

St. Stephen's Beacon

From the Desk of Rev. Karen

This Sunday marks the fourth Sunday of Lent which is known as Laetare, Rose, or Mothering Sunday. On this Sunday we can relax a bit. There will be flowers on the altar and a special treat for coffee hour, but don't get too excited...there are still no "Alleluias"! The Alleluias must wait until Easter Day! This half way point offers us an opportunity to reflect on our Lenten journey.

On Ash Wednesday you were invited to observe a Holy Lent through self-examination, repentance, prayer, reading and meditating on God's holy Word. Are you pleased with your progress or do you feel you have fallen short of your goals? Sometimes the goals we set are unrealistic. That is just human nature but don't let that be a reason to give up. Perhaps you need to redirect your focus or try something new. Remember, our ultimate goal is to come to Easter Day having drawn closer in our relationship to God and with a better understanding of how God is calling us to live into our baptismal covenant. The remaining weeks of Lent are full of opportunities.

Join us on Wednesday night for prayer, dinner and Bible study. Our library is full of books just waiting to be read or join the Tuesday book group and read

the Foolish Church. Attend Mary's Way of the Cross on April 12. It is a powerful service which helps us gain a greater appreciation for Christ's sacrifice for us through Mary's eyes.

Most important, participate in Holy Week! It begins with Palm Sunday when we celebrate Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem and we commit ourselves to walking with him through his passion, death and resurrection. Maundy Thursday focuses on the gift of the Eucharist as we remember Jesus' last supper with his disciples and the message of caring for our neighbors through the washing of the feet ceremony. On Good Friday we recall Jesus' great suffering and the price he paid for our sins. Holy Saturday we make our way to the tomb to be with Jesus as he rests. Having walked with Jesus through his passion we arrive on Easter morning with a deeper sense of the sacrifice that was made for us. We rejoice with great joy at Jesus' victory over sin and death saying,

"He is risen!

He is risen indeed!"

May you continue to keep a Holy Lent.

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday and concludes with the Holy Saturday Service. Easter is, of course, The Great Feast and is not part of Holy Week.



Palm Sunday, April 14, 9:30 am

with palms and procession beginning in Latham Hall and processing through the church.

Maundy Thursday, April 18, 7:00 pm Jesus humbly washes the feet of his disciples as a profound reminder that we are all called to serve and to share in table fellowship. In this service we will take part in both the washing of feet and communion. At the end, the altar will be stripped and the watch – our waiting with Jesus – continues in the sanctuary until midnight.

April 19 at noon Good Friday Community Cross Walk beginning at St Stephen's. This is an ancient practice that recalls the last events of Jesus' earthly life: being condemned to death, given his cross, his long walk to Golgotha, his crucifixion and death. There are 14 stations in all. This is a solemn time to contemplate Jesus' suffering and death.

Good Friday Service, April 19, 7:00 pm (St. Stephen's) Through fasting and quiet prayer, the passion and death of Jesus Christ are remembered in solemn reverence on Good Friday. There will be a reserved Eucharist.

Holy Saturday, April 20, 9 am This is often referred to as the Holy Sabbath and the Great Sabbath. It is an empty day, the day when Christ rested in the tomb and all creation awaited the resurrection.

Easter Sunday, April 21, 9:30 am The most holy of feast days for Christians, Easter celebrates the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Following is an enhanced coffee hour and an outdoor Easter egg for children, weather permitting. hunt for children, weather permitting.

EASTER LILLIES

See Joyce Rabedeaux during coffee hour on Sunday April 7 and 14 to place your order. She will have the price at that time.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

6th Jonelle Farver,
29th Steve Adams

SPECIAL OCCASION

7th Rev. Merle Smith Ordination

ANNIVERSARY

14th Christopher & Marian
Templeton

*Blessings on your special day from your
friends at St. Stephen's*



**Men's Group Meets
Saturday, April 13
at 9 am**

Come for scripture
reading, food and
fellowship.

