



THE WITNESS

St. Stephen's Church Newsletter

Volume 36, Issue 5 & 6
The Rev. Mark Bradford, Pastor

May-June 2025
Church Phone (405) 843-5333

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Recently I was invited to be a part of a 13th birthday celebration for one of my students. His parents asked me to bring a piece of paper to the event with three things on it: 1) Good qualities that I see in their son; 2) A piece of advice for their son; and 3) A prayer for their son as he enters his teen years.

As I was considering what advice I would give to a thirteen-year-old a couple of verses of scripture came to my mind. The verses were verses that I had memorized years ago but had not given much thought to recently. The verses are Proverbs 3:5-6. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths." These are great verses for all of us to live our lives by, not just a thirteen year old boy with his entire life in front of him.

These two verses can be divided into four parts. The first three parts contain things the writer is encouraging his readers to do. The fourth part contains a promise for those who do them.

The first thing we are encouraged to do is "Trust in the LORD with all your heart." With the conviction that God is going to fulfill His purpose for us, we should trust the LORD for everything. We should trust that God is going to lead us, provide for us, and always do what is best for us. In life there are things that happen that we do not always understand. We sometime ask, "why did this happen to me or to someone I love?" In times like these it can be difficult to trust the LORD with

all our hearts. We regularly have to remind ourselves "that for those who love God all things work together for good." (Romans 8:28)

The second thing we are encouraged to do is, "not lean on your own understanding." Part of what this involves is not relying on our own gifts and abilities, but putting our reliance on the One who gave us the gifts and abilities we possess. Duane A. Garrett commenting on this phrase says that it, "further explains what it means to trust in the Lord. The wise will govern themselves by what the Lord Himself declares. They do not trust their own finite and often-mistaken understanding if it opposes God's word."

The third thing we are encourage to do is, "in all your ways acknowledge Him." We have nothing good that we have not received from God. Because of this we should always give the credit and the glory to Him.

If we will do these three things we are promised that "He will make straight your paths." To make one's paths straight means to continually progress toward a goal. It also means not to stray from the path that God has set before us. The odds are that a thirteen-year-old still has a long path left to follow in this life. For those of us who are older, the path we have to journey on keeps getting shorter. But even for us it is comforting to know that God will make our paths straight.

Let us follow the advice of Proverbs 3 and trust the LORD with all of our hearts.

Yours in Christ, Pastor
Mark

MAY/JUNE SERMON TOPICS

During the months of May and June we will be continuing our journey through the Gospel of John.

May 4	John 4:15-26 <i>Facing the Truth</i>
May 11	John 4:27-45 <i>The Savior of the World</i>
May 18	John 4:46-54 <i>The Healing of the Official's Son</i>
May 25	John 5:1-18 <i>Jesus Heals at Bethesda on the Sabbath</i>
June 1	John 5:19-29 <i>Jesus Claims to Be God</i>
June 8	John 5:30-47 <i>The Father's Witness to the Son</i>
Jun 15	John 6:1-15 <i>Five Thousand Fed</i>
June 22	Guest Preacher – Ed Bedrosian
June 29	John 6:16-27 <i>Seeking Jesus</i>

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:45 Adult & Children Sunday School

11:00AM – Worship

11:00AM – Streaming Online Worship

facebook.com/StStephensOKC



May 11



June 15

SMALL GROUPS

Thursday Bible Study – May 8 & 22 and June 12 at 2:30PM

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

April SESSION REPORT

FINANCIAL REPORT: We had a good month in giving to the general fund. There were no unusual expenses for the month.

FELLOWSHIP: Everything is going smoothly.

NURTURE: Joan Miranda reported on behalf of the children's Sunday school classes. Summer Sunday school will have the young children joining Mira and Lucy in the library to watch *The Chosen* series.

WORSHIP: Because it can be difficult for some people to carry the cup and the bread back to their pews, it has been requested that Pastor Mark reiterate that those with mobility issues should remain seated and allow the serving Elders to come to them.

OLD BUSINESS: Stained Glass Room – Kent Larason reported that he has prepared the walls for painting. His deadline for completion of the room remains June 1.

Spruce Up Committee – The flooring has been installed in the library. Joan presented two bids from The Blind Factory (Midwest City) for window treatments. Permission was given to go ahead and get new lighting, a ceiling fan, and two occasional chairs for the room. Painting the room's wallpaper may be considered.

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will meet Thursday May 8 at 12:30PM for our potluck and last meeting until fall.

May Greeter Larry Wilson

June Greeter Adam Mendenhall

PENTECOST OFFERING

We will be collecting our Special Pentecost Offering on June 1st and 8th. This offering will be given to *City Rescue Mission* and *Urban Mission*.

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
SARAH HUDSON

Sarah was born and grew up here in OKC. She is the daughter of Mary Frances Derrick (our own "Miss Butch"), a teacher and Wilbur Derrick, property manager, pilot, and former OU football player. Her parents divorced after 31 years when Sarah was still in her 20's. She had a brother named John who battled with depression, and took his own life in 2002 at the young age of 37 years. This was a devastating loss for Sarah. She believes that his death brought her closer to her Lord.

In 1995 Sarah married Jeff Hudson. They were together for six years and married for five years, divorcing in 2000. Sarah and Jeff have two daughters: Hannah, born in 1998. She is currently a 3rd grade teacher and in 2023 married Jay Tedesco, a police officer. Hope, was born 18 months after her sister in 1999. She is a counselor (soon to be licensed) who works at the Yukon Counseling Center. Sarah lives with mom "Miss Butch" and two large dogs named Ella and JoJo.

