

## **Scarcity, Overlooked Resources, and God's Abundance** by Rev. Angie Mabry

*But he answered them, "You give them something to eat. ... How many loaves have you? Go and see." Mark 6: 37a, 38a*

Jesus' disciples were exhausted.

They had just returned from the mission that Jesus sent them on, two-by-two. Traveling, teaching, proclaiming repentance, and casting out unclean spirits depleted them. So, Jesus called them to a deserted place so that they could process and rest.

Mark tells us that many people saw them, hurried on foot, and arrived at the place before Jesus and the Twelve. Having compassion, Jesus taught them. As the day drew on, the disciples told Jesus to send the crowd away so that they might find something for themselves to eat. Jesus responded with words that no weary and effete person wants to hear, "You give them something to eat" (emphasis mine).

Where, exactly, was food for this crowd to come from? Not one of the Twelve had money to purchase it, anyway. Jesus sent them out on their mission with orders to "take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts" (Mark 6:8); and so they had returned. And that rest Jesus invited them to? That was pushed aside when the very throng they're being asked to feed came along. Twelve spent people charged with feeding and serving 5,000-plus. How is this to happen?

We may wonder what thoughts ran through their heads. We may wonder how they felt towards the crowd, towards Jesus. We may understand the breadth of their lacking vigor, creativity, generosity, hospitality, patience, and kindness. We may be able to relate to them. Few people are at their best when energy and resources are drained-to-nonexistent.

The disciples respond with a hyperbolic rhetorical question about the cost of feeding all these people. Jesus, ever the One to see what humanity cannot, tells them to go and see what they *do* have. Five loaves and two fishes – a severely inadequate fare. And yet, this offering was more than enough for Jesus to work with. Out of scarcity Jesus brought forth abundance, using the resources that the disciples had.

Like many churches in the U.S., St. Stephen has been on a steady decline for years. Researchers credit this with an increasingly non-religious population, adding that COVID likely dissuaded moderately engaged people from returning at all. We received an eye-opening assessment of our financial situation last Sunday. *And yet*, we are still here, seeking God through our transitional process.

"We can't do anything with what we don't have, ... but we do have something," writes Rev. Michael Mather in his book *Having Nothing, Possessing Everything: Finding Abundant Communities in Unexpected Places*. The key to transformation at his church, he says, was simple yet profound: identifying and celebrating the many "somethings" that the congregation had – human, structural, and material resources – and encouraging them to put those gifts to use.

*What are St. Stephen's "somethings"? Do we truly believe that, if we give them to Jesus, he will bless, multiply, and feed crowds of people? What must we do to relinquish our fearful grasp on what we have and give it over to him to work with?*

On March 21, session, trustees, and the Budget and Finance Committee will meet to begin discussing SSPC's current finances, and looking for creative uses of our resources as a part of the solution. Will you please pray for them?

*Now, to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3: 20)*



Daylight saving time begins on Sunday, March 12 at 2:00 am  
Set clocks AHEAD one hour before bed on Saturday night!

## PRAYER REQUESTS

### Current Needs

Russell McCall	Son of Dian McCall
Darlene Housewright	Member
JW Wilson & family	Members
David Higbee	Member
Pam Elza	Daughter of Art Schmidt
Christy Green	Stepdaughter of Dexter Wilborn
Melynda Wester	Member
Mark Dolive	Husband of Christie Wester Dolive
Nancy Menking	Member
Wayne Menking	Retired Minister
Dan Smith	Member
Ron Adams	Member
Darlene Myatt	Member

### Members with Long-Term Needs

David Higbee	Priscilla Harrier
Dale Henderson	Bee Ingalls
Natalie Hubbard	Jim & Faith Mallory
Kitty Mitchell	Judy & Ben Pennington
Jody Wasson	Angela & Ernesto Jimenez

### Family & Friends with Long-Term Needs

Robin Boldt	Cousin of Beth Haller
Curtis Hissam	Friend of Mimi & David Andrews
Grace Wright	Friend of SSPC
Lynette Larmour	Mother of Bill Larmour
Sandra Wheeler	Sister of Darlene Myatt
Betsy Johnson	Cousin of George Bristol

### Welcome New Member Genny Straughan!

Genny joined St. Stephen on Sunday, Feb. 26, by transfer of letter from Creekwood United Methodist Church, Fairview, TX. Genny is a resident at Stephenson Oaks, the new retirement community in southwest Fort Worth. Her neighbors are Marilyn Jones and Becky and Jerry Moody!

