

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church



Annual Meeting
January 12, 2020

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ANNUAL MEETING

ANNUAL MEETING REPORTS

Rector's Report

I am so grateful to be serving St. Stephen's as your rector. As I finish my first complete calendar year with you, I am thankful for the wonderful clergy (Deacon Marionette Bennett, Rev. Doug Dunn, and Rev. Delores Shortridge) and staff (Gwen Blumenschein, Susan Bailey and Patrick Wilson) who serve alongside me. I am also grateful to the countless volunteers who make this church the wonderful place it is and to your wonderful vestry, who continue to work hard to live into the vision of this church and steward the resources God has blessed us with.

This year, our vestry's primary focus was on growth. We wanted to welcome new members and deepen the engagement of our current membership. I am so happy to announce that we have been successful on both fronts. Our average Sunday attendance has gone up by about 10% and we continue to see new faces in our worship. We have a communications plan and are working to reach out to more people and building our newcomers ministry so that we can continue to be a welcoming place.

We also continue to grow the programming of our church to support all our members. We reinstated programs like the parish life committee and the bell choir and began new committees to support spiritual formation, as well as expanding our offerings for children and youth.

Thank you so much to everyone who joined our strategic planning feedback sessions in the fall. We learned a lot about why people love this church (diverse, welcoming community; meaningful worship, music and formation) and what we feel called to in the future (growing and serving our community, primarily). The vestry has worked to put together 5 goals that we will be working on over the next five years in conjunction with that vision: Growing Young, Growing Spiritually, Growing as Stewards, Growing Community, Growing Outwardly. You will hear more about those areas as we move into the future and continue to grow into the community God is calling us to be.

We continue to run a deficit budget even in the midst of this growth. Our vestry is working hard to reduce that deficit, but it will likely take several years (and thus, a hunk of our savings) before our operating budget is flush. Although I am disappointed to be reducing our savings, I think the drastic cuts necessary to balance the budget immediately would hinder our growth, which is actually what we need in order to balance the budget. Please know that the vestry and I take our financial situation seriously and are striving to be good stewards of our resources.

Finally, I want to thank all of you who have taken the time to meet with me in my first year here. I am beginning to try to see people for a second time, and I am always

willing to meet if there is anything you would like to discuss in terms of the life of the parish or your own spiritual life.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Kate Bradsen, Rector

Deacon's Report (The Rev. Marionette Bennett)

In most situations, change is often seen as a negative action. And it often takes time for everyone or for most people to accept the change. But as the world changes, so must we. Throughout 2019, there was a coming together of the minds, and things began to happen. New ideas were implemented and groups were formed to foster a sense of togetherness. There was a game night, a couple of movie nights and other such things. We wanted to be the Body of Christ within our walls and for the surrounding community. We had an outdoor event in July where our neighbors were invited to come and enjoy themselves, no strings attached.

But the bottom line is this. As an Episcopal Church located on the corner of Del Mar Circle and Peoria Street, we at St. Stephen's have to do more to reach individuals who make up our community. We cannot survive as a church if we don't go into the trenches and meet our neighbors where they are. In the Advent Edition of Colorado Episcopalian, Bishop Kym Lucas speaks about being "Called Together". She tells us that Jesus wants us to be faithful to who we are. She goes on to say that we must be a compassionate church, especially to those who have no voice. This statement is a vow that all Deacons make when they are consecrated. And when we are baptized we make a vow or it is made on our behalf to serve Christ in all persons. To begin to make an impact on the people we come in contact with, we must connect with them regardless of who they are, where they come from, or where they are on their spiritual journey. As an African American female that grew up in the south, I have been on the lonely road so many of our Latino families and other immigrants (our neighbors) are now traveling on. I know how it feels to want to belong but be pushed aside. What is church about if we cannot or will not include our neighbors who are our sisters and brothers in Christ? Things cannot continue as they are.

This year, 2020, I will make an even greater effort to be a neighbor who cares for and love everyone and try to make their lives better. I invite you to join me. Together, let us come together as icons of Christ in this place we call our church home.

Respectfully submitted,
Deacon Marionette

Senior Warden's Report

It is hard to believe it is now 2020...a new year and a new decade. Although I am one that looks toward the future and the positive momentum of our transformational journey, I will provide a brief overview of the vestry and church activity for the past year.

I want to thank all the parishioners who have been supportive of my role as Senior Warden. It is a definitely a different path than I have journeyed before. Those of you that have raised your hand, or cheerfully accept a role when asked are greatly appreciated.

