



# THE WITNESS

## St. Stephen's Church Newsletter

**Volume 29, Issue 7**  
**The Rev. Mark Bradford, Pastor**

**July 2018**  
**Church Phone (405) 843-5333**

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

By the time we get through the month of July we will all have a better understanding of the Sacraments. During July I am going to be preaching a series of sermons on the sacraments. My Witness articles over the past several months have been on the doctrine of the church and the means of grace. It just so happens that this month's article has us considering sacraments as a means of grace. Last month we began with a general discussion of the sacraments. There are a few other things that need to be considered about the sacraments in general before we move on to discuss baptism and the Lord's Supper in particular.

To begin, the question must be asked, "How many sacraments are there?" In the Reformed understanding of sacraments we see that in the Old Testament there were just two sacraments, circumcision and Passover. The first was instituted in the time of Abraham, the second in the time of Moses. In keeping with the Old Testament dispensation they both involved the shedding of blood. We believe that the church of the New Testament also has two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, neither of which involve the shedding of blood. After Christ's perfect sacrifice, no more shedding of blood was needed.

The Roman Catholic Church expanded the number of sacraments by adding confirmation, penance, holy orders, matrimony, and extreme unction to bring the number up to seven. The Orthodox Church also has seven sacraments. I once asked a Baptist minister how many sacraments they

have in the Baptist Church and to my surprise he told me, "none." They do not refer to baptism and the Lord's Supper as sacraments but as ordinances. What is the difference?

I went to Google to see if I could get some clarification. The site I was linked to makes the following distinction: "Sacraments are acts that bring God's grace" and "Ordinances are duties commanded by the church." This seems to be a fairly good distinction, though in the Reformed understanding the mere act of performing a sacrament does not bring God's grace in and of itself; faith and the Holy Spirit have to be involved as well.

Let us move on to a discussion of baptism. In keeping with our understanding that in order for something to be a sacrament it had to be instituted by Christ, baptism meets the criteria. The clearest verse of scripture to support this is Matthew 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

What is the proper mode of baptism? Our Baptist friends would argue that it is by immersion; some would argue that baptism applied in any other way is not truly baptism. They hold that the fundamental idea of baptism is that of being buried with and raised again with Christ and that this is symbolically indicated only by immersion. Louis Berkhof on the other hand argues that "purification" is the essential thing in the symbolism of baptism and that this can be achieved by sprinkling or pouring as well as by

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immersion. Consequently the mode of baptism is immaterial.

Who are the proper subjects of baptism? This is another point in which we will disagree with Baptists, though some of you may disagree with me. That is O.K. Not even the Baptist would say that our salvation is dependent on our answer to this question. Everyone agrees that adults are proper subjects of baptism. The disagreement is over whether infants should be baptized. Baptism is intended for believers, though we would add, "and their seed." Initially all of those who were baptized were adults who had made a public profession of their faith. No one would argue that an adult (youth or child who has reached the age of accountability) who has not made a profession of faith should be baptized. When such a profession of faith is made, the church generally accepts it at face value unless there are good reasons to doubt its sincerity.

We will save our discussion of infant baptism for August. It is good from time to time for each of us to consider the significance of our baptism. As Berkhof has said, it is symbolic of our purification. It is also symbolic of us dying with and being raised with Christ. "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death..." (Romans 6:3-4) Since symbolically we have died with Christ in baptism let us seek no longer to live for ourselves but to live for Christ.

Yours in Christ, *Pastor Mark*

**Worship Schedule** - Every Sunday  
9:30AM - Adult & Children's Sunday School  
11:00AM - Worship

### CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

There will be a congregational meeting following worship on July 8. The purpose of this meeting is to present to the congregation our 2018-2019 Budget. This is an informational meeting. The budget has already been approved by the Session. Our fiscal years run from July 1-June 30.

### Prayer Requests

If you have missed prayers or would like to be added to the Women's Fellowship prayer chain please call Doris Cornell 943-1732 or Treva Gullett 735-9908.

### JULY SERMON TOPICS

Having finished the book of Ecclesiastes, I have decided to do a series of sermons on the sacraments. One of the difficulties of doing so is selecting the proper biblical text for each topic. At this point I am planning to do three sermons on the sacraments and see how it goes. There is a chance that there will be more than three sermons. Because there is so much disagreement on this subject within the Christian church it is important to approach this topic with humility and grace.

July 1 Romans 10:14-17

*Sacraments*

July 8 Romans 6:1-4

*Baptism*

July 15 Children's Program

July 22 Matthew 26:26-29

*The Lord's Supper*

July 29 Guest Pastor: Randy Faulkner



### June Session Report

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Discussion of the financial report indicated that the general fund is currently in a positive position.

**FELLOWSHIP:** The Fellowship committee is prepared to assist with Father's Day activities.

**NURTURE:** VBS will be postponed for this year and revisited next summer. There was discussion concerning playground improvements.

