

# The First Order

## St. Stephen's Parish

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JUNE 2016

Reflections

Biologically speaking, change is life.

Literally: an organism that is alive is constantly creating new cells, and shedding others, constantly renewing itself and growing in planned, and unplanned, directions.

Our bodies illustrate this beautifully. Our hair and nails grow, aches and pains come and go, our hearts beat and infuse oxygen into our blood, even as by-products are jettisoned. When change stops, life ends.

In the church, too often we pray to have our Church be an unchanging place. Imagining that a place exists where nothing changes gives us a false sense of stability and security. It deludes us into thinking we won't answer to the same rules. We even attribute to God qualities we can only long for in our own lives: "unchangeable," "everlasting," "eternal."

But I do not believe our God is frozen in time and space. Our God is infinitely bigger than our imaginations, and is not bounded by our fragile human conceptions of time and space. God Is. The nature of God's eternal "is-ness" is more than I can ever know.

This month, our church staff is changing, and it is a bittersweet thing. Jenny fully embraces her larger vision of community faith development and leadership, and we give thanks for her time with us as she accepts full-time diocesan work. Mamie will move on to her next adventure~ and we are confident she will stay in touch

and perhaps be back now and again as a "consultant" as we make shifts to our Church School program in the year ahead.

Change is a given in our lives. What our faith and community offer us is not constant same-ness, but rather a network of support and love that never ends. *That never ends.*

Let's join our hearts this month to wish Jenny and Mamie Godspeed in their new ventures, knowing that the relationships and connections we have built with them do not end this month. We believe and trust that God will continue to work in them, and in us, greater things than we could ask, or imagine.

Staffing Shifts!

In the month ahead, Joseph and I will be looking at both our current church programs and also upcoming new initiatives, and determining oversight and planning responsibilities. Stay tuned for news in the July issue about Youth Group, Church School, Education, and other updates!

~Cricket

# Jenny's "Official" Last Sunday, June 5th!

Please mark your calendars, and come celebrate Jenny on June 5<sup>th</sup>! Featuring a special coffee hour, and????

BRING A PHOTO of yourself, to place into a scrapbook for her to keep. If you have something you'd like to add to the celebration, please be in touch with the SuperSecretCelebration committee: Cricket Cooper and Zack Senecal. (Whoops, there goes the secret!)

## Did You Know?

- That **Grady Pedersen** (Pittsfield High) was named #2 for 110 Meter Hurdles in the High School Track and Field Honor Roll and #5 in the High Jump. Congratulations! And a follow-up: in a later edition of the Eagle, Grady was listed with important returnees for the PHS track team as "PHS has a monopoly of sorts over the years in the hurdles" because of Grady and one other student. And "Pedersen can compete in the long and high jumps and run on the 4X400 relay team."
- That Lenox senior and basketball co-captain **Kevin Coakley** received the Mike Kinne Sportsmanship Award, Southern Division from the International Association of Approved Basketball Officials. Well done!
- That Pittsfield High has published its Honor Roll for the third marking period. The following St. Stephen's students were included: on High Honors – **Mackenzie Ellis, Heather Macfarlane, Makailey Cookis, Meagan Ellis**; and on Honors, **Selah Ekstrom** and **Rebecca Hughes**
- That **Zachary Turner** made the High Honor Roll at Wahconah High School for the third quarter.
- That **Kasey Turner** graduated from High Point University with a BS in Exercise Science and a minor in Psychology; she was inducted into the High Point National Honor society and was on the Dean's List. Congratulations!

## Happy Anniversary:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 5 Patricia and George Decker (2009)                 | 17 Veronica and Christopher Fenton (1989)    |
| 6 Jennifer and Scott Doane (1998)                   | 20 Ann and Don Phipps (1964-52 years!)       |
| Katie and Scott Haviland (2009)                     | 21 Paula and Bill Morey (1969)               |
| Sue and Thom Smith (1971-45 years!)                 | Maria and Nathan Zuckerman (1970)            |
| 8 Mary and David Turner (1985)                      | 24 Martie and David Ekstrom (1961-55 years!) |
| 10 Kim and Peter Croce (2000)                       | 25 Josie and Scott Ellis (1994)              |
| 11 Beth Anne Hamling and Stephanie Mansfield (2011) | Nancy and Bill Travis (1972)                 |
| 12 Cathy and Michael Wheelock (2011)                | 27 Kristen and Jim Currie (1993)             |
| 14 Wavelyn and Jeffrey Hine (1969)                  | 28 Jodie and Jay Roberts (2003)              |
| Debbie and Roy Stillman (1980)                      | 30 Mary and Steven Wheelock (1972)           |

# June

## Happy Birthday:

- 1 Stephanie Mansfield (a milestone!)
- 2 Joseph Carchedi, Selah Ekstrom (18), Joan McFalls
- 4 Michele Kysor, Emma Lyman (12)
- 5 Nathan White
- 6 Amanda Brunelle, Blake Wiechmann (5)
- 7 Cricket Cooper (a milestone!)
- 8 Brad Swanson, John Wilker
- 9 Priscilla Zuber (a milestone!)
- 10 John Garinther (a milestone!), Kristena Turner
- 11 Audrina Maloney (9), David Winchester (a milestone!)
- 12 Dan Moon
- 13 Meilani Hamilton (5)
- 14 Taylor Eddy, Linda Engle
- 16 Susan Bedard, Jim Day, Elizabeth Smith, Betty Swanson
- 17 David Turner
- 18 Avery Hartman-Caesar (13)
- 19 Peter Champagne (5), Courtney Hamilton, Alyson Warman
- 20 Emilia Cobb (3)
- 21 William Benoit, Emanuel Brown (14)
- 22 Daniel Lavery (5)
- 23 Pam Aldrich
- 25 Laura Quinn (a milestone!)
- 28 George Decker
- 29 Marietta Cawse
- 30 Jaylen Hamilton (9)



## from Joseph

The month of June brings with it many ordination days; recently graduated seminarians, still fresh from their programs, are ordained as deacons or priests all throughout the Church.

