



THE WITNESS

St. Stephen's Church Newsletter

Volume 40, Issue 9 & 10
The Rev. Mark Bradford, Pastor

September-October 2026
Church Phone (405) 843-5333

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In my article in the July/August *Witness* I mentioned that the Navigators in their discipleship ministry teach five assurances to new believers. We looked at the first assurance, the assurance of salvation, in the last *Witness*. Today I would like us to look at the second assurance, the assurance of answered prayer.

One of Satan's first attacks on new believers is to cause them to question their salvation. Another of Satan's attacks is to cause us to question the effectiveness of our prayers. Have either of these thoughts ever arisen in your mind? "Is God really interested in me?" "God is far away and is concerned about more important things." I have often thought about how insignificant I am as just one of 8.3 billion people in the world. When I have these thoughts, I remind myself of Saint Augustine's great quote about God's love, "God loves each of us as if there were only one of us."

The wonderful thing is that with Jesus as our Savior and Lord we have the unique privilege of speaking directly with our heavenly Father through Him. 1 Peter 5:7 tells us to "cast all our anxieties on him, because he cares for you." The

writer of Hebrews tells us that since we have in Jesus a great high priest, "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). God is interested in us and our needs.

The verse the Navigators have new disciples memorize is John 16:24, "Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full." Jesus spoke these words to His disciples during His discourse the night before He was crucified. The emphasis is on "in my name." As followers of Christ, we can pray in His name because we belong to Him. To "ask in His name" is to pray according to the character of Christ. It is to pray in accordance with the will of God. It also carries with it the idea of praying according to His merit. In Daniel 9:18, Daniel prays, "...we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy." Daniel had already confessed that he and his people were not righteous.

There are a few important conditions scripture teaches regarding answered prayer. In John 15:7 the condition for answered prayer is,

"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you."
 In 1 John 5:14 the condition is asking according to God's will. "And this is the confidence we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." 1 John 5:15 goes on to say, "And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him."

There is a wonderful promise in Jeremiah 33:3 about God answering prayer. "Call to me and I will answer you and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known."
 Ephesians 3:20-21 reveals to us something about God and the extent to which He will go in answering our prayers: "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

In Matthew 7:9-11 Jesus makes it clear that God gives good gifts to His children. We do not always know how to pray. I find comfort in knowing that if I request something that would be bad for me God will not answer my request. It is also comforting to know that at times God puts off answering our prayers when He knows that the answer would be better at another time.

Prayer is an essential part of a Christian's life. Prayer is more than asking for the things that we want, it is communion and fellowship with God. God knows what we need and He cares for us. It is good to have the assurance that God does hear and does answer our prayers.

Yours in Christ,
 Pastor Mark



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

SERMON TOPICS

The third Sunday of September we will complete our long journey through the Gospel of John. On September 27, I am going to begin preaching the Epistle Lessons from the *Common Lectionary* until the season of Advent.

- September 6 John 20:19-29
Jesus Appears to the Disciples
- September 13 John 20:30-21:14
Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples
- September 20 John 21:15-25
Jesus and Peter
- September 27 Philippians 2:1-13
Christ's Example of Humility
- October 4 Philippians 3:4b-14
Christ Above All Else
- October 11 Philippians 4:1-9
What to Think About
- October 18 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
Becoming An Example
- October 25 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8
Gentleness



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1	Ava Young
1	Ellen West
2	Chris Robinson
6	Patricia Kuhn
7	William Robison
8	Sandy Gifford
8	Anne Osborn
11	Timothy Bradford
16	Robin Page
19	Richard Urdahl
24	Joe Young
28	Miranda Almen



3	Kathy & Dale Boaz
13	John & Pat Robison
19	Richard & Donna Urdahl
30	Mark & Molly McBride



8	Hope Hudson
8	Devin Page
22	Molly McBride
22	Shelley Dutcher
23	Lucy Patten McBride
23	Audrey Daub
26	Holly Welte
29	Anna May
30	Linda Merriweather





- 5 Curt & Susan Almen
- 7 Frank & Joan Miranda
- 10 Kate & Gary Catron

September Fellowship Treats

- Sept 6 – Dorla Beaty
- Sept 13 – Jaquelyn Kuhn
- Sept 20 - Pat Robison
- Sept 27 – Keith & Karin Seidemann

October Fellowship treats

- October 4 – Laurie Daub
- October 11 – Jean & Kent Larason
- October 18 – Wendy Smith
- October 25 – Lori Pickrell

Women's Fellowship

Thursday September 10, 12PM and Thursday October 8, 12PM. If you have missed prayers or would like to be added to the Women's Fellowship prayer chain, please call Treva Gullett (405-735-9908) or Patsy Kuhn (405-820-2016).

