

the SPIRIT

SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 2026 | THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

St. Stephen's commemorates 250

At St. Stephen's Church, we will honor our country's 250th anniversary over two Sundays in July. On Sunday, July 5, the 10 a.m. service will include its usual features for the Sunday closest to July 4: timely prayers and music, the procession of flags, and a special sermon, given this year by our vicar, the Rev. Will Stanley. The following Sunday, July 12, will feature preaching by the Rev. Bill Sachs, our historian-in-residence, at the 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. services, and a special presentation in the large fellowship hall afterwards.

In "The Meaning of Freedom," Bill will remind us that our national pause on July 4 should last more than a few days. On the 250th anniversary of declaring our independence, there is much more to consider. We must go further in understanding what freedom means, how we can secure its blessings, and what perils to freedom we truly face. Bill will explain what freedom has meant and why the gift of freedom remains incomplete. As Christians, we have special insight and special opportunity to contribute to our nation's future. Let's keep the conversation going well beyond July 4.

Speaking of Independence Day...

The parish office will be closed this Friday, July 3. This means there are no meetings or events that day, and weekday Morning Prayer will not take place. While the Café @ St. Stephen's will be closed, it will be open—along with the Farmers Market @ St. Stephen's and the May Fair House—on Saturday, July 4.

New here? Orientation to St. Stephen's is offered monthly

SUNDAY, JULY 12 | 11:30 A.M. AND 7 P.M., IN THE CAFÉ

If you're newer to or exploring St. Stephen's Church, attend one of our July orientation sessions to learn the lay of the land, tour the facility, and share your questions. All are welcome! You can also reach out to us anytime by submitting a Welcome Card, found in the pew racks in the church, in kiosks throughout the parish house, or at ststephensRVA.org/visitor-card (or scan the QR code in the bottom right corner of this page), or call 804.288.2867.

Signage and hospitality project continues

The next phase of our signage and hospitality project is underway, with the addition of more interior signage and moving several tables and other items, including the nametag station. "Nametag Central" is now located between the outreach table and Information Central, across from Elevator 1. If you already have a nametag, you will find it on one of the racks in this new location. If you need a nametag, this will be where to request it, and to find a temporary sticky-back nametag to use in the meantime. When your new nametag is ready, it will be on the "Nametag Central" table.

Other new "stations" include a family ministry station near Palmer Hall, with information about ministries for children, youth, and parents; Dogwood Preschool materials; Scout Troop 418 information; and brochures about diocesan offerings for children and youth, including Shrine Mont camps.

The first space that people see when they walk up the steps from the large parking lot is now "Visitor Central," with welcome cards, visitor guides, and campus maps.

In the Hollerith foyer (adjacent to the fellowship hall, near the water fountains), you'll find "Giving Central," where pledge cards, envelopes, annual giving materials, and Legacy Society materials are available.

In preparation for these changes, staff consulted with those whose work or ministries are affected by the relocation of furnishings and art, and we're thankful for their gracious flexibility.

Visiting? Newer to St. Stephen's?

We'd love to welcome you personally. It helps us get to know you better if you fill out a visitor card. If you prefer to do this digitally (or there's no visitor card near your seat), just scan the code and take it from there. If you take this newsletter home (we hope you will!) you can scan the code and complete the form later.





Racial healing: walking with the enslaved

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 | 8:30 A.M.-5 P.M.

Walking with the Enslaved is a Spirit-led pilgrimage through Richmond's sites of enslavement and resistance. Rooted in the intertwined histories of St. Paul's and St. Philip's Episcopal churches, this journey invites participants to confront the truth of slavery, encounter stories of courage and resilience, and open pathways toward healing, reconciliation, and shared wholeness. St. Stephen's Church has reserved 10 spots for this event, and we encourage our parishioners to participate on September 19 so that we can experience the pilgrimage together. Scan the code to read more, register, and find a link to recent coverage of this pilgrimage.



Stay in touch all summer

Many people travel in the summer, and if that includes you, this is a reminder that all our Sunday services are livestreamed at ststephensRVA.org/this-sunday.

If you do not already receive the **eSpirit**, our weekly email newsletter, why not sign up now? You'll stay in the loop about what's happening at your church even if you're away for a time. This is also a good way to ensure that you know about upcoming registrations for small groups or other offerings. We have other newsletters focused on specific ministries. Scan the QR code for a sign-up/menu of the **eSpirit** and other newsletters. All are free, you may unsubscribe at any time, and we do not give your information to any outside party.



