



THE WITNESS

St. Stephen's Church Newsletter

Volume 29, Issue 5
The Rev. Mark Bradford, Pastor

May 2018
Church Phone (405) 843-5333

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In our discussion of the doctrine of the Church we will now consider what Louis Berkhof refers to as “the power of the Church.” Berkhof divides the power of the Church into three areas: the teaching power, the governing power, and the ministry of mercy power. The governing power is restricted to the Church itself, but the other two go beyond the bounds of the Church and have always been a part of the Church’s mission.

When we think about the power of the Church we need to remember that it is not a physical or military power, but a spiritual power given by the Holy Spirit and meant to be exercised in a spiritual way.

The first power of the Church is a teaching power. The Church is commissioned to guard the truth, to hand it on faithfully from generation to generation, and to defend it against all forces of unbelief. In speaking about elders, Paul tells Titus, “He (the elder) must hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it.” (Titus 1:9) The Church is also called to preach/teach the Word to all the nations of the world. Paul tells the Corinthians that “We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.” (2 Corinthians 5:20) Berkhof would also say that the Church is responsible for drawing up creeds and confession and for providing the training of future leaders.

The second power of the Church is a governing power given to the Church for its governance. A Presbyterian joke I often heard growing up was that

Presbyterians do things decently and in order. This should actually be true of the Church of Christ as a whole. God is a God of order, who desires all things in the Church to be done decently and in order. “For God is not a God of confusion but of peace...all things should be done decently and in order.” (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40) For this reason God made provision for the proper governance of the Church. Paul tells Titus that “I left you behind in Crete for this reason, that you should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.” (Titus 1:5) The early Church appointed elders to govern the Church. We also believe that God gives individuals special gifts to help them in carrying out these responsibilities. One of the gifts Paul mentions in Romans 12 is the gift of leadership.

The third power of the Church described by Berkhof is a ministry of mercy power. Christ sent out His disciples, not only to preach, but also to heal. When discussing spiritual gifts, one of the gifts Paul mentions is the gift of healing. There is disagreement among Christians as to whether this special gift came to an end with the apostles. Whether this is the case or not, the Church through the centuries has always carried on a ministry of mercy. The Church has been instrumental throughout the world in building clinics and hospitals. “Medical missions” have always been a part of the missionary work of the Church. The Church has also been involved in other ministries of mercy through the years. It has sought to minister to the poor in many ways including providing food,

clean water, clothing and, when possible, employment.

When we think of the power of the Church we should remind ourselves that it is God who empowers the Church to teach, govern and do ministries of mercy. Each of us are gifted in different areas. We should ask ourselves two questions: 1) What are the special gifts God has given to me? and 2) How can I use my gifts in the life of the Church to teach, help govern and/or do acts of mercy?

Let us also remember who the Head of the Church is. It is not a particular man or woman no matter how gifted they may be, but the Head of the Church is the Lord Jesus Christ. To Him alone be the glory.

Yours in Christ, *Pastor Mark*

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



MAY SERMON TOPICS

Sundays in May we will continue our study of Ecclesiastes. The one exception will be the third Sunday, May 20, which is Pentecost Sunday. We are also planning a special Ascension Day service on Thursday, May 10 at 7:00PM. For a number of years I have been toying with the idea of doing an Ascension Day service because of the importance of the event, an event which often gets overlooked. Finally, with the support of the Worship Committee and the Session, I have decided to do it. I do not know of any other protestant church in town that does an Ascension Day service. It will be unique.

- May 6 Sixth Sunday of Easter Ecclesiastes 6
Is Life a Dead-end Street?
- May 10 Ascension Day Acts 1:6-11
The Ascension of Jesus
- May 13 Seventh Sunday of Easter Ecclesiastes 7
How to Be Better Off
- May 20 Day of Pentecost Acts 2:1-13
The Coming of the Holy Spirit
- May 27 Trinity Sunday Ecclesiastes 8
What About the Wicked?

April Session Report

FINANCIAL REPORT: Discussion of the financial report indicated that the general fund is currently in the black due to generous donations by members of our church family.

FELLOWSHIP: The Easter brunch was very successful with several positive comments coming from individuals in attendance.

NURTURE: VBS will be conducted on Friday evening June 22 and Saturday, June 23. Final times TBD.

OUTREACH: There were very positive reviews of the Easter Celebration. Approximately 23 children took part in the activities. Mother's Day will be celebrated on May 13.

WORSHIP: Communion May 6. Valerie will be gone May 6 and May 27. Thursday May 10 is Ascension Day. Pastor is planning on conducting an Ascension Day evening service at 7:00PM.

OLD BUSINESS: Choir director discussions--postings of the position have been placed at various locations. The search continues to progress. Robert Buswell will be getting an updated estimate on the parking lot project.

NEW BUSINESS: Spotlights on the front of the church need to be replaced. Discussions were conducted to replace the old type flood lights with new LED lights. Bids have been compiled and the Session unanimously agrees that this project should be completed.

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.



SMALL GROUPS

Bible Study & Prayer - Sunday evenings at Pastor Mark & Anne Bradford's - May 6 & 20 at 5:30PM.