LITURGICAL ROSTER

Apr. 7 (5th Sunday in Lent)

9:30 am Layreader/Chalice: Jim &
Meredith T.
Layreader: Barry H.
Petitioner: Rev Merle S.
Ushers: Paul & Kay K.
Counter: Paul K.

**Apr. 14
(Palm
Sunday)
9:30 am**



Layreader/Chalice: Kathy T.
Layreader: Winonah M.
Petitioner: Jason M.
Ushers: Winonah M. & Ron H.
Counter: Lorraine W.

**Apr. 21
(Easter
Sunday)**



9:30 am
Layreader/Chalice: Steve H.
Layreader: Barry H.
Petitioner: Winonah M.
Ushers: Paul & Kay K.
Counter: Mary H.

**Apr. 28
(2nd Sunday of
Easter)**



Layreader/Chalice:
Rita B.
Layreader: Rita B.
Petitioner: Jason M.
Ushers:
Counter: Janice C.

May 5 (3rd Sunday of Easter)

Layreader/Chalice: Jim & Meredith T.
Layreader: Rev. Merle S.
Petitioner: Rev. Merle S.
Ushers: Winonah M. & Ron H.
Counter: Lorraine W.

May 12 (4th Sunday of Easter)

Layreader/Chalice: Kathy T.
Layreader: Barry H.
Petitioner: Winonah M.
Ushers: Paul & Kay K.
Counter: Paul K.



**Sunday, April 14
at 11:00 am
Vestry meets
in the
Undercroft**

**Wednesdays
During Lent
5:15 pm Evening Prayer
with Eucharist
followed by soup supper
and our Lenten study
led by
Clergy and
Lay Leaders**



**APRIL DONATIONS FOR THE
SALVATION ARMY**

Microwavable Mac & Cheese,
Tuna and Hamburger Helper.
Also spaghetti sauce.



**CURRENT
FINANCIALS**

**We are in need of
Layreaders, and Petitioners
also ushers, see Rev. Karen
or Rev. Merle.**

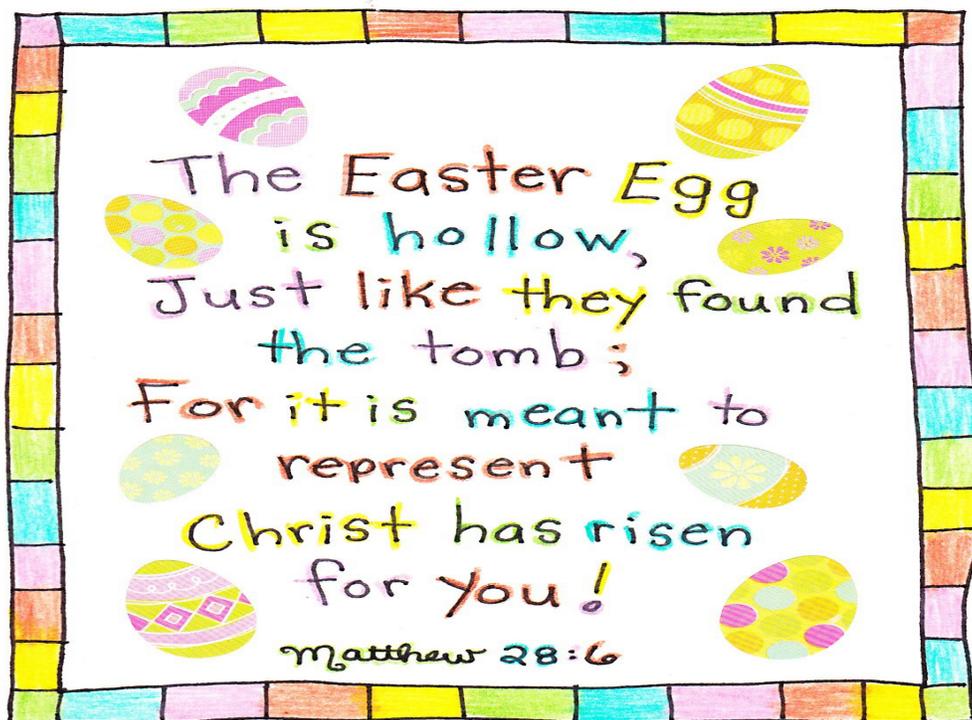
	<u>FEBRUARY</u>	<u>YEAR-TO-DATE</u>
Income	\$ 15,126.00	\$ 8,820.00
Expense	\$ 7,421.68	\$16,934.34
Difference	-\$ 7,704.32	-\$ 8,114.34

