



St. David's
Episcopal Church
Southfield

Staying in Touch

Connections

May 2022

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God is with Us!

Years ago, when my daughter was itty bitty, we decided it was time for her to lose the training wheels and learn to ride a bike.

I took her down to an empty parking lot and watched her ride, then said, "Okay honey it's time to do it on your own." The very idea frightened her. But after some cajoling she let me remove the training wheels as long as I promised to hold on and stay with her.

So there we were, her on her bike, and me holding on to her seat and handle-bar, jogging alongside as she rode on two wheels.

As she got the hang of it, I slowly removed my hands from the bike and let go.

My daughter declared, "Look Dad! I'm doing it!" I was smiling from ear to ear as I said, "You're doing great! And don't worry, I may have let go—but I'm still right here."

On the 40th day after Easter, Christians celebrate Ascension Day—the day Jesus took off our training wheels - ascending to the heavens—and leaving his followers to carry on His work.

The very idea of Jesus letting us go on our own is as scary for us as it was for



my daughter—especially in light of COVID where the average church has sustained losses in contributions and regular attendance.

But Christ trusts us to find our balance, choose our direction—and while He may have let go, He's always here.

So we ask: Where are the training wheels in our lives?

Are we stretching our minds?

Challenging our bodies?

Exercising our souls?

Ascension Day asks us to consider our maturity—and the ways we are losing the training wheels—and trusting in God's faith in us to do the work.

†Fr. Chris

... I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.

~Matthew 28:20



Regional Confirmation Draws 200 to St. David's

Dozens of candidates from around the diocese gathered at St. David's at 11 am on Saturday, May 14 for Confirmation, Reception into the Church and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, including five of our own who Reaffirmed their faith: Mary Lou Pfaetender, Carol Wells, Zoe Gideon, Rita Spiller, and Boi Tia Stevens—Congratulations!

Bishop Bonnie Perry, in her first visit to St. David's since she was consecrated, said she was very impressed with our parish, and the way we have organized our digital worship. Candidates from Christ Church Cranbrook, St. Andrews, Ann Arbor, St. Clare's, Ann Arbor and St. Paul's, Brighton were on hand and a part of this day of celebration!



Come to Vacation Bible School: June 27-July 1

We're Partnering with All Saints' Pontiac

Sign up for VBS! Come and explore your gifts at an Encanto VBS, a fun-filled program designed for children ages 4 to 11.

Hours are from 5 to 7:30 pm with dinner served at 5 pm.

See the poster (shown at left) at the St. David's Ministry Hub or visit bountogetherpontiac.org for more information and to access the online registration forms for both attendees and volunteers.

Kids Club Tutoring Program

By Judy Walsh

On Wednesday, May 4, St. David's proudly kicked off our new partnership with Vandenberg World Cultures Academy. In this community outreach project, 10 volunteer parishioners work with K-5th grade students to reinforce literacy and math skills. The program runs weekly, 3:30-4:30 pm in the Parish Hall until June 8 and perhaps will expand in the Fall. Monica Eason, Vandenberg principal invited families to participate and worked with Fr. Chris and Judy Walsh to design the program.

Vandenberg is a part of Southfield Public Schools and is a magnet school for English Language Learners. Students from 27 countries speak 29 languages. St. David's has enjoyed a strong partnership with the school over the past 12 years, including a pen pal program, in-class mentors, tutors and support of food, backpack and school supply drives.

St. David's looks forward to using its updated campus to welcome neighborhood families and students. This is a win-win opportunity for all involved. St. David's volunteers are excited to embrace our mission aspects of outreach and love for all by supporting this project



50 Days for Ukraine, An Easter Offering

By Janet Ernst



Deborah Davis and Darryl Butler meet up with some friends



Some of the Crew Members



Fr Steve speaks to the Fox 2 News Crew

Bishop Bonnie Perry, in conjunction with Diocesan Council and the Deans of our diocese have challenged our diocese to raising \$100,000 for support for humanitarian efforts in Ukraine. The diocese kicked off the campaign with \$50,000 from the diocesan operating fund. The fundraising effort goes from April 18 through June 5 – the 50 days of Easter.

Shaken by the devastation wrought by the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian military, St. David's was happy to do our part. The Vestry decided to host a Dinner for Ukraine featuring Eastern European food often eaten in Ukraine. Led by Mary Bensmiller a committee was quickly formed and a menu of pierogi, golabki, kielbasa and cookies was chosen. The food was purchased from Srodek's Quality Sausage Company in Hamtramck and finished here.



Crew and Friends

Thanks to Mary Bensmiller, Kitchen Queen and Janet Ernst doing the organizing we soon had a project plan in place. On Friday, April 29 we hosted the Festive Dinner for Ukraine. The event exceeded our expectations. We offered both a dine-in option and a takeout option. Both were equally popular. We served the takeout orders from the front door with patrons using the circle driveway. The Fellowship Hall was decorated in blue and yellow, the colors of the Ukrainian flag. Tables were decorated with miniature flags and sunflowers which are the national flower of Ukraine.