Sunday Worship Schedule

- 9:45 Adult & Children Sunday School
- 11:00AM – Worship
- 11:00AM – Streaming Online Worship

Small Groups

Thursday Bible Study – September 10 & 24 and October 8 & 22 at 2:30PM

Men's Prayer Group – Saturday mornings at 7:30AM



Elders

Class of 2026

Dwight Daub 618-7497 President of Corporation/Nominating

Kent Larason 808-3971 Fellowship
Wendy Smith 850-6564 Treasurer

Class of 2027

Glenn Beaty 795-3393 Outreach
Keith Seidemann 474-5454 Worship

Class of 2028

Kathy Flanigan 885-7309 Clerk/Stewardship & Memorials
Carla Pickrell 819-6494 Nurture

Deacons

Class of 2026

Dennis Bryley 664-3640 Flowers
Ruby Ochoa 301-9047 Ushers/Greeters
John Robison 627-3565 Work Day

Class of 2027

Kathy Boaz 850-3053 Clerk

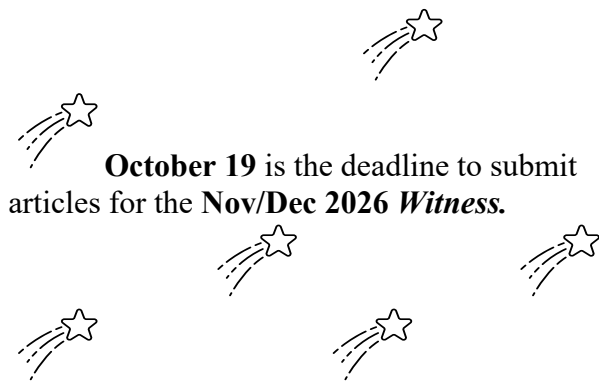
Class of 2028

Michael Bassett 200-7995 Maintenance
Shirley Hampton 831-4852 Missions

Marta Clay

would like to express her deep appreciation and thanks for all the thoughts and prayers from her church family as she recovers from her knee replacement surgery.





October 19 is the deadline to submit articles for the **Nov/Dec 2026 Witness**.

August Session Report

FELLOWSHIP: Doing Well. Big thanks to Women's Fellowship for preparing the snacks & light refreshments for the Memorial Service on 8/7/26.

WORSHIP: Communion: September 6. Nathan Carroll covering the pulpit on November 21. Bell Choir: Saturday - 8/29, Bell polishing. Saturday, 8/29, Choir Retreat from 3-5 PM. September 2nd, regular rehearsals resume for Bell Choir (6pm) and regular Choir (7pm).

OLD BUSINESS:

Handrails: Completed and installed.

NEW BUSINESS:

People Caring For People: Storage offered with 2-3 rooms in the northeast side of kid's area. (Post Session meeting note: they ended up only needing one room).

Kent will get other bids for tree work on remaining 8 trees that need trimming.

September Greeter Adam Mendenhall
October Greeter Larry Wilson

Special Dates for Sept & Oct

Labor Day, *Sept 7*
Patriot Day, *Sept 11*
First Day of Autumn – *Sept 22*
Pastor Appreciation Month - *Oct*
World Communion Sunday – *Oct 11*
Reformation Sunday – *Oct 25*
Reformation Day – *Oct 31*
Turn Your Clocks Back – *Oct 31*

Meet Our St. Stephen's Family



Kathy Boaz

Kathy was born in 1958 in Wichita, Kansas. Her parents were Eugene and Gladys Newton. Eugene was a salesman, who also played the bag pipes. Kathy remembers him marching through the neighborhood park making music with his bagpipes. Gladys was a switch-board operator for Duo-Bed Co. & Beech Aircraft Co. in Wichita. She was part of the team that connected the very first call from space to the USA. Kathy considers her mother to be her hero. She worked full time, was a talented seamstress, a girl scout leader and a skilled camper.

Kathy has one sibling, her sister Pam. Pam has been married 53 years to Joe, and has 2 children; Ben and Sarah, Kathy's niece and nephew. They live in Kansas with their families.

Kathy met Dale at Central Presbyterian in 1974, and married him when she was only 18. Dale was owner-manager of Boaz Candy & Tobacco Company. She says "I am so glad God saved Dale for me", she considers him her soulmate.

She and Dale had 2 children. Their son, Jeremiah died tragically in 2022. Their daughter, Justine, is now 37 is married to Michael. They live here in Oklahoma City. Justine has 2 stepdaughters from Michael's previous marriage. They occasionally all visit St. Stephen's.

Dale's sister Vickie & family, live nearby in Edgewater. Kathy has lived in only 2 places – Wichita until she was 16, and Okla. City until the present.

Kathy graduated from Putnam City High School in 1976. She spent over forty years working in the oil industry. She started as a "temp" for Anadarko Petroleum. The job developed into a full time file clerk position. She worked for them 15 years, until the company moved to Houston. Fortunately so she and Dale could remain in OKC, she found a new job at Devon Energy. She learned about lease records and served as an assistant to a land man. After 27 years of working with leases and contracts, she retired.