And finally, be sure to **keep current with your pledge** over the summer. The church's finances do not take a vacation!

Taking care of our hand-stitched kneelers

Is the pew you are sitting in missing a kneeler? St. Stephen's needlepoint guild has undertaken a cleaning project for our kneelers due to excessive soil and wear principally due to contact with shoes. We are sending kneelers, 12 at a time, for professional steam cleaning. All kneelers should be back in place by mid-July. To preserve the beauty of these kneelers, lovingly stitched by skilled volunteers, the guild would be most appreciative of your refraining from resting your feet on the edge or top of the kneelers, or standing on them. In fact, two dedicated parishioners—Earl Roney and Mac Hines—have put their design and woodworking skills to use crafting and installing wooden strips on the edges of the cleaned kneelers to protect the stitching and serve as a reminder not to rest your feet on the cushions. Thank you to Earl and Mac, and thanks to all for your cooperation!

Family ministry events this summer

STSTEPHENSVA.ORG/SUMMER-FAMILY

Our family ministry team offers events for children, youth, and parents this summer. Postcards have been mailed to those in our database with children and youth in their households; they're also available at the family ministry information table.

The next event is Saturday, July 11 at Shalom Farms, 9 a.m.-noon. Shalom Farms is a not-for-profit organization helping build healthy communities by growing nutritious food and distributing it in communities where access to fresh produce is limited. St. Stephen's families, youth, and children can support this effort by providing hands to harvest, plant, or weed at Shalom's North Side farm. Children age 4 and up (with parents attending) and rising 6th to 12th graders (with or without their parents) are invited to participate. Just a few slots remain, so sign up today by scanning the QR code.



Wednesday, July 15: Playground hang, 9-10 a.m. (preschoolers with parents; siblings welcome)

Sunday, July 19: Popsicles, playground time after the 10 a.m. service of Holy Baptism

Ham Cemetery summer work day

SATURDAY, JULY 25, 9:30 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.

Join the Friends of the Sons and Daughters of Ham Cemetery later this month to prepare the area for a commemoration of Buffalo Soldiers Day.

Ham Cemetery is the final resting place of formerly enslaved people and their descendants, buried there at a time when many cemeteries accepted only white people. As you may know, Buffalo Soldiers were U.S. Army regiments composed exclusively of Black American soldiers, formed during the 19th century to serve on the American frontier.

Our group will clean up the area around the new historic marker. We will add mulch, remove invasive vines, clean up fallen branches and debris, and add flowers near the marker. You will not only play a part in the important work of maintaining this historical cemetery, you will also learn more about it.

All are welcome and encouraged to attend the dedication ceremony on July 28 at 7 p.m.

Sign up for the work day using the QR code. Contact Jennifer Bousquet, director of outreach and engagement, jbousquet@ststephensRVA.org, with any questions.



Food insecurity is year-round (and growing)

This week as you do your grocery shopping, please consider donating **peanut butter and/or hearty soups** to stock our pantry serving those in need. In addition, the weekly fruit ministry needs fresh apples, oranges, and bananas for the fruit ministry, and plastic or paper grocery bags with handles. You may drop off these items at the Somerset entrance to the parish house, or in baskets inside the church. Remember that children and youth who receive food assistance in the form of school breakfasts and lunches may not have access to these programs in the summer; this not only affects them, but puts added financial pressure on their families. If you will be away this summer, please consider “doubling up” on your usual food pantry donations. Thank you for your generosity!

Flower dedications: good to know

The beautiful floral arrangements designed by our talented flower guild are possible thanks to donations to remember or honor loved ones. If you have requested a Sunday flower dedication in the past, Laurie Rogers gives you a courtesy call or email to find out if you wish to continue the practice in the current year. Since Laurie is working with bulletin printing deadlines set by the parish staff, please respond promptly to her inquiry. We don't want your flower dedication to be left out of the bulletin! To request a memorial, use the form at ststephensRVA.org/flower-memorials. There are **two steps** to giving a memorial: filling out a request form, and paying either online or by check. Be sure to fill out the request form on our website—**payment alone will not alert us to your request**. Phone the office if you need assistance, 804.288.2867.

Summer at St. Stephen's

STSTEPHENSRVA.ORG/SUMMER-AT-ST-STEPHENS

The Sunday summer schedule:

8 a.m., Holy Eucharist: Rite One

10 a.m., Holy Eucharist: Rite Two*; *coffee, iced tea, water, lemonade served afterwards*

5:30 p.m., Celtic Evensong and Communion*

6:30 p.m., Sunday Community Supper

**Child care is available during the 10 and 5:30 p.m. services.*

Morning Prayer continues weekdays at 8:10 a.m. in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit unless the church is closed for a holiday.

