Help Wanted

In order to continue publishing, The Grapevine needs a Design Editor – someone who can take the completed articles and format them into a readable and attractive newsletter. The newsletter is published 3 or 4 times yearly, for distribution in e-mail and print. The Editor seeks out contributions, writes articles, and edits the material into its final written form. The Design Editor then puts all the documents into the newsletter format, inserting photos and images as well.

You don’t have to be a professional – just be comfortable working with a desktop computer, using a newsletter design template from Word, for example. This is a good project for someone with an eye for detail and for what looks good. Time commitment is probably 3 to 5 hours for each newsletter. Please speak to Betty Schellenberg if you would like to know more.

A Letter from our Priest-in-Charge:

Christian Formation: Providing Christian education for all generations, to assist growing into the full life of Christ.

Christian formation is the lifelong process of growing in our relationship with God, ourselves, others, and all creation. Every experience in our life can provide us with the opportunity to express our faith.

The great challenge we face is to recognize these opportunities and to find ways of learning how to live a life which is sometimes different from the lives of those around us in our secular society.

At St. Stephen the Martyr, we use several ways to nurture the process of life-long learning in the practice of our Christian faith. It has been my job to provide this mainly through sermons and study sessions, usually during Advent and Lent. I also provide opportunities for learning through preparation of candidates for Baptism and Confirmation. We have Bible study groups on Tuesday evenings and Friday afternoons at St. Stephen’s. And we also have →
available to us a wonderful library, lovingly cared for by Audrey Watson.

A major struggle for all of us is to find the time and place to meet for group discussion. After Church appears to be the primary time most people are available, but it is difficult for parents of young children to make use of this, and often there are other meetings. Evenings, on the other hand, are very busy for all of us, and for the elderly, driving at night is a problem. Then, of course, we all have different learning styles. Some learn best by reading, some by discussion with others, and yet others prefer the media of audio/video recordings on TV or computers.

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For myself, being available to the parish only twenty hours per week imposes a great restriction because I am not always available when people are free. And then, of course, there is the variety of interests and depths of knowledge parishioners have. My struggle is to try to figure out which topics interest which parishioners.

So, I want to introduce a way that we can engage in learning which can be in groups, as well as being available to individuals at home, using the internet. I have access to a wide variety of Christian Formation material for use in groups and/or directly by individuals. The material comes from an internet source called ChurchNext.tv, which has developed learning programs for the mainline churches, including Anglican and Lutheran. I can provide it at no cost to those who are interested.

I will, shortly, arrange a meeting time after church to demonstrate ChurchNext.tv using our large flat screen TV. In the meantime, I can give you a sampling of topics to entice you, which include: “The Bible,” “Our Faith,” “Christian Practice,” “A Simple Path to a Deeper Spiritual Life,” “Developing Christian Patience,” “Economic Inequality and the Church,” “Being Single—Staying Faithful,” “Growing Old with Grace,” “How to Pray,” “How to Help a Sick Friend.”

Please let me know if you are interested or have questions, at ghamblin@shaw.ca or by phone, at 604-838-8638.

Happy Thanksgiving!
The Reverend Gary Hamblin

Thank you!

With this issue of The Grapevine we say farewell to Antoine Giraud, who has served as our Design Editor for the past three years. A quick glance at any newsletter issue from these years will show how much Antoine has contributed to making The Grapevine beautiful to look at and a pleasure to read. As Editor, I have found it a delight to work with Antoine on this project. Thank-you for sharing your talents with us, Antoine – we will miss you!

Betty Schellenberg
Grapevine Editor
1. Introduction

Since our election as church wardens, Bishop’s Warden David Nash and I have been as transparent as possible in our communication with the congregation at the Parish of St. Stephen the Martyr. Communication has been in the form of church announcements, warden-to-parishioner conversations, and the parish newsletter, The Grapevine. How well do the wardens connect with the congregation? On the one hand, the wardens are expected to provide parishioners with all the information they need. On the other hand, parishioners should be willing to share information they have with the wardens.