Scan our new QR code with your iPhone to access the St. Stephen giving portal and our digital Sunday bulletin!



# SUMMER FRIENDS

July 24-28 / July 31 - Aug 4

9:30-12:30

### AGES (as of 6/1/23)

- Enrolled Roly Polies ('23-'24)
- 12m - entering Kindergarten
- School age SSPC members and SSPDS graduates (limited availability)



The Day School is offering two weeks of super fun summer care in July and August!

Registration is now open. A limited number of spots are available.

Contact Lauren Ferguson more information.

Cell: (817) 832-8849  
Office: (817) 927-8422

### RATES

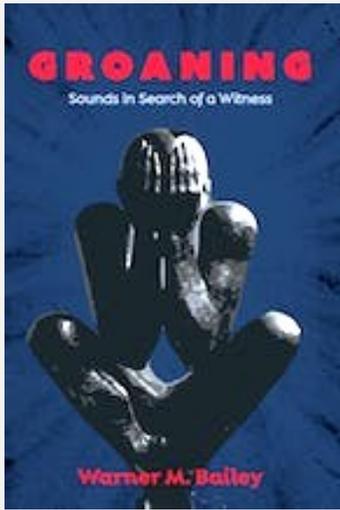
- \$165/wk - SSPDS Families
- \$160/wk - SSPC Members
- \$185/wk - Community

Includes a \$25 non-refundable Registration Fee due at sign up. Remaining balance due by 5/1/23. No refunds after 7/1/23.

### Questions?

Contact Lauren Ferguson  
DaySchool@ststephenpresbyterian.com





## A NEW BOOK by Warner Bailey!

### **GROANING -- Sounds in Search of a Witness**

When a Minneapolis police officer murdered George Floyd, that cop seared on to the American consciousness a lasting symbol of the injustices that communities of color have submitted to since slavery. Many people used the word "groaning" to describe their response to this murder. This book seeks a better understanding of this visceral reaction, and its pastoral importance. In Lamentations 1, groaning plays a pivotal role, and a witness to groaning is indispensable to relief. Groans are sounds in search of such a witness. This points up the silence of God as witness, crystalized in the symbol of the anti-shepherd. The book ends with the stark, impending reality of baleful, divine rejection. Yet, God does not intend for silence to be the final result. This book probes several openings to a cruciform model in which groaning is contextualized and transformed. Lamentations functions creatively in canonical relationship with Second Isaiah, the Gospel narrative of Jesus, and Paul's description of the Spirit's intercessory work. A range of Black religious thinkers--Cone, Evans, Glaude, Copeland--are analyzed for insights into addressing groaning. Finally, the indispensability of a witness challenges communities of faith to serve as witnesses to persons who struggle to flourish even as they carry their scars.

Now available on Amazon - \$23.00

Come and experience one of the nation's finest college choirs, Sunday, March 12, 7 pm at St. Stephen!  
**The Concordia Choir**



## **ACTIVE SHOOTER TRAINING CLASS OFFERED Sunday, April 16 - 12:15 pm**

Would you know what to do if someone came into our church and randomly began firing a weapon?

You will learn what to do, and what not to do at the **CRASE** class (citizen's response to active shooter event) on April 16<sup>th</sup> at 12:15 in Eastminster or Parish Hall.

**RSVP for lunch and meeting by calling the church office (817) 927-8411.**

The class will last 1 ½ hours. Hope to see you at this very important class.



**Tuesday, March 14**

PW Council - 10:00 am

Morning Glories Bible Study - 10:30 am  
Eastminster Room

**Monday, March 27**

LOTE - Evening Bible Study & Potluck Supper - 6:30 pm  
*At the home of Charlotte Ray*

## **In a world of disaster, hunger, and oppression**

Millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity.

