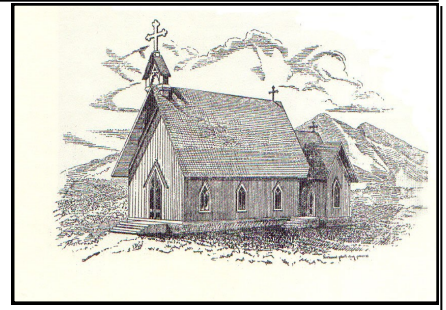




The Voice of St. Stephen's

Location: 2177 First St. Baker City, OR

Mailing address: PO Box 1146 Baker City, OR 97814

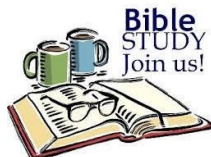


September - October 2023

The Voice of St. Stephen's

The Vicar's Moment...

by the Rev. Taylor B. Clark



Fridays at 11:00 am

Change.

Good morning and welcome to another vicar's corner. What a beautiful morning this is. Carol and I sat on our porch today as we breathed in the wonderful Eastern Oregon air, with just a touch of smoke. There is a hint of changing color in the trees. The grass is green with the recent rains.

I am writing as we transition from late summer into fall. These seasons of our year, Summer, Autumn, Winter, and Spring frame what we do and how we adapt. One of the hallmarks of our worldwide Anglican faith are those markers that embrace the liturgical seasons. These seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and the season after Pentecost focus on different aspects of our Christian life.

In this season of the 'common time' after Pentecost this year, we have 4 readings each Sunday. We have the Old Testament, or Hebrew Bible, a reading from the Psalm, a reading from the Epistles of Paul, and a reading from the Gospel. For this year in our readings from the Hebrew Bible, we follow the arc of God's formation of the chosen people from Abraham's call. We explore the lives of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob to Joseph and the life and experiences of Moses.

Presently we are at the beginning of Moses' life. In our last Bible study, we wondered how the Hebrew people were able to maintain their faith through 400 years of life in Egypt? What were the cultural and spiritual markers that kept them aware that they were the chosen people? As we talked around the table, the conversation moved to the question of our identification as the people of the way, Jesus' way. How do we maintain our faith in the face of acceptance by the world. I think that much of my life, I conform to the world's expectations. I pay my bills, attempt to minimize conflict, have a job, care about others. I think that is conforming. So, what is transforming in our walk with Christ? How do we maintain our calling as Christians? I think what I see are those 'Christian things that we do.' Here at St. Stephen's people are regular in their coming together as community. People are engaged in the community through activities. Folks do things like visiting those who cannot come to church. They belong to the Altar Guild or cook breakfast for coffee hour. People ask to help the church and those of the Parrish in a variety of ways that transforms and shapes us into the body of Christ.

I think what I see that separates us as Christians is that people at St. Stephen's want to see Jesus in the lives their friends, companions and associates. They want to be transformed more and more into Christ's likeness and presence.

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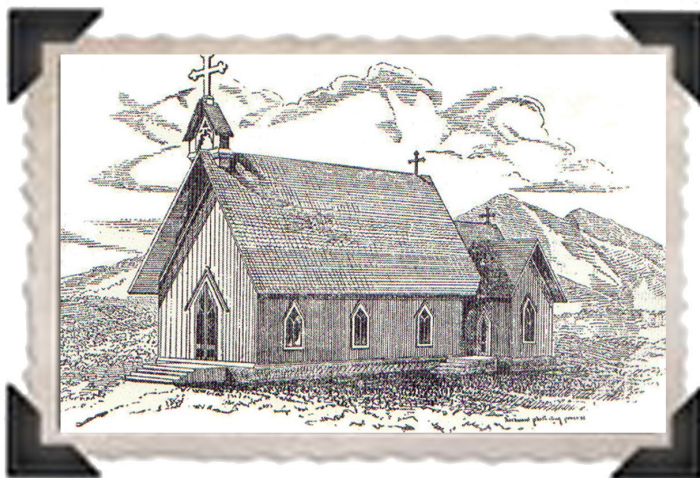
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Sesquicentennial

By: The Rev. Aletha Bonebrake

Founded in 1873, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church at the corner of First and Church Streets is celebrating its 150th year of service. It is the oldest church building of any denomination in continuous use for worship in Eastern Oregon. The town of Baker City had just been laid out in 1865 after the gold strike in Auburn played out, and the following year became the new County Seat when the postmaster moved his variety store and post office. Bishop Morris from Portland had been visiting towns since 1871 and securing lots for churches when he sent Father Reuben Denton Nevius, newly arrived in Oregon, out to oversee construction projects in 1872. He began in Baker City where the cornerstone was laid signifying completion in November of 1873. Baker City was incorporated in 1874. Father Nevius had come from the Civil War Battlefields in Alabama, ministering to a slave compound until the war was over. His wife and daughters died of Yellow Fever there so he went West alone to begin a new life. He was sent out into the hinterlands of Eastern Oregon by Oregon's Bishop to "go up every creek and convert every heathen miner you encounter there." This appealed to him because he was a product of the Second Great Awakening of the 1830's that changed many Protestant church missions toward evangelizing in fields and camps. Nevius was also a renowned botanist after whom many new plants were named. The wild country was a fertile field for all his passions.