This communication can only work well if the average parishioner knows what to expect from the wardens—in other words, parishioners need to know what the wardens can or cannot do. In this case, educating the congregation to become familiar with the duties and responsibilities of the church wardens can not only build confidence, it can move the parish of St. Stephen the Martyr in a right direction.

This is the main purpose of this paper. In what follows, I discuss the duties and responsibilities of the church wardens at the Parish of St. Stephen the Martyr. Since most parishioners do not have The Parish’s Warden’s Manual, I will in most cases quote the manual verbatim (quotations are presented in italics).

2. What is a warden?

I am sure if you asked an average parishioner what a warden is, he or she would say the one who makes announcements at the church every Sunday. This shouldn’t surprise anyone. Prior to my being elected the People’s Warden, I had a →
→ similar impression. Well, a warden is more than just an announcer. The dictionary defines a warden as a lay officer in an Anglican Church. The Parish Warden’s Manual (p. 9) puts the definition of church wardens in perspective:

Originally, wardens were protectors and guardians – they protected the people from the priest, and the priest from the people. This explains the warden’s staff or wand. Today the wardens and the parish priest together form the main leadership of the parish and assume a large portion of the responsibility for the parish.

At St. Stephen, there are two iron rods with brass tops sticking out of two of the middle pews. These symbolise the warden’s “wands.”

3. Wardens at the Parish of St. Stephen the Martyr

In accordance with Canon 14 [Part 7(4); Part 1421], St. Stephen has two wardens: the Bishop’s Warden Mr. Arthur David Nash, who was appointed by the bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster upon the recommendation of the priest-in-charge. The People’s Warden, Mr. John Ebenezer Hayfron, was elected at the last annual Vestry meeting. Canon 1451: Subject to Sub-paragraph 1421(e) and Paragraph 1463, Church Wardens and all other Officers and Committees shall continue in office until their successors are appointed or elected. [7(10); Amended 88th Session].

Some parishioners, particularly newcomers, may wonder which of the two wardens they should talk to when they have concerns. It really does not matter. The two wardens have a shared responsibility. However, it would be wrong for any leader of a small group ministry, or a parishioner, to marginalize a warden. This would be in clear violation of the tenets of the Screening in Faith Policy for Parish Leaders. To quote Reverend Martin Luther King Jr: We must keep God in the forefront. Let us be →

Twelve O’ Clock

Six boots tramp live hooves at the back door,
Come in to the room’s warm glare, the ready table.

Pieces of broken talk, a folded newspaper, scraped chairs;
Grave a scattering of words, a murmur of amens.

Then split potatoes, soft and floury, for bits of butter,
And poured glasses full of sudden sunlight.

As light slides out from late September cloud,
Glinting the knives, rosing the turned faces—

No sound except the somewhere song of a tap’s drip
And down the hall a radio left talking to itself.

K.C.S.

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Christian in all our actions.

4. What are the duties and responsibilities of the Bishop’s and People’s Wardens?

4.1 Legal responsibility

Wardens together with the parish priest are officers of the parish and are primarily responsible for the property of the parish. If the parish is incorporated the responsibility for the property rests with the trustees under the Act of Incorporation of the Diocese of New Westminster. Wardens are trustees by virtue of their position.

4.2 Canonical committee

In principle, the Parish of St. Stephen the Martyr has a Canonical Committee. This committee consists of the Bishop’s Warden, the People’s Warden, the Lay Delegates to Synod, and the Alternate Lay Delegates [Canon 1441]. These officers are also members of the Parish Council at St. Stephen. The Canonical Committee is responsible for parish input in the selection of a priest to fill a vacancy in the parish. It works closely with the Regional Archdeacon and the Bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster in the selection process, which includes interviewing approved candidates. The Bishop makes the appointment. Canonical committees do not hire a priest. [Canon 14, Division 4].

