

August 27, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AND THE BEAT GOES ON!
SUMMER FUN AT ST. STEPHEN'S DRUMMING CAMP
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
119 Main Street, Millburn, NJ 07041**

MILLBURN, NJ. "Uplifting!" volunteer photographer, Susan Dinan, said in the subject line of a recent email she sent sharing her photos of St. Stephen's summer drumming camp. And they certainly are! After spending the last six months dealing with and continuing to deal with the COVID19 pandemic, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church was thrilled to be able to host their summer drumming camp.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Millburn has been hosting a week-long summer drumming camp since 2013. The camp was established in partnership with the Diocese of Newark Prison Ministry that advocates for restorative justice, interfaith programs, and personal healing for prisoners, their families, and communities, and they were determined to host it again, although they knew it would require compromises and changes.

"We had such a great time! We did almost everything we usually do, though on a much smaller scale, and mostly outside," shared Rev. Paula J. Toland, rector of St. Stephen's Church. "The two camp days started with health screenings and impromptu obstacle courses with staff encouraging and cheering the campers on. Lunch and dinner was served each day followed by arts and crafts, dancing and of course drumming. And everyone abiding (with no complaints!!!) about the mask wearing and physical distancing requirements. Even the weather cooperated. The exception to the smaller scale was dance and drumming with Yah'Ya Kamate, an incredibly talented musician and teacher who truly seems to work magic with the kids. He spent two to three hours on each of the two days with the campers. At the end of day two, the campers went home with painted t-shirts, photos to share, a school backpack and some wonderful memories.

Although a part of me is quite sad that we had only two days instead of five, about half as many campers, and could not invite back many of our older volunteers, most of me can still feel the excitement and joy of last week, and hear the sounds of happy campers and staff as they danced and drummed and played safe outdoor games. We are truly blessed to have this ministry.”

For more information about St. Stephen’s Drumming Camp and other ministries at St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church in Millburn, you can visit the St. Stephen’s website at <http://ststephensmillburn.org/>. For information about the Episcopal Diocese of Newark Prison Ministry, you can visit their website at <https://sites.google.com/site/newarkprisonministry/>.