When he arrived in Baker City he found a few Episcopalians and set about drawing plans for a place of worship that he intended to be spiritual in design, of a simple construction and affordable to the people. Seed money of \$500 had been given by Bishop Morris and the locals raised the balance of \$1,500 and built it with their own hands.

The Sanctuary walls are chevron design of clear red fir which has never been treated with anything but linseed oil and turpentine. The ceiling is an upside-down hull of a ship, a sanctuary on the rough seas of life. Nevius lived in a small office structure that would attach to the rectangular Sanctuary as it was built and become the Vestry where vestments and altar cloths and other altar furnishings were kept.



St. Stephen's Early Drawing approximately 1873

Nevius planted 32 churches in a similar manner throughout Eastern Oregon and Eastern Washington, many with reminiscent features of his first church in Baker City. Ascension School Chapel and St. Thomas in Canyon City are two examples. He would travel by horse and stage to provide services wherever a congregation could be found and was still working into his 86th year.

Little changed over the years, until the 1950's found mainstream churches in full flower and needing expansion. Churches were a center of social and commercial life in those days and financial support was generous. An extensive renovation in 1953 began when the current rector had his sons demolish the western wall so expansion would be inevitable. The original Sanctuary was raised up, a basement dug within the original stone foundation and set down again. The Sanctuary was extended West by about 12 feet to accommodate the new fashion of moving the altar away from the back wall so the table would face the people. A wing addition, paneled upstairs and down in knotty pine, was added to the North toward the Catholic Church for offices upstairs and classrooms downstairs. A Chapel built by extending the original Vestry to new space off the upper hallway now contains the original altar and reredos (wood panel backing to the altar). The structure was then clad in antique brick. All the carved gothic furnishings and beautiful stained-glass windows commissioned as memorials by long-ago members, had been placed in the 1880-1890 period and remind us of the commitment, losses and faith of frontier society.



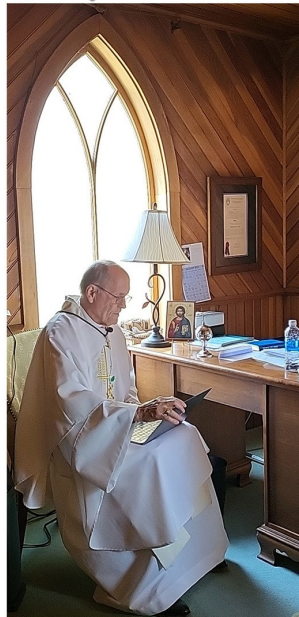
IN LOVING Memory



Barbara Prowell, aged 90, passed away on July 26, 2023, at her daughter's residence in Baker City. A memorial service to celebrate the life of Mrs. Prowell is scheduled for Saturday, September 23, 2023, at 10:00 am. The service will take place at St. Stephens Episcopal Church located at 2177 1st St. Baker City, OR.



**The Rev. Taylor Clark
At the Red Doors & in his office**



**Jr. Acolyte Training Class
Beginning Soon!**



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Mailing Address: PO Box 1146
Baker City, OR 97814



St. Stephen's is a welcoming community of faith.
Please join us Sundays at 9 AM.

We miss you when you are not here.

September - October 2023

Bible Study Fridays 11:00

Sept 3	Holy Eucharist II @ 9 am	Pentecost 14
Sept 10	Church Picnic – Holy Eucharist II @ 9 am	Pentecost 15
Sept 17	Holy Eucharist II @ 9 am	Pentecost 16
Sept 23	10:00 am Barbara Prowell Memorial Service	
Sept 24	7:30 am Vestry Mtg. - Morning Prayer II @ 9am	Pentecost 17
Oct 1	Holy Eucharist II @ 9 am	Pentecost 18
Oct 8	Morning Prayer II @ 9 am	Pentecost 19
Oct 15	Holy Eucharist II @ 9 am	Pentecost 20
Oct 22	Morning Prayer II @ 9 am	Pentecost 21
Oct 29	Morning Prayer II @ 9 am	Pentecost 22