4.3. Parish finances

Wardens are responsible for the buildings, records and funds of the parish. They may delegate these responsibilities to other persons with the consent of the Church Committee or Vestry. Wardens typically work closely with the parish treasurer, but they bear the ultimate responsibility for the finances of the parish. The Bishop’s and People’s Wardens are members of the St. Stephen Finance Committee. The committee provides oversight of St. Stephen parish finances.

The wardens’ financial responsibilities include oversight of the parish bank accounts and the budget. Parish bank accounts are under the direct control of the wardens. Both (all) should be signing officers together with the treasurer, any two signatures being required for each outgoing transaction. Cheques should never be pre-signed to make easier the →

The Lovely

On a night so clear the darkness rang with stars
That shone and shivered as they sang
Of tumbling down to decorate the trees,
I saw their brilliant faces watching me.
Their lovely shapes were sewn across the sky,
Some pinned along the fraying edge, some high,
And when the wind reached up to snatch their gilt
It seemed I heard their silvery laughter lilt.
Alone among the thoughts of heaven bared,
Of which no graceful wonder had been spared,
I waited until dawn arose; I stayed
Until the last bright spangle fell away.

R. W-O.
→ task of securing enough signatures. With regard to the budget: The wardens and treasurer should present a budget that sets out the cost of operating the parish, and indicates the planned expenses for the coming year at the Annual Vestry Meeting. The budget must include the anticipated income for the coming year.

4.4. Responsibility for the parish property

According to paragraphs 3, 4 & 5 of Canon 14, the church wardens are responsible for the property, including the buildings, of the Parish of St. Stephen the Martyr. They act as “owners” of the St. Stephen property when it comes to insurance claims, etc.

4.5. Pastoral responsibility

Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the wardens and the priest-in-charge chair the Parish Council meetings on a rotational basis. They participate in small-group ministry meetings. They attend religious conferences and seminars, etc. Together with the priest-in-charge, the wardens are responsible for hiring parish staff including the music director, the office administrator, etc.

"The strength of the parish priest is his leadership team, which includes the Bishop’s Warden and the People’s Warden. For this reason, a collaboration between the team members is essential to the smooth running of the parish. The wardens share with the priest the pastoral and spiritual concerns of the parish."

The strength of the parish priest is his leadership team, which includes the Bishop’s Warden and the People’s Warden. For this reason, a collaboration between the team members is essential to the smooth running of the parish. The wardens share with the priest the pastoral and spiritual concerns of the parish.

At St. Stephen, the two wardens hold regular meetings with the Reverend Gary Hamblin, our Priest-in-Charge, to discuss matters relating to the church.

The duties of the Parish Council shall be to assist the Minister in charge and the Wardens in the general business of the parish and in all aspects of the life and business of the parish.[7(8); Amended 87th Session]. The wardens and the priest-in-charge chair the Parish Council meetings on a rotational basis. They participate in small-group ministry meetings. They attend religious conferences and seminars, etc. Together with the priest-in-charge, the wardens are responsible for hiring parish staff including the music director, the office administrator, etc.

5. Conclusion

It is clear that two-way communication between the wardens and parishioners is important for the following reasons: 1) it improves understanding between the wardens and parishioners; and 2) it enables the wardens to be fully informed about what’s going on at St. Stephen. I hope this discussion of the duties and responsibilities of church wardens is helpful in achieving this goal.

John Ebenezer Hayfron
People’s Warden
St. Stephen's Annual Fall Fair

It is that time of year again when we get ready to hold our annual Fall Fair, so mark your calendars for Saturday December 5th. The day will be here before you know it! We are still looking for donations of special items to serve as prizes for the main raffle and also as door prizes. We could also use interesting and appealing items for the silent auction. So if you have anything you can donate, please let Janet or Val know.

As always, we ask all you crafters out there if you have some homemade crafts that you can make for the craft table. We do appreciate them. As we do not have an official “craft group” running we depend on your donations for this table.

Calling all bakers: we will also need baked goods for the bake table: jams, jellies, cookies, breads, loaves—anything you make is a help, as this table is always a very popular one. We know there are a few of you who make things that are in high demand, so we are hoping those donations come in again this year.