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
223 East Fourth Street North
Newton, Iowa 50208

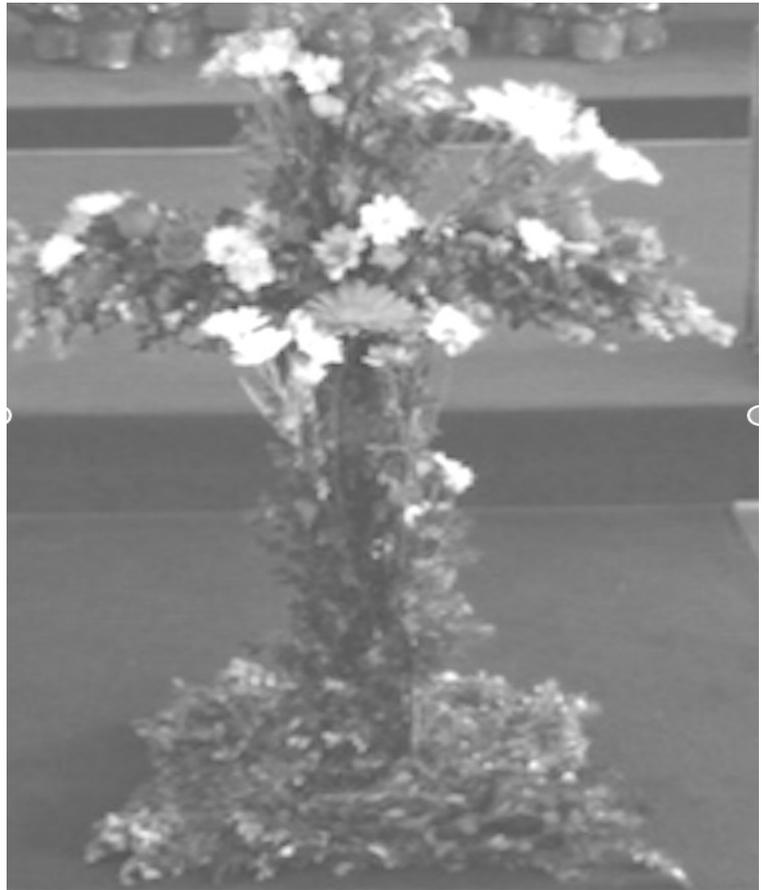
Our Vision: "To be the hands,
feet and face of God"



SUNDAY APRIL 21ST



The Flowering of the Cross



One of the great Easter traditions is the flowering of the cross. It is a beautiful way to symbolize the new life that emerges from Jesus's death on Good Friday. People bring and place fresh flowers on a drab wooden cross filled with nails. This tradition has been traced back to the 6th century. Some legends say that the wood of Christ's cross came from the tree of life or from a tree that grew from seeds of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden. There is another legend that says at Christ's death the cross burst into blooming flowers. Whether these legends are true or not the point in all this is that a symbol of death, darkness, pain and hopelessness is transformed into something beautiful, new and alive in celebration of the Resurrection of Christ. Death has been defeated and Christ is risen. Alleluia!

This year on Easter Sunday you are invited to pause by the cross at the front of the sanctuary and add some flowers to it. You can bring flowers from your garden, or you can place flowers provided by the Flower Guild. We are excited to begin a new Easter tradition at St. Stephen's.