The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

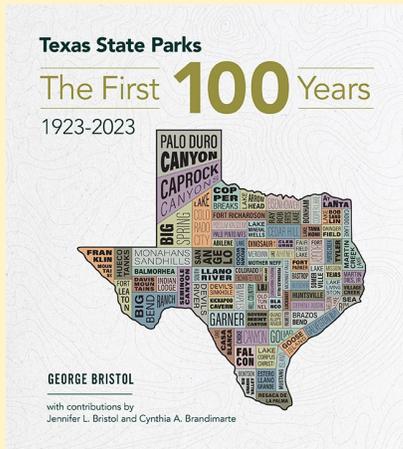
Join with Presbyterians worldwide in sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

Ways to Give –

- Donate through St. Stephen - Offering envelopes and fish banks for loose coins can be found in the pews and will be collected each Sunday through Easter
- Donate by credit card online at [pcusa.org/give-oghs](https://pcusa.org/give-oghs)
- Text OGHs to 91999

# An Exciting Event Coming And You Are Invited To Be a Part!

## George Bristol's Reading and Book Signing



**Monday, March 20, 2023**  
**5:30–7:00 pm**  
**(Reading and Discussion at 6:15)**

**Eastminster Room**  
**St. Stephen Presbyterian Church**  
**2700 McPherson Avenue, Fort Worth, TX 7610**

Hosts: Fourth Friday Book Group & Friends

**RSVP by Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**to Sharon LeMond 817.253.0990 or**  
**[sharonlemond@me.com](mailto:sharonlemond@me.com)**

**or**  
**Click on the QR Code**



Beverages and snacks will be served.

*George is a great storyteller and is married to our friend Gretchen Denny. He is a noted conservationist and parks advocate and will discuss this extraordinary Centennial Edition. He will be available to sign copies of his book.*

## Remember Loved Ones and Beautify Our Sanctuary on Easter Sunday April 9, 2023

**One Service Only - 11:00 a.m.**

I wish to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ plants @ \$18 ea.

Will pay by check.  I paid online.

This Easter lily is dedicated to:

**INDICATE:** in HONOR or in MEMORY:

For multiple dedications, use a separate sheet or form.

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**FROM:**

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**LAST DAY TO ORDER - Sunday, April 2**  
**for names to be printed in the bulletin.**

**Use the QR code to order and  
pay online.**



*The Chancel Guild  
sincerely appreciates your  
generous support for the  
holiday flowers and  
Sunday floral dedications  
throughout the year.*

**Pay online and drop your completed order  
form in the collection plate for processing!**

**Palm Sunday  
Donkey Processional**

**April 2, 2023**  
10:45 a.m. on the  
Promenade



**Following Late Worship :**

**Palm Sunday Picnic:  
Food, Crafts, Activities, Fun.**  
Entire Church is Invited!

Sliders and Desserts Provided;

**Pot Luck Requested for Salads, and  
Sides, por favor!**



Make Bird Feeders, Make a Terrarium  
(adults), Stuff Plastic Eggs for Easter, Play  
Hard on the Lawn, Fellowship, Make a Few More Crafts!

**Bring a Lawn Chair if Possible.**



**Youth Fellowship Activities -  
Coming Up!**

**Sunday's 5—7:30 or so!**

- Mar. 12 Assist Tommy and Peggy Wadley with **hosting a meal for the Concordia College Singers.** We will help set tables and clean up and possibly serve. We can for the concert at 7 p.m.
- Mar. 13—16 Youth Mission Trip Sneak Peek to Wise, VA Take Pics, assess projects, ask questions, figure out mechanics of summer trip coming July 22—30, 2023!
- Mar. 19 Show off photos of Youth Mission Trip and go out to eat!
- Mar. 26 Tour a Hindu Temple, hopefully, with Seema and Indu Jain, our friends from India.

**Caterpillars Arriving This Week**

Our Caterpillars will arrive over Spring Break for our annual quest to observe metamorphosis and understand the Easter Symbolism associated with butterflies.



Like Jesus born, we are earthly beings. We then travel between life and death as Jesus in the tomb, we are chrysalides.



Jesus is resurrected miraculously out of the tomb and like a butterfly, we change into heavenly beings, spirits with God.

Caterpillar assistants are Margaret and David Germany and mom, Elizabeth Bourland, along with Beth Fultz. They come this week and will be on display in the hallway by Parish Hall.

**Children's Choir &  
Choristers' Choir**  
**Wednesday's at 5:15—6 p.m.**



Kids are singing on Palm Sunday and again on Children's Sabbath, April 23, and in May. See you at choir!

