA.org/shrine-mont) for details and a link to the waiting list. The weekend will offer ways to re-engage our values, relationships, and conversations with God, and planned activities are balanced with time for rest, relaxation, and recreation.

## Coffee, tea, free wifi, and art

TUESDAY-FRIDAY, 7 A.M.-11 A.M. | SATURDAY, 7 A.M.-NOON

The Café @ St. Stephen's is the perfect place to warm up on a chilly morning, and if the weather is balmy, you can enjoy our outdoor seating. Locally-roasted Rostov's coffee is freshly brewed, a variety of teas is available, and our baristas can make the full range of espresso drinks. Bagels, muffins, and other morning fare are also available. Enjoy the friendly, relaxed atmosphere, free wifi, and ever-changing art exhibits.

## Needed for the food ministry this week

- canned tuna and boxed cereal for the pantry ministry
- apples, oranges and bananas for the fresh fruit ministry
- grocery bags with handles

Thank you!







## Parish Staff

To reach a staff member, call 804.288.2867 or send an email using the initial and name provided in parentheses, with [@ststephensRVA.org](mailto:@ststephensRVA.org). The number for May Fair House is 804.282.3004; the Café can be reached at 804.288.3318.

Betsy Anderson, *May Fair House Manager*

The Rev. Cate Anthony (canthony), *Associate Rector*

Kitty Ball (kball), *Office Coordinator*

Sarah R. Bartenstein (sbartenstein), *Director of Communication*

Larry Bidwell (lbidwell), *Facilities Manager*

Omar Catedral (ocatedral), *Sexton*

Diana Chou (dchou), *Associate Director of Music*

Matt Depaolis (mdepaolis), *May Fair House Cook Teams Coordinator*

Chris Edwards (cedwards), *Director, St. Stephen's Choir*

Mary Feldman (mfeldman), *Executive Assistant to the Rector and Vicar*

Dillon Gwaltney (dgwaltney), *Communications Associate/Video Producer*

Claire Hackley (chackley), *Parish Suppers Coordinator*

Caroline Harris (charris), *Youth Ministry Coordinator*

Ian Hayes, *Barista*

Chris Holman (cholman), *Sexton*

Jack Hotchkiss (jhotchkiss), *Sexton*

The Rev. John Jenkins (jjenkins), *Associate Rector*

Anna F. Jones (ajones), *Farmers Market Manager and Outreach Ministry*

Wondell Kareem (wkareem), *Sexton*

The Rev. Abby Kocher (akocher), *Director of Children's Ministry*

Susan McNamara (smcnamara), *Finance and Administrative Assistant*

Robin Raver (rraver), *Café Manager*

The Rev. John D. Rohrs (jrohrs), *Rector*

Thatch Rudolph, *Barista*

The Rev. William L. Sachs (bsachs), *Associate Rector*

Fred Staley (fstaley), *Executive Director of Church Operations*

The Rev. William S. Stanley (wstanley), *Vicar*

Brent te Velde (btevelde), *Director of Music*

### *Our Missionaries*

Heidi Schmidt and Monica Vega, *serving in Argentina*

## Vestry

### **Serving until 2/2025**

Jeff Johnson, *Junior Warden*

Andy Luke

Brenda McDowell

Anne Pinion, *Senior Warden*

Whitney van der Hyde,

*Register*

### **Serving until 2/2026**

Robert Birdsey

Kathy Brock

John Crowder

May Fox

Mary Ashburn Pearson

Christopher Smith, *Treasurer*

### **Serving until 2/2027**

Bill Davis

Katherine Farley

Greta Kidd

Nan O'Connell

Gayle Royals

Randy Seibert

