



THE WITNESS

St. Stephen's Church Newsletter

Volume 38, Issue 5 & 6
The Rev. Mark Bradford, Pastor

May-June 2026
Church Phone (405) 843-5333

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The book of Acts is also referred to as “The Acts of the Apostles.” Some people think that a better title would be “The Acts of the Holy Spirit.” In the book of Acts, we see the great work that the Holy Spirit does through the apostles. It is the Holy Spirit that empowers them to do the work that God has assigned to them. However, when it comes to the New Testament’s teaching on the Holy Spirit there is no better source than the Gospel of John particularly chapters 14-16.

Four times in these three chapters the Holy Spirit is called in Greek *parakletos*. The richness of this word can be seen in the variety of ways in which it is translated. The Revised Standard Version translates it “Counselor,” the King James Version, “Comforter,” and the English Standard Version, “Helper.” The word literally means “a person summoned to one’s aid.” In 1 John 2:1 the word is applied to Jesus as “the one who speaks to the Father in our defense.” It is the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised to send to His followers and who dwells in every believer.

In John’s gospel Jesus teaches us many things about the Holy Spirit. One of the primary things Jesus tells us about the work of the Holy Spirit is that of a teacher. “He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to

you.” (Acts 14:26) “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.” (Acts 16:13)

The Holy Spirit also comes to “convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.” It is the Holy Spirit who brings the conviction of sin into the lives of people so that they come to the realization that they are sinners and are in need of a Savior.

The actions of the Holy Spirit in John’s Gospel are similar and in fact in many cases identical to the actions of the Father and/or the Son. “It is the Spirit who gives life.” (John 6:63) This is also true of the Father and of the Son. “For the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will.” (John 5:21) The Spirit proclaims the future, “he will declare to you the things that are to come.” (John 16:13) The Spirit indwells believers, “You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.” (John 14:17) The Spirit testifies to Jesus. “But when the Helper comes...he will bear witness about me.” (John 15:26) And the Spirit glorifies Jesus. “He will glorify me.” (John 16:14).

The Holy Spirit is sent to us by the Father and the Son. “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom

the Father will send in my name.” (John 14:26)
“But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father...” (John 15:26) “...But if I go, I will send him to you.” (John 16:7)

In the Nicene Creed we profess, “And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the prophets.” There are four noteworthy things in this statement. First, “the Holy Spirit is the Lord and Giver of life.” These are things we would also attribute to the Father and to the Son. Second, He proceeded from the Father and the Son. We understand what we have already noted that the Holy Spirit was sent to us by the Father and the Son. Third, “who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified.” We are to worship the Holy Spirit as we worship the other two persons of the Godhead, the Father and the Son. And fourth, “who spake by the prophets.” It was the Holy Spirit who inspired the prophets to speak and write what they did. “No prophecy ever came by human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” (2 Peter 1:21)

May 24th is Pentecost Sunday. It is the day that we celebrate the anniversary of the Holy Spirit being given to the Church. As we celebrate this event let us remember that the Holy Spirit dwells within us. “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you?” (1 Corinthians 6:19) He is our helper, our comforter, our teacher, and the one who empowers us to live lives that are pleasing to God.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Mark

MAY/JUNE SERMON TOPICS

During May and June, we will be continuing our journey through the Gospel of John. I will be out of town on June 14. Jarad Chambers from Crossings Mayfair will be preaching.

- May 3 John 15:1-11
The Relation of the Disciples to Christ
- May 10 John 15:12-17
Relation of the Disciples to One Another
- May 17 John 15:18-16:4a
The Relation of the Disciples to the World
- May 24 John 16b-15
The Work of the Holy Spirit
- May 31 John 16:16-24
Your Sorrow Will Turn into Joy
- June 7 John 16:25-33
I Have Overcome the World
- Jun 14 **Jarad Chambers Preaching**
- June 21 John 17:1-8
The Prayer to be Glorified
- June 28 John 17:9-19
The Prayer for the Disciples

Special Pentecost Offering

On May 17 and 24 we will be collecting our Special Pentecost Offering which will be given to the City Rescue Mission and the Urban Mission.