**Come join us! It's a lot of fun!**

**Stuffed Easter Eggs Needed For Easter MORN!**  
**Due by April 6!**



Bring Stuffed Eggs to Office in Wagon.  
**Need 75 Dozen.**  
**Stuffings:** Wrapped Candies, Stickers, little trinkets, coins are acceptable for older children.

**Vacation Bible School Recruitment**

**June 12 - 16, 2023**

Vacation Bible School is an important outreach to the community and St. Stephen is well known for its outstanding VBS thanks to our energetic schedule and Volunteers! It is important to place volunteers soon. Can you help us? 1/2 day assignments either morning or afternoon; or full day. Daily or all week. All week is best. **YOU ARE NEEDED!**

- Shepherds Youth Ages 6th—12th (lots!)
- Bible Story **Pastor Angie Mabry + 1 volunteer.**
- Science Need 1—2 volunteers (Youth Basement)
- Acts/Kindness **Brandy J. Scott +1 helper.**
- Crafts Need 1—2 volunteers morning; 1—2 in afternoon.
- Snacks **Julia Mallin**, Parish Hall / Kitchen
- Recreation Need 1 adult and several youth volunteers.
- Supervisors Morning & Afternoon —2 volunteers each with **Beth Fultz.**
- Security Morning—2—3 volunteers; Afternoon 2—3 volunteers.
- Check in /out Morning—2; afternoon—2 volunteers.



VBS Registration is 25% full already. Sign up as soon as possible!

<https://ststephenpresbyterian.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/VBS-2023-Registration.pdf>



### Trinity Adult Bible Study Class Finishing Esther; Going Next to Maccabees.

The Trinity Class has almost finished the Old Testament Book of Esther and how God saved her and the Jewish people under rule of King Ahasuerus and the manipulative Haman. The class also considered the treatment of women and the Jewish people then and how it is continuing into modern day. The Class will look next into the Book of Maccabees, part of the Apocrypha literature based in the period of the Old Testament writings, but not canonized by the Christian scholars, though they are part of the Catholic and Orthodox Bibles. Come learn, come ask questions, come seeking wisdom from delving into Esther and part of the Apocryphal literature. You'll enjoy digging deeper into knowledge.

Taught by Angela Springfield; Sundays, Northminster Room, 9:30—10:30 a.m.

### Next Faith on Tap, March 31, 6 p.m.

Stephen Stock, a faithful visitor to SSPC along with his wife, Lynn, is an aficionado of Faith on Tap. Stephen is a CBS Investigating Correspondent who will lead our Faith on Tap on March 31 at 6:00 p.m. in the Eastminster Classroom. His topic will be **Faith vs. Work.**



**The Intersection between your Beliefs and Your Job!**

We are excited to have Stephen come and present us with our every day challenge of how do we live out our faith in the workspace.

*A Nursery is Always provided! BYOB or drink some of ours!*

**NEXT MONTH, COMEDY NIGHT on April 21, 6 p.m.,** hosted by Ellen Fultz, Dane Robertson, Donald Bennett, and Chris Hansen, Dallas Based Improv Comedians.

### Searchers Adult Sunday School Upcoming Speakers



- March 12 Stephen Stock, returns to address "Spirituality & Journalism."
- March 19 Paul Lewis on "Missio Dei", a different perspective on what we think of as mission.
- March 26 Maria Shupe, PCHAS Development Director

Searchers Class meets in the Eastminster Classroom from 9:30—10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings.

Charlotte Ray, coordinator for the class, is in need of an assistant to help coordinate future speakers. If you are interested, please contact Charlotte via email: [char4204ray@gmail.com](mailto:char4204ray@gmail.com).

### Holy Week Lunches—April 3—7 M-F at Various Times

M—W: 12 noon in Sanctuary Narthex.

Maunder Thursday Service at 12 noon, then Lunch Following in Narthex.

Good Friday Service at 12 noon, then Lunch in Parish Hall (food provided by Fellowship Committee).

*Speakers Announced Soon; Looking for Frugal Chefs! Cost to soon be determined.*



### The Little Present Word Adult Bible Study Class Focus



In 2 Kings 5, Naaman, the powerful and rich (and leprous) commander of the army of the king of Syria, sought healing of Israel's God through the prophet Elisha. Elisha did not even come out to greet Naaman. Instead, he sent a message for him to wash in the Jordan River seven times to be healed. "Naaman was angry and went away, saying, 'Behold, I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call upon the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper. Are not ... the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?' So he turned and went away in a rage" (2 Kings 5:11-12). Naaman's servants urged him to reconsider, and Naaman wisely did. The passage goes on to say, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?" So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." (2 Kings 5:13-14). Naaman's life was saved by God because of a simple act of faith...