It is rare that the Prayer Book requires a hymn be sung, but on ordinations either the hymn “Veni Creator Spiritus” or “Veni Sancte Spiritus”, both ancient hymns, must be sung just before the ordination itself.

As I look back at ordination time, I remember the beauty of the invocation of the Holy Spirit on my ordination days. How often do we see the work of the Holy Spirit, and how often do we pray for the Holy Spirit to be present? Sometimes it feels like I’m ignoring the Spirit, even though it’s through the power of the Spirit that we live and breathe and are renewed.

Below is the text of the Veni Creator Spiritus (a text written by Benedictine monk Rabanus Maurus in the 9th Century). I commend it to you to help you ponder the work of the Spirit during this long season after Pentecost. This season may seem quieter than Lent, Easter, and Pentecost, but remember that God speaks to us in the quiet, too, as we practice faith, hope, and love.

O Holy Spirit, by whose breath  
life rises vibrant out of death  
come to create, renew, inspire  
come, kindle in our hearts your fire.

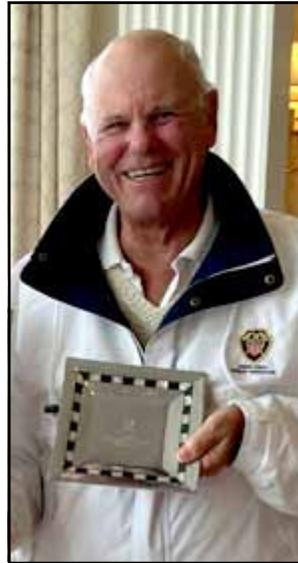
You are the seeker’s sure resource,  
of burning love the living source,  
protector in the midst of strife,  
the giver and the Lord of life.

In you God’s energy is shown  
to us your varied gifts make known.  
Teach us to speak, teach us to hear,  
yours is the tongue and yours the ear.

Flood our dull senses with your light;  
in mutual love our hearts unite.  
Your power the whole creation fills;  
confirm our weak, uncertain wills.

From inner strife grant us release;  
turn nations to the ways of peace.  
To fuller life your people bring  
that as one body we may sing:

Praise to the Father, Christ, his Word  
and to the Spirit: God the Lord,  
to whom all honor, glory be  
both now and for eternity.



**David Ekstrom  
took 2nd place in  
Croquet Championship at Piping Rock,  
Long Island.**



## *On the Lighter Side*

### **The Picnic**

A Jewish Rabbi and a Catholic Priest met at the town’s annual 4th of July Picnic. Old friends, they began their usual banter. “This baked ham is really delicious,” the priest teased the Rabbi. “You really ought to try it. I know it’s against your religion, but I can’t understand why such a wonderful food should be forbidden! You don’t know what you’re missing. You haven’t lived until you’ve tried Mrs. Hall’s prized Virginia Baked Ham. Tell me, Rabbi, when are you going to break down and try it?”

The Rabbi looked at the Priest with a big grin and said, “At your wedding!”

### **The Usher**

An elderly woman walked into the local country church. The friendly usher greeted her at the door and helped her up the flight of steps. “Where would you like to sit?” he asked politely. “The front row, please,” she answered.

“You really don’t want to do that,” the usher said. “The pastor is really boring.”

“Do you happen to know who I am?” the woman inquired.

“No,” he said.

“I’m the pastor’s mother,” she replied indignantly.

“Do you know who I am?” he asked.

“No,” she said.

“Good,” he replied.

# St. Stephen's Parish

67 East Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201

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## The Eclectic Book Club

Our final meeting until the fall will take place on June 3rd. Joan Kurber and Connie Bullard will co-host, serving wine and goodies prior to a delicious potluck supper. We will discuss the book, *Fifth Business* by Robertson Davies. Over the summer, keep track of what you have read that you would like to share with the group – either in a positive or a negative way. We will share all of these in September. Enjoy your summer of reading and join us in the fall!

## Altar Flowers

Perhaps you have noticed that on most Sundays, the flowers on the altar are given in Loving Memory of someone or in recognition of an important day in the life of a parishioner. Would you like to honor someone or something in this way? You can choose the date and the type of arrangement you want, including specific flowers, simply by calling Joan Kurber (413-499-3799) or emailing her (joankurber@gmail.com). The cost is nominal and right now, several Sundays are available. Consider this and give Joan a call. Thanks!

## Graduations and Changes for our Students

If you have a student who is moving from one level to another (i.e. middle school to high school) or is graduating from high school or college, please let Kathy Sulock know so that we may publish the news in the next First Order. Kathy can be reached by email [sulock@ststephenspittsfield.org](mailto:sulock@ststephenspittsfield.org) or by calling the office at 448-8276. We want to include everyone on this list of important events in the life of our children, so please get the news to us.