Sunday Worship Schedule

9:45 Adult & Children Sunday School
11:00AM – Worship
11:00AM – Streaming Online Worship
facebook.com/StStephensOKC

SMALL GROUPS

Thursday Bible Study – May 14 and June 14 & 18
at 2:30PM
Men's Prayer Group – Saturday mornings at 7:30AM

APRIL SESSION REPORT

FELLOWSHIP: Going well, Kent still working on setting a date for the Potluck.

WORSHIP: Communion: May 3rd. Preacher Sundays Mark will be gone: June 14 – Jared Chambers, July 5 – Ed Bedrosian, July 12 – Branden Dillard.

OLD BUSINESS: 1) Handrails for the sanctuary: Bid Pending. 2) Stained Glass Room: WIP, close to finishing.

NEW BUSINESS: Personnel Committee Meetings (Dwight, Carla, Keith): 1st Monday, May (5/4/26), beginning at 5:30pm. Budget Committee (Dwight, Kathy, Wendy): the goal is to approve 2026/2027 Budget in June. The Church Year begins on July 1st.

May Greeter Larry Wilson

June Greeter Frank Miranda

Special Dates for May

Mother's Day, *May 10*
Ascension Day, *May 14*
Armed Forces Day, *May 16*
Pentecost, *May 24*
Memorial Day, *March 25*
Trinity Sunday, *May 31*

Special Dates for June

Flag Day, *June 14*
Juneteeth, *June 19*
Father's Day, *June 21*

Women's Fellowship

Thursday, May 14 and Thursday, June 11 at 1:00PM. 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).

Meet Our St. Stephen's Family



Erin Christine Von Tungeln

Erin was born here in Oklahoma City to our own Joan and Frank Miranda. She has a brother, 7 years older and a sister-in-law and 2 nephews in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina.

On July 7, 2007; Erin married Seth Von Tungeln (a family lawyer). They met at Henry Hudson's Bar where Seth was a karaoke DJ.

They have 3 children:

Madison, now 28, who lives a mile from their Quail Creek home (Seth's daughter from a previous marriage).

Miranda "Mira", a freshman honor student at Charter Prep School.

Hudson, a 6th grader at Belle Isle school.

Erin has numerous relatives – her Dad, is one of 7 siblings. She and her family spend the most time with Seth's family and Uncle Joe (Frank's brother) here in Oklahoma, and have visited Joan's family in Nebraska.

Erin's favorite ancestor is Grampa Miranda. He migrated alone from Nicaragua through Ellis Island at the age of only 16 to pursue the American dream (he lied about his age). He was an accomplished violinist and composer, writing his own music including a piece inspired by his son, Frank.

Erin and family share their home with a 20 year old cat named Princess Leah, and 2 dogs: Otis a

golden retriever and Sadie, an Australian Shepherd, both 8 years old.

Erin has always lived in Oklahoma, except for one year, when she lived in Spain, as an exchange student, studying for her Spanish degree.

Erin graduated High School in 1996. In 2001, she graduated with a degree in Spanish from OU. She planned on teaching Spanish, but an opportunity to work for Farmer's Insurance presented itself. They were looking for someone bilingual and her Spanish degree made her qualified. She filled several positions with the company, working in claims, on the catastrophe team for 4 years, and currently as a marketing rep. She is currently a territory manager, working from home and traveling to other agent offices throughout Oklahoma. This year will be 25 years with Farmer's.

Erin's life heroes and mentors are her parents. She has always been proud and amazed at the respect they have received in the community. They "give so much of themselves to others". Like her parents Erin believes "we should be doing things for others", often little acts of kindness mean a lot.

"We are put on this earth to give, to devote ourselves to a radical brand of generosity that changes lives and leaves a legacy".

From "Giving it all Away", by David Green

Erin volunteers as a scoutmaster for her daughter's girl scout troupe. Under her leadership they have organized a conservation project. For example; at Martin Nature park, the troop spent 2 days cleaning brush and reestablishing the natural flow of water through the creek filling the pond.

Also while on a camping trip they worked on Catalina Island to remove invasive plants, and clean up the beach.

The girls were named "Troop of the Year" and Erin was honored with the assistant scoutmaster of the year award.