We served over 200 golabki (stuffed cabbage), 50 dozen pierogi, 160 Kielbasa and 120 cookies! With the generous support of our congregation, families and friends we raised over \$3,000!

The money raised will go to Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) to support persons affected by the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. ERD working with its partners in Europe are coordinating immediate and long-term humanitarian efforts in Romania, Poland, Hungary and Slovakia. In time, ERD will also support resettlement efforts in the United States.

A successful project requires many dedicated volunteers. Special thanks go out to Chelsea Liddy Pivtorek whose husband is of Ukrainian descent. They donated the sunflowers, beer and wine plus Chelsea manned the bar and saw to it that the event was publicized in the Ukrainian community. To everyone who helped set-up, decorate, acted as cashier, waited on guests and bussed tables, cooked food, served the food and cleaned up we extend a very grateful **THANK YOU!** It would not have happened without you!

A Note from Deacon Donna

May 2022

Dear Siblings in Faith,

It is with a bittersweet heart that I write this note of thanks; bitter because I will not be as closely connected with you as I move forward in ministry, and sweet because it marks a very significant end of one chapter in my formal formation.

As I prepare for the next phase of my journey, I take with me the love and support that all of you at St. David's have shown me from the first day I worshiped with you to this very day. Thank you all for sharing with me your stories, for making me feel so *radically* welcomed into your faith community, and for sharing with me your faithfulness in building God's Kingdom through seeking justice for all. I am also grateful for the love, guidance, and support of my lay committee, Ellen Boyes, Deborah Davis, Steve Ernst, Darryl Butler, Audrey Humphrey, and Judy Walsh. I appreciate each of you and the honest feedback you have given me over the past year. I want to also give a special thanks to St. David's Altar Guild. Your gentle guidance and coaching throughout the year has made a lasting impression on me. I am so grateful for all that you have taught me about maintaining our sacred spaces. Thank you also to Fr. Steve, Mike Stutso, the Vestry, and Lynne Zacharias for your support and guidance over the past year. I have enjoyed our many conversations and I am very grateful to you all for sharing so freely your many gifts. And I would be remiss if I did not thank George Cullinan and all of the choir and band members. Your music has filled my heart and soothed my soul over the last year. Thank you!

A very special thank you to Fr. Chris for saying yes when I asked to do my final year of field-ed at St. David's. I am so grateful for your guidance and support in helping me to learn liturgical presence, planning, preaching, and leadership in ministry. And though I came to the doorsteps of St. David's extremely camera shy, your ability in maintaining a strong presence for the congregation gathering in hybrid form is a lesson I will carry into this new post-covid age of offering worship and being church outside the walls. I am also grateful for the final blessing bestowed on my last day. I carry this with me as I move forward in answering God's call. Thank you all!

And may "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace." (Numbers 6:24-26)

With deep gratitude and much love!

Yours in faith,

Deacon Donna

Photo Gallery

By Joanne Sackett



Youth Sunday
our youth taking part in the service



Easter Sunday





**Blessings and Thanks on
Donna Lockhart's Last Sunday**



Mother's Day



St. David's Episcopal Church

16200 W. 12 Mile Road
Southfield, MI 48076-2959
248-557-5430

www.stdavidssf.org

Congratulations 2022 Graduates

We would like to honor all of our graduates (college, trade or high school) in an upcoming newsletter. Please send a photo of yourself along with a brief paragraph including school name, major, graduation date and your plans for the future. Send your information to our parish administrator: lynne@stdavidssf.org



Outdoor Worship Returns June 5: Kitty Kenning Retires and It's Pentecost, Too!

*Don't forget to wear red, bring a lawn chair and
a Big Congrats to Kitty*



Join us out on the back lawn at 10 am on Sunday, June 5 for the first of four outdoor services this summer! We'll be celebrating God's gift of the Holy Spirit plus honoring 37 years of church school ministry by our directors and volunteers, especially Kitty Kenning. Plus we're kicking off our mid-year fundraiser. Other outdoor services will be the first Sundays in July, August, and September. Come share a memory and have a piece of cake as we toast Kitty.

Food Pantry Ministry Needs Food Donations

Our food pantry needs donations of non-perishable food goods both can and dry goods as well as any toiletries. **They are especially in need of pasta sauce, pork & beans, chili, black beans, baked beans, dry beans, rice, soup, cereal and oatmeal.** Blessings and thanks in advance of your generosity. Our emergency food pantry continues to support dozens of people each week, we're open M-W-F 9a-12n. Contact our pantry coordinator Mike Stutso via the church office.



Calling All Green Thumbs Help Us Maintain Our Campus

Would you like to help maintain a garden bed at church? Many hands make light work, so we're asking if you'd like to 'adopt' a flower bed near the north entrance of the church to plant/maintain it during the spring and summer months. We'll have a zoom meeting to kick it off soon. For more information contact Fr. Chris at chris@stdavidssf.org