**OUTREACH:** Father's Day Brunch is prepared and ready to go for Sunday 6/17/18.

**STEWARDSHIP/MEMORIALS:** Additional donations have been given in the names of Cleo Larason, Dorothy Bryson, Patty Almen and Charlie Mighton. All memorial thank you letters and family acknowledgments have been sent.

**WORSHIP:** Next Communion-July 1, 2018.

**OLD BUSINESS:** The budget committee presented the 2018-2019 budget. After a lengthy discussion, a motion (Larason/Hermes) was made and passed to accept the 2018-2019 budget with minor adjustments.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Bids will be collected to remove the large dead tree in the playground area.

## SMALL GROUPS

Bible Study & Prayer – Sunday evening at Pastor Mark & Anne Bradford's – July 8 at 5:30PM.

Monday Prayer Group – July 2, 9, 16 & 30 at 12:30PM, church library.

Tuesday Bible Study – July 17 at 2:30PM.

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

## Ushers/Greeters

**July Greeters:** 1, 22 & 29 Frank & Joan Miranda, 8 & 15 Nelson & Carla Pickrell

### July Ushers:

**July 1** – Michael Bassett, Sumish & Christa Charlie, Nancy Spradling

**July 8** – Sandy Gifford, Pat Robison, Wendy Smith, Nancy Spradling

**July 15** – Michael Bassett, Randy & Rebecca Stateler, Nancy Spradling

**July 22** – Sandy Gifford, Pat Robison, Wendy Smith, Nancy Spradling

**July 29** – Youth

## Fellowship Hour Treats

**July 1** – Frank & Joan Miranda, Pat Robison

**July 8** – Margo Whiting, Laurie Daub

**July 15** – Lori Pickrell, Sarah Welte

**July 22** – Doris Cornell, Miss Butch Derrick

**July 29** – Marilyn Hanson, Jim & Treva Gullett



## Drama Camp

July 9–13, 9AM–12PM

Programs: Saturday, July 14 at 6:00PM,

Sunday, July 15 at 11:00AM.



## SEQUENCE PLAYERS



*Sequence* will meet July 24. Any questions, please call Doris Cornell at 943-1732.

## St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church 2018-19 General Fund Budget

### RECEIPTS

General Fund	223,442
Special Offerings	4,000
Loose Offering	8,500
Checking Interest	200
<b>Totals</b>	<b>236,142</b>

### DISBURSEMENTS

#### Payroll:

**Sub Total** 150,744

#### Building, Office, Van:

Maintenance	12,000
Insurance	17,000
Utilities	18,000
Office (telephone, copier, supplies, etc.)	8,000
Church van expenses	500
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>55,500</b>

#### Program:

Worship	1,000
Fellowship	1,000
Nurture	1,500
Evangelism & Outreach	2,000
Children & Worship	500
Music	1,000
Drama Camp & Christmas Musical	600
Way Day	3,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>10,600</b>

#### Missions:

General	15,000
Special Offerings	4,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>19,000</b>

**Total Disbursements** 235,844

## CONGRATULATIONS

**John Hermes** has a new little grandson, Davis Allen Hermes. He was born June 7 and weighed 7lbs., 11oz. Davis's Dad & Mom are Peter and Angel, and big sister, Bryan. Blessings on the new little guy.



Congratulations to **Keith and Karin Seideman** on their wedding June, 10. May our Lord bless their marriage.

## A Prayer for the 4<sup>th</sup>

Lord Jesus, thou who art the way, the truth and the life; hear us as we pray for the truth that shall make all free. Teach us that liberty is not only to be loved but also to be lived. Liberty is too precious a thing to be buried in books. It costs too much to be hoarded. Help us see that our liberty is not the right to do as we please, but the opportunity to please and do what is right.

*Peter Marshall, before the U.S. Senate*

### LORD REMEMBER ME

The funeral of renowned evangelist Billy Graham was a celebration — not of the preacher’s long life and many accomplishments but of his arrival in heaven. Graham, who died at age 99 in February 2018, was confident he’d spend eternity with Jesus but knew the reason wasn’t his own status or actions.

Graham knew he was a sinner in need of forgiveness. “I still need the cross,” he said.

Graham added, “I am not going to heaven because I have preached to great crowds or read the Bible many times. I’m going to heaven just like the thief on the cross who said in that last moment: ‘Lord, remember me.’”

### WHAT’S HAPPENING

Zoë Gifford is performing in two productions this summer: *Lion, Witch, and the Wardrobe* in June in which she plays Peter, the older brother and *Alice in Wonderland* in July. Performances are at the Oklahoma Children’s Theatre in the Burg Theatre. Tickets are \$10. Zoë’s cousin, Cassidy, is also in the first production.

### Salvation Army Request

Reminder that we are collecting small soaps like the ones you get at hotels or motels. Please bring them to the church office.