Erin is devoted to fitness, regularly working out at Goal Chasers Fitness Club. The family are cyclists. They participated in the RAG BRAI, a 7 day bike ride, camping and cycling across the state of Iowa.

Erin does yoga, and enjoys camping and swimming. She loves to travel to National Parks and hopes to eventually visit them all. She is a big

OU sports fan, a devoted Thunder fan, and with husband Seth follows the NFL 49'rs team.

Some of her favorite things include

-Sweets: "Cheese and chocolate are my favorite food group"

-Mom's cooking

-Crime & Mystery shows

She says "reality TV (trashy shows included) is my guilty pleasure".

Not a fan of country music, she and Seth like to go to concerts, especially enjoying performances by 80's pop stars.

Erin's favorite bible verse (read at her wedding); is John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Erin is a "St. Stephen's baby". She remembers pre-K classes at the old church on Military. Mira and Hudson were baptized here. St. Stephen's is "my family, my history, my life, my love". She says "There is nothing that can be replaced at another church". She holds a special place in her heart for Miss Butch and all her Sunday School teachers (although she had a reputation for talking too much).

Erin says her faith "gives me confidence in accepting things that did not always go my way". "Usually it works out God's way"; looking back "God had a plan". Erin believes "Acts of service are my love language", "show people love by doing things for others"!

From 1st Peter 4:10 -

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others as faithful stewards of God's grace in various forms".

Erin's devotion to others, and what she calls "acts of service" remind me of the words of our own pastor Mark, who once wrote in one of his letters to the congregation:

"... there is one calling we all have in common, we are all called to love one another and to allow our lives to be a blessing to those around us. The power that enables us to fulfill our calling comes through prayer which is a channel by which the powers of the Holy Spirit works within us".

By Margo Whiting 2026

GOD

God the almighty is truly real
He knows exactly how you feel
He listens to you in Heaven above
He answers prayers with all His love.

He keeps you safe when you feel alone
You don't have to pick up your cell phone
Talk to God, He knows what is on your mind
He will never ever leave you behind.

So have trust and faith in your daily prayers
Don't think for a moment that He is unaware
He is all around us this is true
Listening to everyone and that includes you!

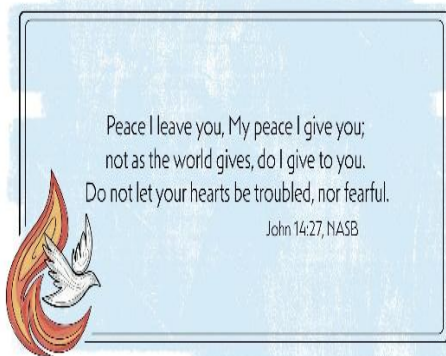
*Blessings & Love,
Anna May*

May Fellowship Treats

May 3 – Jaquelyn Kuhn
May 10 – Wendy Smith
May 17 - Pat Robison
May 24 – Keith & Karin Seidemann
May 31 – Lori Pickrell

June Fellowship treats

June 7 – Jean & Kent Larason
June 14 – Marta Clay
June 21 – Dorla Beaty
June 28 – Joan Miranda



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


June 17 is the deadline to submit articles
for the **July/August 2026 Witness**.



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- 2 Anna Welte
- 5 Miss Butch Derrick
- 11 Jaquelyn Kuhn
- 19 Jon Powell
- 21 Karin Seidemann
- 29 Barton Davis
- 30 Frank Miranda



- 1 Kinley Stateler
- 3 Lori Pickrell
- 7 Josiah Morgan
- 10 Fred Thompson
- 15 Toni Stateler
- 16 Adam Mendenhall
- 18 Karen Ballare
- 20 Robert Buswell
- 22 Rory Stateler
- 28 Susan Almen
- 28 Dwight Daub



- 6 Kent & Jean Larason
- 10 Keith & Karin Seidemann
- 23 Glenn & Valerie Pulley
- 30 Dave & Judi Dawson



- 26 Steve & Ann Wilson



*Thank you, St Stephen's Family, for all your kind words, hugs, and sympathies on the passing of Patty Robison. We appreciate all that the church has done for her. She loved attending services plus all the other functions. It was truly a second home.
 The Stateler and Robison Families.*