Jesus told Nicodemus in the famous discourse, "For God so loved the world that **whoever believes on the Son will never perish but have everlasting life.**" Jesus did not tell Nicodemus he had to go do some heroic deed and come make another appointment in order to be born again...

So what must we do to be born again? We will open our studies next Sunday, including how Jesus calls the most surprising people to be His disciples, even us.

Teacher: **Marvin Champlin, Teacher.** Class meets in Parish Hall, 9:30—10:30 am. Sunday mornings.

# March 12 - 25, 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<b>SPRING BREAK - Beth Fultz &amp; Youth Group travel to Wise, VA</b>						
<p>8:30 am Worship and Communion</p> <p>9:30 am Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 am Worship</p> <p>12:15 pm Deacons mtg Session</p> <p>1:00-7:00 pm Concordia Choir Rehearsal Parish Hall</p> <p>7:00 PM CONCERT Concordia Choir <i>Reception follows</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: yellow;"><b>LISA TRAMMELL Out of Office</b></p>	<p style="color: red;">PNS sandwiches due today!</p> <p>10:00 am PW Council</p> <p>10:30 am Morning Glories Eastminster</p> <p>7:30 pm Boy Scouts Scout Lodge</p> <p style="color: red;">RSVP for the George Bristol book signing!</p>	<p>Noon Bible Study Zoom</p> <p>4:30 pm Mission Study Eastminster</p> <p>6:30 pm Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>7:00 am Morning Prayers Chapel</p> <p>8:00 am PNS setup &amp; sack Parish Hall</p> <p>6:30 pm Handbells</p> <p>7:00 pm Eagle Boards of Review Parish Hall</p> <div style="text-align: center; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <p style="color: black; font-weight: bold;">LISA TRAMMELL Out of Office</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p style="color: black; font-weight: bold;">WARNER BAILEY - Out of Office</p> </div>	<p>8:00 am PNS Sack and Delivery Parish Hall</p> <p>5:00 pm Samaritan House Supper Delivery</p>	
<b>JORDAN SMITH - Vacation</b>						
<p>19</p> <p>8:30 am Worship and Communion</p> <p>9:30 am Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 am Worship</p> <p>12:15 pm Elders and Deacons Training for In-home communion service Eastminster</p> <p>8:00 pm Choral Compline (Taizé) Sanctuary</p>	<p>20</p> <p>9:30 am Day School</p> <p>1:30 pm Staff meeting</p> <p>4:30 pm Communications Zoom</p> <p>5:30-7:00 pm Book Signing GEORGE BRISTOL <i>Texas Parks: First 100 Years Eastminster</i></p>	<p>21</p> <p>Noon Finance Cmte Eastminster</p> <p>1:30 pm Card Ministry Eastminster</p> <div style="border: 2px solid red; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> <p>7:00 pm Called Session, Trustees &amp; Finance Cmte meeting Eastminster</p> </div> <p>7:00-9:00 pm Court of Honor Troop 17 Parish Hall</p>	<p>22</p> <p>9:30 am Day School</p> <p>11:00 am Children's Chapel</p> <p>Noon Bible Study Zoom</p> <p>4:30 pm Mission Study Eastminster</p> <p>5:15 pm Children's Choir and Choristers</p> <p>6:30 pm Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>23</p> <p>7:00 am Morning Prayers Chapel</p> <p>6:30 pm Handbells</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>7 am - 3 pm GARAGE SALE Troop 17 St. Stephen Roberts St. entrance</p>



2700 McPherson Avenue  
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**WORSHIP SERVICE:** **SPRING SCHEDULE | JANUARY - MAY**  
**2 SERVICES - 8:30 AM WITH COMMUNION**  
**11:00 AM WITH MONTHLY COMMUNION AND**  
**LIVE STREAM ON WEBSITE & YOUTUBE**

**OFFICE HOURS:** **MONDAY-THURSDAY 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM**  
**FRIDAY 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM**

**TELEPHONE:** (817) 927- 8411