I also encourage everyone to speak out, speak up, share your opinion, share what you think, share ideas and concerns. Every parishioner should feel free to reach out to me or any vestry member. If you don't raise your hand and share an idea, or express a concern, we don't know it exists. We are here to support the continual transformation of the congregation and to do the work of the church!

VESTRY YEAR IN REVIEW

- Vestry met regularly throughout 2019 to attend to business, set policy and manage the budget and finances. We still have an operating deficit but thankfully the amount continues to decrease.
- The Vestry identified and took action on immediate priorities
 - We identified a Vestry liaison for every committee to create engagement with the work of the church and the vestry.
 - Building and grounds issues (aka The Living Water Project) With the help of many members of the congregation the sanctuary was deep cleaned and the nursery has been drywalled and painted.
- We held two Vestry retreats – in March we set our goals. In November we measured our success towards the goals and reassessed for 2020 with feedback from the congregation.
- We held Vision sessions giving everyone an opportunity to provide feedback. It is with this feedback the Vestry established 5 areas of growth for St Stephen's.
 1. Growing Young – increasing engaged youth and young families
 2. Growing Spiritually – deepening our faith and discipleship through worship and formation
 3. Growing as Stewards – balance budget. Increased giving and management of building and grounds (year-round stewardship and legacy)
 4. Growing Community – continue growth as a diverse and welcoming community (Parish family life etc.)
 5. Growing Outwardly – establish a signature project which engages those in the church to serve those in our community (newcomers, evangelism and community service)
- We have had some success with our 2019 goals. There has been a lot of positive momentum that we look to carry into 2020.
 - We welcomed new members that have joined our congregation.

- We are building youth programs with Sunday School and Rite 13 youth group
- We began Sunday morning forums on topics such as Christian Art and Advent preparation and Wednesday Bible Study and
- We had several opportunities to celebrate our congregational family with Parish Life events.
- We have new members to support the important work of Altar Guild, Altar Servers, Ushers, Greeters, the Technology team to support our Sunday worship.
- The Music Ministry is strong with the support of our organist, Gwen, who also took on the role of directing choir and bells. A special thanks to all those that participated in the special performances and the very successful Veterans Day show.
- We continue to have wonderful hospitality and great fellowship of coffee hour following services. A special thanks to those that make sure the kitchen is always in order, coffee made and those that bring food to share.
- We have great outreach programs with Totes for Hope, Aurora Warms the Night, Thanksgiving Food baskets and Christmas Giving tree.
- Thanks to all of those who participated and supported the rummage sale, the family fun day, Vacation Bible School, the Men's Group pancake breakfast and the Women's Group holiday fiving.
- At our meeting in December, vestry passed a 2020 budget that eliminated additional expenses. Although we continue to have an operating deficit, we are working to become breakeven in the next few years. This will occur with a growth in income (through stewardship and fundraising). We also thanked our two outgoing members, Paul Mitchell and Jean Burkhart, for their roles on the Vestry and service to the church!

As I continue to note, St Stephens is on a transformational journey that is bringing different, new and exciting changes. We continue to be blessed with positive momentum with God's love and each of you; your commitment to each other, our collective faith journey and the health of this parish. Thank you everyone for this ongoing support of our mission, we truly are ***Changing Lives.***

Respectfully,

Karen Hardy, Senior Warden

1/1/2020

Junior Warden's Report

Much of the building and grounds activity this past year has revolved around water damage from a flood in the nursery. Mold testing indicated mold in a portion of the nursery walls. A mold mitigation company was hired to remove the infected drywall and treat the studs and adjacent walls with disinfectants and sealers. Volunteers from the

parish, including Sheldon Hardy, Harry Seese, Betty Parko, and myself replaced the drywall with mildew resistant drywall and painted it to match the surrounding walls.

Plumblin services came out and inspected all four sump pumps in the church and found that three of the four were defective. Plumblin replaced the one in the Elevator pit, and a group of volunteers consisting of Gordon Heil, Tom Parko, Jim Willis, and myself replaced the other two faulty pumps. The vestry originally voted to pursue installing a drain in the swamp area east of the building and connecting to an existing storm drain on the east side of the parking lot. I decided to put this on hold as the repair of all the sump pumps may have corrected the situation.

The entire church has been rekeyed. We felt that this would be a good idea since there were too many keys unaccounted for and it required too many keys for administrative personnel to keep track of. Now we have a simple system with a limited number of master keys required.