Don’t forget, too, that we have a table of “new” gift items that would make great gifts for friends and family, and as always, the Thrift Shop has some special deals that you won’t want to miss on their table.

We will be open from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. with the raffle draws starting at 2:50 p.m. There will be lunch served by our night Bible Study Group, at very reasonable prices.

So please come and join us for great bargains, lunch, and some friendly competition at the silent auction and raffle tables! It is a great day for fellowship, and good times are had by all who come.

Be there or be square!!

Bring your friends, neighbours and family—they deserve to have fun too!

Janet Pavlakovic and Valerie Krause
Fall Fair Coordinators

Editor’s note: Our parishioner Esther Hizsa’s first book, Stories of an Everyday Pilgrim, is coming out in October! It contains vignettes, poems and essays about how she has met God in her day-to-day life: in a smelly hospital waiting room, in her panic to catch a bus, in a woman who’s just been robbed, in church kitchens and silent retreats—even in a men’s washroom. Esther’s goal is to encourage and inspire her readers and fellow pilgrims. If you’d like to pre-order a copy, you can email Esther (ehizsa@gmail.com) or visit her blog.

Visit her blog www.estherhizsa.com
Praying in the Cracks

“The what?”

“Do you pray?” she asked.

“What can I do?”

“I’ll go to my first spiritual director a dozen years ago while I was studying at Regent College. After a few sessions my director said gently, “You have a lot of noisy, discouraging tapes playing in your head. I can’t compete with them.”

I swallowed hard. “What can I do?”

“How about praying in the cracks?”

“Sure,” I said skeptically.

“Trust me. If you pray in the cracks, it will change your life.”

As I walked from her office to the bus stop, I decided to try it. I began to pray and all kinds of thoughts flooded into my mind: things I should pray for, things I should do. Then I looked down at a crack in the sidewalk and stopped. Just allow God love you, she had said.

Leaves—golden and red—caught my eye. Dry brown ones crunched under foot. I listened to the birds and the laughter in the distance, and I thought about being God’s beloved child.

After that, whenever I found myself waiting for anything (and remembered to pray), I quieted my heart and imagined God saying to me, “You are my beloved child, with you I am well pleased.”

In those cracks God deposited seeds of his kingdom. Before long I found myself relaxing in the shade of a mustard tree, with more freedom to pray and enjoy God’s presence.

A dozen years later I still pray in the cracks. And those old tapes? They’re not as loud as they used to be.
Godly Play and St. Stephen’s

Many of you will have heard talk of the Godly Play Sunday-school curriculum in recent months—perhaps at Synod, or at a Parish Council meeting, or in an email from me, or through Kate Deans’ presentation of the Godly Play story of Creation in our church service last Sunday. If you’re wondering what this is all about, here’s a brief description from an amateur and a newcomer to the whole concept (i.e. me).

What is Godly Play?

GP is based on the belief that children, like all of us, have a built-in sense of God. The goal is to help them explore and develop this spirituality for themselves by helping them find a “language” for it. This “language” is developed through stories, ritual, play, and creativity. The program is similar to the Montessori method of education—stories lead to conversation, play, or artwork. The child is offered a range of activities to follow up on the story.

In other words, there are two basic principles to Godly Play:

1. Worship - each Sunday the children move through the complete pattern of worship—coming together, listening to the Word, thanksgiving, the feast, and going forth. This means they are following the centuries-old pattern of Christian worship, but in a way that is appropriate to their age. By going through this pattern, the children learn to open themselves up spiritually and to participate in worship—rather than being told by others to be quiet, to behave, etc.

An example – in the last few weeks, I have been using the GP practice of preparing the children to meet God and learn about God in our classes. As you know, they often have lots of energy at the start of our church time, sometimes they come a little late, etc., so this can be a challenge for them. With GP, each class begins with inviting each child personally, by name, if she or he is ready to come into the special place to learn about God and hear God speak to them. One or two of the children might say no the first time, but gradually they become calm, focused, and tuned in to the lesson. This is like our gathering for worship in church upstairs, where we become silent and then sing a hymn to begin.