Monday Prayer Group - May 7, 14 & 21 at 12:30PM, church library.

Tuesday Bible Study - May 15 at 2:30PM.

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

**Wear your red on Sunday,
May 20, for Pentecost.**

Special Pentecost Offering

We will be collecting our Special Pentecost Offering on May 20 and 27. Our Pentecost Offering will be going to support *City Rescue Mission* and *Urban Mission*.

Ushers/Greeters

May Greeters: Jon & Dorothy Powell

May Ushers:

May 6 – Michael Bassett, Randy & Rebecca Stateler, Nancy Spradling

May 13 – Kym Manning, Sandy Gifford, Pat Robison, Nancy Spradling

May 20 – Sumish & Christa Charlie, Wendy Smith, Nancy Spradling

May 27 – Youth

Fellowship Hour Treats

May 6 – Lori Pickrell, Sarah Welte

May 13 – **Mother's Day Brunch**

May 20 – Doris Cornell, Miss Butch Derrick

May 27 – Treva & Jim Gullett, Marilyn Hanson



Mother's Day Brunch
Sunday, May 13
Brunch Served at 9:15am.



Congratulations to our Seniors!

Graduation Sunday is May 20.

Austin Andrews (Edmond Santa Fe)

Nikki Dawson (Harding Charter Prep)

Branden Dillard (Edmond Santa Fe)

Hope Hudson (Putnam City North)

Hanna Wilson (Francis Tuttle)



SEQUENCE PLAYERS

Sequence will meet May 22. Any questions, please call Doris Cornell at 943-1732.



THANK YOU

I want to thank everyone who has prayed for me and my hands. I know that prayer works and I appreciate all of you interceding on my behalf. *Cher Brooks*

Well Done!

Timmy Bradford and **Josiah Morgan** have been inducted into the Edmond Santa Fe National Honor Society. They join **Will Robison** in this distinguished honor.

Timmy was also received into the National Technical Honor Society through Francis Tuttle.



HELP NEEDED

Have a Green Thumb and want to volunteer? We need help watering the church's outdoor flowers this summer. Many hands will make watering easier. You can help weekly or monthly. Please contact Christa Charlie if you are able and willing to help with the watering.

LOOKING AHEAD

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Vacation Bible School

Friday, June 22 & Saturday, June 23

Times to be determined.

Drama Camp

July 9–13, 9AM–12PM

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

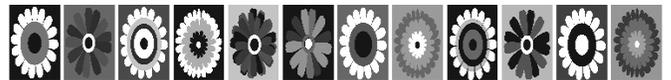
Sunday, July 15 at 11:00AM.

THE GIVER

It is beyond the realm of possibilities that one has the ability to out-give God. Even if I give the whole of my worth to him, he will find a way to give back to me much more than I gave. *Charles Spurgeon*

“The point is not to pay back kindness but to pass it on.”

Julia Alvarez



Margo Whiting's sister, Paula Owens, lives in Louisville, KY and she belongs to *Fourth Presbyterian Church*. The pastor there is trying something new – blogging. He is trying this endeavor in hopes of raising some money for their struggling church. Margo wishes to let other Presbyterians know about the site as the pastor and others in their church give out thoughts and writings. The blog can be found at **15forfaith.com** but it does cost \$10 a month.

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

May 21 is the deadline to submit articles for the June 2018 *Witness*. You may bring items to the church office or e-mail them to: secretary@ststephensokc.org. Thanks! Laurie Daub, St. Stephen's Secretary

St. Stephen's Church

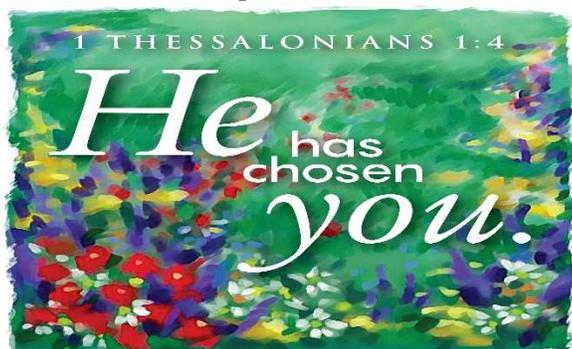
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[facebook.com/StStephensOKC](https://www.facebook.com/StStephensOKC)



1	James Page
1	Linda Ralls
3	Lori Pickrell
7	John Hermes
7	Cindy Bowden
7	Josiah Morgan
10	Fred Thompson
11	Peter Bradford
14	Eli Nichols
15	Toni Stateler
18	Hannah Wilson
18	Karen Ballaré
20	Robert Buswell
22	Rory Stateler
25	Abigail Larsen
28	Susan Almen
28	Dwight Daub



26	Steve & Ann Wilson
30	Chris & Ruby Ochoa

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

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.

“My idea of housework is to sweep the room with a glance.” ☺
Erma Bombeck

Special Dates

- National Day of Prayer, *May 3*
- Ascension Day, *May 10*
- Mother's Day, *May 13*
- Armed Forces Day, *May 19*
- Pentecost Sunday, *May 20*
- Trinity Sunday, *May 27*
- Memorial Day, *May 28*