### Prescription Drugs Needed

If you have any **unexpired** prescription drugs to donate, please give them to Laurie.

“He who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love.”

*St. Basil*

## PECAN NUTS

On the outskirts of town, there was a big old pecan tree by the cemetery fence. One day two boys filled up a bucketful of nuts and sat down by the tree, out of sight, and began dividing the nuts.

“One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me,” said one boy. Several were dropped and rolled down toward the fence.

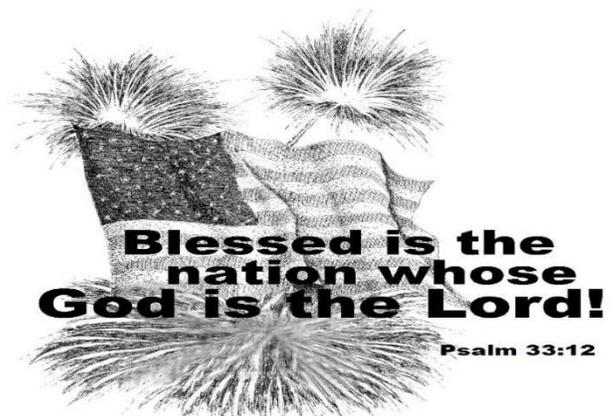
Another boy came riding along the road on his bicycle. As he passed, he thought he heard voices from inside the cemetery. He slowed down to investigate. Sure enough, he heard, “One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me.” He just knew what it was.

“Oh my,” he shuddered, “it’s Satan and the Lord dividing up souls at the cemetery.” He jumped back on his bike and rode off. Just around the bend he met an old man with a cane, hobbling along. “Come here quick,” said the boy. “You won’t believe what I heard. Satan and the Lord are down at the cemetery dividing up souls.”

The man said, “Beat it kid, can’t you see it’s hard for me to walk?” When the boy insisted, though, the man hobbled to the cemetery. Standing by the fence they heard, “One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me.”

The old man whispered, “Boy, you’ve been telling the truth. Let’s see if we can see the devil himself.”

Shaking with fear, they peered through the fence, yet were still unable to see anything. The old man and the boy gripped the wrought iron bars of the fence tighter and tighter as they tried to get a glimpse of Satan. At last they heard, “One for you, one for me. And one last one for you. That’s all. Now let’s go get those nuts by the fence, and we’ll be done.”



**CHURCH OFFICERS**

**Elders**

**Class of 2018**

Robert Buswell	426-7429	Treasurer
Jon Powell	470-0230	Outreach
Dana Wilson	706-3191	Nurture

**Class of 2019**

Dwight Daub	618-7497	Clerk/Stewardship & Memorials
Kent Larason	808-3971	Fellowship

**Class of 2020**

John Hermes	202-9621	President of Corporation/ Nominating
Mark McBride	410-2003	Worship

**Deacons**

**Class of 2018**

Lori Pickrell	503-9585	Clerk
Pat Robison	879-2762	Missions

**Class of 2019**

Jaquelyn Kuhn	424-2123	Church Work Days
Kym Manning	426-7298	Van/Transportation

**Class of 2020**

Christa Charlie	834-7031	Flowers
Nancy Spradling	206-5828	Ushers/Greeters
Randy Stateler	620-253-6431	Maintenance

**WITNESS DEADLINE**

**July 16** is the deadline to submit articles for the August 2018 *Witness*. You may bring items to the church office or e-mail them to: [secretary@ststephensokc.org](mailto:secretary@ststephensokc.org). Thanks! Laurie Daub, St. Stephen's Secretary

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[www.ststephensokc.org](http://www.ststephensokc.org)

[facebook.com/StStephensOKC](https://www.facebook.com/StStephensOKC)



- 3 Ivy O'Neil
- 4 Jean Collins Mighton
- 4 Austin Andrews
- 5 Elizabeth Garrett
- 6 Elizabeth Bradford
- 6 Joan Miranda
- 6 Dorothy Powell
- 7 Randy Felton
- 7 Katie Jones
- 8 Branden Dillard
- 8 Margo Whiting
- 10 Glenda Leinbach
- 11 Nelson Pickrell
- 12 Gentry Hiline
- 16 Micah Morgan
- 18 Christa Charlie
- 19 Mary Walker
- 21 Hunter Page
- 22 Cher Brooks
- 25 Hudson Von Tungeln
- 25 Dan Dutcher
- 25 Dean Mikkelson
- 25 Laurie Daub
- 26 Kari Kosanke
- 29 Pat Tsoodle
- 29 Kym Manning
- 30 Mark Bradford
- 31 Peyton Hiline



- 7 Seth & Erin Von Tungeln
- 8 Aaron & Gentry Hiline
- 26 Michael & Joy Bassett
- 29 Dan & Shelley Dutcher

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

**Special Date - 4<sup>th</sup> of July**

