

# the SPIRIT

SUNDAY, JULY 5, 2026 | THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

## St. Stephen's commemorates 250

At St. Stephen's Church, we are honoring the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence today and next Sunday. Today's 10 a.m. service includes special prayers and music, the procession of flags, and a special sermon. Next 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 "pop-up" Sunday Forum in the large fellowship hall after the 10 a.m. service. 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 beyond 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](http://ststephensRVA.org/visitor-card) (or scan the QR code in the bottom right corner of this page), or call 804.288.2867.

## Family ministry events this summer

[STSTEPHENS RVA.ORG/SUMMER-FAMILY](http://STSTEPHENS RVA.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 this 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. for preschoolers with their parents; siblings welcome. \*Sign up in advance.

**Sunday, July 19:** Popsicles, playground time after the 10 a.m. service of Holy Baptism; no sign-up needed.

**Sunday, July 26:** Rising senior high youth go to Cameo Cakery with Caroline Harris following the 10 a.m. service (our treat). \*Sign up in advance, and meet Caroline at church at 11:15 a.m.

\*To sign up for the playground hang or the senior high outing, visit [ststephensRVA.org/summer-family](http://ststephensRVA.org/summer-family). On the same page you'll find information about August offerings.

## Do you know a young person who loves music?

St. Stephen's Chorister program instills confidence and poise in each chorister, as each learns to be part of a team—both as members and as leaders—whose sum is greater than its parts. We provide choristers with outstanding professional vocal training, music theory, leadership development, and abundant performance opportunities. We welcome young people in grades one and above, inclusive of all genders; join at any point during the year! Read more at [ststephensRVA.org/choristers](http://ststephensRVA.org/choristers), and be in touch with Robert McCormick, [rmccormick@ststephensRVA.org](mailto:rmccormick@ststephensRVA.org).

## 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.





## 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](mailto:jbousquet@ststephensRVA.org), with any questions.



## Signage and hospitality project update

Several moves have taken place over the past couple of weeks, including the placement of a new nametag station. "Nametag Central" is 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.

The next phase will involve re-hanging artwork that was temporarily removed during this project, and the addition of photographs of our parish life.

## Pastoral announcements

St. Stephen's Church is a large parish and it can be easy to miss important information about fellow parishioners, particularly when a member of our community dies. If you would like to be added to a list to receive email communications when a parishioner dies (and when available, the time and date of their memorial service), please scan the QR code to sign up. Please note that we send pastoral announcements only with the permission of the family.



## 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](http://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!

## Summer at St. Stephen's

[STSTEPHENS.RVA.ORG/SUMMER-AT-ST-STEPHENS](http://STSTEPHENS.RVA.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.

## 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. The 10 places we reserved for St. Stephen's parishioners are filled, but if you hoped to attend and have not signed up, please contact Jennifer Bousquet, director of outreach and engagement, at [jbousquet@ststephensRVA.org](mailto:jbousquet@ststephensRVA.org). It may still be possible for you to participate.

## Addressing food insecurity

Last Monday our food pantry received nearly 90 visitors whose households total about 300 members of our community. Clearly, food insecurity is a growing problem. This week as you do your grocery shopping, please consider donating **spaghetti sauce, cereal, canned chicken, canned fruit, and/or canned vegetables** to stock our pantry serving those in need. In addition, the weekly fruit ministry needs fresh apples, oranges, and bananas for their weekly distribution, 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. You are making a difference.

## Racial healing event offered

JULY 22 | 10:30 A.M.

The Shockoe Institute, located at Main Street Station in the Shockoe section of Richmond, seeks to reveal the enduring impact of racial slavery on our shared American experience, inspiring both reflection and action. An exhibit at the Shockoe Institute presents the history of America's struggle to expand human freedom. "Expanding Freedom" explores the origins and growth of racial slavery in America, including Richmond's rise as an epicenter in the national trade of enslaved people. The exhibit explains how racial slavery touched virtually every aspect of American life before the Civil War. On Wednesday morning, July 22, join others from St. Stephen's Church to see the exhibit and gather for lunch and discussion afterwards at Mama J's. **Please note that you will need to reserve a free ticket in advance, and tickets are limited.** Scan the QR code for the ticket link and to let us know you're coming. Contact Jennifer Bousquet, director of outreach and engagement, with any questions, [jbousquet@ststephensRVA.org](mailto:jbousquet@ststephensRVA.org).



## 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.



## 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 (dgwaltney), *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.

6000 Grove Avenue | Richmond, Virginia 23226 | 804.288.2867 | [ststephensRVA.org](http://ststephensRVA.org)