2. Stories – the truths of God and our spiritual life are communicated through the stories that have been passed on through many generations. This is the “Word” part of the GP session. It always takes the form of a story that the storyteller has practiced and presents without reading,
→ using objects like large pieces of cloth, a box of desert sand, and small figures or objects. The children listen to the story without interruption, and then are invited to “wonder” about different aspects of the story. Afterwards they can play with the objects of the story, or draw pictures, or play with clay, or read the story in the Bible.

Examples – Kate Deans’ story of Creation, presented in church on Sept. 27, is an example of how stories are told in the GP curriculum. The pictures below show some of the GP materials she has prepared – for “The Ark and a Tent for God” (the story of the Ark of the Covenant and the Temple), for “How the Church Tells Time” (explaining the liturgical seasons of the year, starting with Advent), and for “The Ten Best Ways to Live” (the Ten Commandments).

Some Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. *Who is Godly Play for?* – it is designed for children of about 4-10 years. In the upper ages it would be advisable to supplement with age-appropriate materials like Bibles, maps, etc. This program would apply to the youngest group and most of the middle group kids in our Sunday-school.

2. *What is required to run a Godly Play program?*

   a. A space that can be set up with shelves containing the different story modules, art materials, etc., an area for the story-telling, and different stations to move into for art and play. I.e. something like our basement area. If the space is shared with others during the week, the storage shelves need to be folding or movable so that the materials can be out of the way for the week. **We would probably need a shelf-builder or builders.**

   b. Story kits containing handcrafted objects like items cut out of felt and wooden figurines. These can be purchased, but the sets are ridiculously expensive (for example, you can purchase a 2-lesson set for the Ark and the Temple for $230 USD). A better option is to make the materials or made using instructions available in books or on the web. **We would need crafters, maybe to get together to make story sets over a period of a year or two.** Once these materials had been created, they would be re-used constantly, so the program would cost less than our annual purchase of Sunday-school curriculum materials.

   c. At least **2 trained teachers** – this training is being offered in the diocese in various formats – e.g. one Saturday per month over 3 months. Total training time is 20-24 hours (8 hours introductory, 12 or more hours core training) for a total cost of $375/person. This teaching team could supervise and mentor others. It is recommended that if a parish pays for training, the person be expected to make at least a 2-year commitment to teaching in the program.

All of this is doable, but it takes a parish, not just one person. This is why the Sunday-school teachers, our priest-in-charge, and our wardens are presenting and discussing the Godly Play with all of you. You can check out the program further at www.godlyplay.ca. And please talk to any of us about any feedback, suggestions, questions, or concerns you might have.

*Betty Schellenberg*
*Children’s Ministry Coordinator*
This section is specifically for children and youth. The young members of our community are invited to share their personal stories with their fellow-parishioners at St. Stephen’s Parish. This section also provides information, stories, and pastoral oversight for youths and children in the parish.

In this edition, we feature an interview with parishioner Tom Doherty, our Youth Delegate to Synod.

How did you become part of the Christian Church?
I was baptised as an infant, and have attended Anglican churches regularly since then.

Why do you attend St. Stephen’s?
I’ve been going here for the past decade, and have come to love the community and the atmosphere.

What are your favourite parts of the worship service?
The readings. I really like the reflective quiet and the varied readings.

What keeps you busy?
I am currently attending high school in grade twelve, and am a server and a member of altar guild, as well as the youth delegate on parish council.

What activities do you enjoy in your spare time?
I really enjoy reading and video games.

What has been your most life-changing experience? Going into an automotive course. I’ve been learning a lot and it’s very different from regular courses.

What made you answer the call to become a youth delegate to Synod?
I felt it would be a fun new experience and to deepen my connection with the church.

What are three things you have learned from attending Synod?
1) The diocese is really big,
2) We give to a lot of different charities, and
3) Bishop Melissa is really cool.

What message would you like to give to St. Stephen’s? We are really lucky and we shouldn’t lose sight of that. We have a stable and close-knit parish, which is more than some people have.