As part of a volunteer community program, sponsored by Devon Energy, Kathy tutored students in reading for Mark Twain Elementary School in southwest OKC for 10 years. She found the work rewarding and developed special relationships with her students. She jokingly said she thought of becoming a school bus driver, so that she could serve the children of the community.

In her free time, Kathy has a passion for reading, mostly fiction. She is dedicated to exercising, daily walks with Dale at the mall and Pilates twice a week. After 2 hip replacements and back surgery, she says she must “keep moving”.

Kathy and Dale are big Thunder basketball fans. They enjoy times together in their “TV room”, currently watching “Blue Bloods” reruns with Tom Selleck. Kathy met him in person years ago at a movie premier event at the Cowboy Hall of Fame (Western Heritage Museum).

Her favorite times are Saturday night dinners with the family. She and Dale love dogs. They unfortunately lost their 15 year old Sheila in March, and hope to adopt another rescue in the near future. Throughout her school years, Kathy was active in Glen Park Christian Church in Wichita. Her parents were not regular church -goers, but insisted on Kathy and Pam participating in Sunday school and youth church. Kathy loved to sing and was part of a youth musical group that performed in churches throughout Kansas. She officially joined church at age 10, at her own request. When she was 16, her father was transferred to Oklahoma City, and the family moved here.

Kathy eventually joined Central Presbyterian church, where she served as a Deacon and participated in a number of activities. After many years, Central unfortunately closed its doors forever. After some time she found her way to St. Stephen's, where she says she “felt the power of the Holy Spirit”.

Kathy now serves as a St Stephen's Deacon, participates in Women's Fellowship and Bible Study. She remembers the warm welcome when first coming to our church. To quote Kathy: “I love the fellowship and the friendships”, “I never met a group of people who were more important in my life”. It was people like Miss Butch, Patsy, Shirley and Marsha among others who were there with her during a difficult time grieving the untimely loss of Jeremiah. Kathy's St. Stephen's friends helped her

give the burdens of her heart to the Lord. They provided a listening ear, comforting her, supporting her, while holding her in prayer.

She also spoke of the importance of faith in her life. “My faith has made me able to endure difficult times, navigate relationships in a loving Christian way”. Kathy seeks God's help and guidance, and believes in the importance of serving others, even in a small way.

Her story features the gift of love she received from her church brothers and sisters in Christ.

We are blessed to have Kathy as part of our church family. And....we are blessed by the loving members of our congregation who follow the teachings of Romans 12:15 – “*Rejoice with those who rejoice, and mourn with those who mourn.*”

Another example of the power of love from the St. Stephen's family.

“We love because He first loved us.” 1 John 4:9

CHANGES

The God of the universe
Is watching over us
Just because that's what He does.
The world is changing
Feel the urgency here below
We must try to change also.
Right from wrong, here we belong
For better or worse.
What are we worth?
To God, everything!

We must change this life futile,
So let us ponder a while
God knows the path we take
This world God cannot forsake
Change must come, not just for some
The universal mind must also be kind.
To grow and to bind together or find
We will be left alone with no one,
Yet God's love is for everyone!

*Blessings & Love,
Anna May*

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 6:30PM NAMI 6:00PM Bell Choir 7:00PM Choir	3	4	5 7:30AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
6 9:45AM Sunday School 11:00AM Worship & Online Worship 2:30PM Zami Worship	7 6:00PM Al-Anon 7:00PM Men's AA	8 7:00PM BETA	9 6:00PM Bell Choir 6:30PM NAMI 7:00PM Choir 7:00PM AA	10 12PM Women's Fellowship 2:30PM Bible Study	11	12 7:30AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
13 9:45AM Sunday School 11:00AM Worship & Online Worship 2:30PM Zami Worship	14 6:00PM Al-Anon 6:30PM Session 7:00PM Men's AA	15	16 6:00PM Bell Choir 6:30PM NAMI 7:00PM Choir 7:00PM AA	17	18	19 7:30AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
20 9:45AM Sunday School 11:00AM Worship & Online Worship 2:30PM Zami Worship	21 6:00PM Al-Anon 7:00PM Men's AA 7:00PM Deacon's	22 7:00PM BETA	23 6:00PM Bell Choir 6:30PM NAMI 7:00PM Choir 7:00PM AA	24 2:30PM Bible Study	25	26 7:30AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
27 9:45AM Sunday School 11:00AM Worship & Online Worship 2:00PM ATOMS 2:30PM Zami Worship	28 6:00PM Al-Anon 7:00PM Men's AA	29 6:00PM Worship Committee	30 6:00PM Bell Choir 6:30PM NAMI 7:00PM Choir 7:00PM AA			

October 2026

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				1	2	3 7:30AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
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