The office closes at 12:30 p.m. on Fridays during the summer.

The farmers market is open Saturdays, 8 a.m.-noon.

Summer hours for the May Fair House are 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays only. The shop is closed on Sundays and weekdays until September.

The Café @ St. Stephen's is open Monday through Saturday mornings except holidays; this week, it will be closed July 3 but open July 4.

Praying for one another

To ask that someone be added to the parish prayer list, send an email to Kitty Ball, kball@ststephensRVA.org, or use the form at ststephensRVA.org/prayer-requests. It's very important to secure prior permission from the person whose name you wish to add. The prayer list is included in Sunday bulletins (except when there is insufficient space), and the bulletins are posted online with our livestreams. If requested, we can list someone's first name only. We print names on the list for three months or less. If you wish someone to remain on the list for more or less time, please email Kitty or call 804.288.2867. Another option is to ask for prayer from **the Daughters of the King**. These requests are kept in strict confidence and are not added to the printed prayer list. Use the form referenced above to ask for these prayers, or use a form and envelope available at Information Central.

Beware of text and email scams

Please be on your guard against scam emails and texts and “phishing.” You may receive messages claiming to be from clergy, staff, a vestry member or other parish leader asking you to “do me a favor,” and instructing you to respond by email or text only and not to call them. We will never ask you for donations, gift cards, or the like, via email or text. If in doubt, feel free to call the parish office at 804.288.2867.

What is Information Central?

Information Central is just outside the parish office, across from Palmer Hall, with a video screen, a large table with printed information, and literature holders on the walls. You'll find brochures, prayer lists, and other items there.



Parish Staff

To reach a staff member, call 804.288.2867 or send an email using the initial and name provided in parentheses, with [@ststephensRVA.org](mailto:ststephensRVA.org).

May Fair House: 804.282.3004 | Café: 804.288.3318 | Dogwood Preschool: 804.665.4902

Betsy Anderson, *May Fair House Manager*

The Rev. Cate Anthony (canthony), *Associate Rector (on sabbatical until September 1)*

Kitty Ball (kball), *Office Coordinator*

Sarah R. Bartenstein (sbartenstein), *Director of Communication*

Jennifer Bousquet (jbousquet), *Director of Outreach and Engagement*

Diana Chou (dchou), *Associate Director of Music*

The Rev. Judy Webb Davis (jdavis), *Associate Rector*

Matt Depaolis (mdepaolis), *May Fair House Cooking Coordinator*

Rashawn Dover (rdover), *Sexton*

Isaac Dyer, *Barista*

David Ellis (dellis), *Director of Facilities and Operations*

Chris Edwards (cedwards), *Director, St. Stephen's Choir*

Mary Feldman (mfeldman), *Executive Assistant to the Rector and Vicar*

Dillon Gwaltney (dgvwaltney), *Communications Associate/Video Producer*

Claire Hackley (chackley), *Parish Suppers Coordinator*

Caroline Harris (charris), *Youth Ministry Coordinator*

Ian Hayes (ihayes), *Sexton*

Paul Honaker (bell-choir), *Director, St. Stephen's Bell Choir*

Jack Hotchkiss (jhotchkiss), *Sexton*

The Rev. John Jenkins (jjenkins), *Associate Rector*

Anna F. Jones (ajones), *Farmers Market Manager and Food Ministry Coordinator*

The Rev. Abby Kocher (akocher), *Director of Children's Ministry*

Robert McCormick (rmccormick), *Director of Music*

Susan McNamara (smcnamara), *Finance and Administrative Assistant*

Madison Prather (nursery), *Nursery Coordinator*

Randy Ransone (rransone), *Sexton*

Robin Raver (rraver), *Café Manager*

The Rev. John D. Rohrs (jrohrs), *Rector*

Thatch Rudolph, *Barista*

The Rev. William L. Sachs (bsachs), *Historian-in-Residence*

Andrew Scully (ascully), *Sexton*

The Rev. William S. Stanley (wstanley), *Vicar*

Kathleen Wilson-Kennedy (kwilson), *Executive Director of Finance and Administration*

Our Missionaries in Argentina

Heidi Schmidt

Monica Vega

Dogwood Preschool

Kate Batten, *Executive Director*

Elizabeth Sykes, *Program Director*



St. Stephen's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

A community of hospitality, healing, and hope, sharing the love of Christ.

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