Sarah spoke of happy memories of times spent with maternal grandparents in their cabin home in Hammond, Louisiana and paternal grandparents in Woodward, OK. She feels blessed to have had such outstanding role models who stressed the importance of dedication to education and hard work.

Sarah graduated from Putnam City North high school in 1987, and went on to receive a degree from the University of Central Oklahoma in Early

Childhood Education. She briefly tried accounting and discovered it was not for her. From 1994-1998 Sarah taught first grade at Wiley Post Elementary. She took time off when her daughters were born. In 2000 she returned to teaching kindergarten at Westminster Montessori School. She instructs her students in language and practical life skills, encouraging independence and seeking help from peers. She believes learning is a team effort and expects parents to work with her. Now in her 29th year of teaching, Sarah has always loved children and childcare. She says it is a privilege to be with children. "God's plan for my life – I love teaching!"

Sarah's favorite quote: "The soul is healed by being with children." Fyodor Dostoevsky

Sarah loves reading in her spare time. She enjoys C. S. Lewis, Chronicles of Narnia, her favorite titled "Screwtape Letter". Another favorite is "The Shack" by William P. Young. She likes time outdoors just being in God's creation. She even enjoys pulling weeds in the yard. Sarah streams favorite shows like *Breaking Bad*, *Walking Dead* and *60 Days In*. Sarah loves all kinds of cuisine but won't eat seafood. Sarah's life heroes are her parents, who loved the Lord and worked hard.

As a girl Sarah was a huge Wonder Woman fan and still is. She was born amazingly flexible and well-coordinated. She was a cheerleader and a gymnast. Even today she can walk on her hands, do cartwheels and jump rope.

Sarah's favorite parable is the "Parable of the Workers" from Matthew 20:1-16. She says, "The opportunity to meet Jesus is never lost." We have "every last chance". She prefers the King James version of the Bible. Her favorite Bible verses are: Romans 10:9

That if thou shalt confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.
Luke 10:19, 20

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Sarah's family were charter members of St. Stephen's. She grew up in the church that she loves. She sees our congregation as "immensely accepting and diverse". She knows many in our church as very generous people who have helped her in the past. Sarah served as Deacon one term, but her biggest contributions have been to the children of St. Stephen's, working with vacation Bible school, teaching preschool, Sunday school, and providing infant care during worship. Some of her favorites included the Von Tungeln's, the McBride kids, and the Daub's grandkids.

A gifted teacher, Sarah, has given years to the young children of our community and our church. Her dedication to her calling and to a God-driven life is impressive. She says, "I try to stay with God every day. My heart is filled with gratitude". I ask God: "Help me to be able to take care of what I have and to be content with what I have".

As part of our St. Stephen's family, Sarah exudes joy! She is a welcome "ray of sunshine" and a warm hand of friendship and love, always reaching out to all in our congregation.

To quote Mother Teresa:

"Joy is the token of a generous personality, a mantle that clothes a life of self-giving. A person who has this gift is like a sun in the community."

By Margo Whiting
Interview March 20, 2025

Thank you

Dear Pastor, staff, and members of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church,

We cannot thank you enough for your service to us at my wife Dorothy's funeral with all your effort and grace to me and my family in particular. You were exceptionally giving to our needs and desires for a celebration of Dorothy's life.

Thank you and God bless you all.

Jon Powell

Happy 85th Birthday, Fred

Please come and join Fred and Nancy Thompson as we celebrate Fred's birthday.

When: May 9

Where: Hefner Grill

Time: 5:00PM -9:00PM

Special Dates for May

National Day of Prayer, *May 1*

Mother's Day, *May 11*

Armed Forces Day, *May 17*

Memorial Day, *May 26*

Ascension Day, *May 29*

Special Dates for June

Pentecost, *June 8*

Flag Day, *June 14*

Trinity Sunday, *June 15*

Father's Day, *June 15*

Juneteenth, *June 19*

First day of summer, *June 20*

FAITH

Faith, something we can't touch see or hear
Yet it keeps God and Jesus close and near
Faith keeps us going and keeps us strong
When we realize to God and Jesus we belong

Faith that no one can take away
Faith stays with us every day
You can share Faith with those who don't have it
Don't be afraid you will be guided by the Holy Spirit

You will be amazed at what your Faith can do
When others begin to listen to you
They may begin to believe in Heaven above
Because you have been kind and spoke with love

*Blessings & love
Anna May*

May Fellowship Treats

May 4 – Keith & Karin Seidemann

May 11 – Marta Clay

May 18 – Joan Miranda

May 25 – Laurie Daub

June Fellowship Treats

June 1 – Jean & Kent Larason

June 8 – Wendy Smith

June 15 – Miss Butch Derrick

June 22 – Lori Pickrell

June 29 – Dorla Beaty



Elders

Class of 2025

Joan Miranda	210-1731	Clerk/Stewardship & Memorials
Lori Pickrell	503-9585	Treasurer

Class of 2026

Dwight Daub	618-7497	President of Corporation/ Nominating
Kent Larason	808-3971	Nurture
Wendy Smith	850-6564	Fellowship

Class of 2027

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

Deacons

Class of 2025

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

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
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June 16 is the deadline to submit articles for the
July/August 2025 Witness.

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



26	Steve & Ann Wilson
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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



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

***If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, **please** contact the church office.*

