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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CAMPERS DRUM UP A GOOD TIME AT ST. STEPHEN'S
ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
119 Main Street, Millburn, NJ 07041**

MILLBURN, NJ. St. Stephen's 7th annual Drumming Camp was a great success! 18 campers - the largest group to date – gave a drumming and dance performance culminating their camping week at St. Stephen's Church. "Nine of them were 'veterans,' though, to be honest, by the time Friday's performance rolled around, you couldn't tell who had prior experience and who sat behind a drum for the first time on Monday afternoon. Our audience was treated to a spectacular show: a drum machine procession, a story, dancing, and, of course, drumming. All of this and great weather, followed by a wonderful meal. A perfect end to a fabulous week. So much to be thankful for," shared The Reverend Paula J. Toland.

"Yah'Ya Kamate, the incredibly talented musician and teacher who truly seems to work magic with drumming and dancing, allowed the children to share his story of migrating to the United States. The campers took turns speaking a line or two, a powerful way to remind us that we all come to this place with different experiences and history and, yet, all of us are God's beloved children." A native of the Ivory Coast, Kamate plays the djembe and the doundoun (a bass drum) and was a member of his country's national dance company before coming to the United States in 1994. He currently teaches at the Alvin Ailey School in New York as well as leads workshops at various schools, hospitals, churches and juvenile detention centers.

Of course there were also a slew of volunteers who organized transportation, meals, arts and crafts, games, s,mores by the campfire, and donations of backpacks filled with school supplies for the children as they head back to school. The following local businesses made contributions of either discounted or free food for the campers and volunteers: Peter's of Millburn, Oscar's Deli, the Millburn Diner, and Pizzetta. And none of this would have been possible without the

generosity of a former parishioner, now deceased, who, though he wished to remain anonymous, made provisions in his charitable trust to fund the Drumming Camp.

The St. Stephen's Drumming Camp was established in 2013 in partnership with the Diocese of Newark Prison Ministry which outreaches to children who have an incarcerated parent in Essex County. The parish offers a week-long summer camp where kids ages 6-12 learn African Drumming, and other arts and crafts. For more information about the Drumming Camp and other ministries at St. Stephen's, you can visit the St. Stephen's website at ststephensmillburn.org.