Our spring Workday consisted of many volunteers laying landscape fabric and spreading wood mulch to the areas on the east side of the church. The fall workday consisted of a few volunteers cleaning the sanctuary to prepare for advent and slitting some of our landscape bulbs.

Our Facilities Manager & Sexton, Patrick Wilson has been invaluable in keeping our church clean and helping with Building and grounds projects, as well as contracting mold mitigation, rekeying, and landscaping contractors.

I would like to form a building and grounds group to help me handle some of the small projects around the church. As I work typically 50-60 hours per week with my job, I don't always have time to do projects right away. Anyone interested please contact me at 303.587.8069

Respectfully submitted,

George Biedenstein, Junior Warden

Growing Young: Children and Youth

The mission of the children and youth ministry at St. Stephen's is to create a program so children and youth can develop an understanding of God while being part of a safe, vibrant, multi-generational worshipping community that knows and supports them. Young people are given opportunities to integrate their faith into their lives by serving as leaders in ministry inside and outside the church.

Welcoming families with children and youth is an essential part of our church's strategy for growth and a goal shared by much of the congregation. During 2019, we reinstated summer camp, and began targeted communication and family outreach events to help with welcoming new families. We celebrated Rite 13 with our youth group in June and they are planning a service trip for the summer of 2020. We have also shifted our

Sunday school curriculum back to the play based Godly Play model we used in the past.

We see the growth of children and youth in two ways. One is that we simply have more children. We welcomed several families with young children last year, and in October we baptized four babies born into the congregation. In the fall of 2018 we had about 4-6 kids in Sunday school on average, now we have closer to 10-12 on average. Another sign of our growing young is the integration of our young people into the ministry of our congregation. We have welcomed two new teams of acolytes, and youth are helping with our audio-visual teams and acolyting as well as our outreach efforts.

We are blessed with a group of committed volunteers who volunteer in our nursery and Sunday school, as well as our youth group. I am especially grateful to Rev. Delores Shortridge, who taught Sunday school for much of last year, as well as Rachel Cave and Jim Burton, who lead our youth group. I am also thankful for Marsha Botts, who has been teaching in our new Godly Play model and helping new teachers to learn this program. Thanks to our continuing volunteers: Lula Baku, Jean Burkhart, Ruth LaFrance, Regina Maker, Earl Shortridge as well as Lisa Perez and Franky Smith who began helping with children in the fall. And thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who helped with summer camp, especially Sandy Bahr, Jan Dunn, Vincent and Celestina Gayle, Bill Hauet, Peg Mancuso, Paul Mitchell, and Harry Seese.

Our primary goals for 2020 are to continue our growth. We hope to hire a youth director and welcome some more youth, as well as continue programs to keep our families engaged and involved. Again, I am truly grateful for all the volunteers who make this effort possible. I encourage all members of our congregation to get to know our young people and welcome them as children of God into our faith community.

Respectfully Submitted,
The Rev. Kate Bradsen

Growing Spiritually: Music (Gwen Blumenschein, Director of Music)

LEADERSHIP

Daniel Romero was hired as Director of Music in January and a few weeks later stepped down from the job to accept a position as organist at Wellshire Presbyterian Church in Denver. At the end of January, Gwen Blumenschein agreed to step in as interim director. After Easter, Gwen was asked to be Music Director for two years.

ST. STEPHEN'S RINGING SAINTS

With the addition of some new members, the choir began regular rehearsals (after a long hiatus of regular ringing) and played for the church service several times in 2019. Bells played for Rachel Samson's (née Cave) wedding on Saturday, October 12, 2019. Bell Members are Nancy Fuhr, Bill Hauet, Harriett Heil, Carolyn Kendrick, Rachel

Samson. Newer members are Gary Blumenschein, Sue Knight, John Lanning, Lesley Mack, Mimi Munroe, Judi Richardson

CANTERBURY CHOIR

A church choir is about the only group who practices regularly for the church service! The members of Canterbury Choir are a dedicated group who rarely miss a rehearsal or a service. In addition to regular Sunday services they participate in Evensong services, The Longest Night service, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil and other special events. During Lent the choir offered a service of Evensong. The Canterbury choir sang for the Easter Vigil which was held at 6 AM on Easter morning. They did double duty by also singing for the regular 9 AM Easter service and were joined by the St. Stephen's Ringing Saints who provided music for Prelude and Communion. In Advent, on Sunday, December 8, 2019 the choir led the music in a service of Evensong at 6 PM. An abbreviated service of Lessons and Carols was presented at 7 PM on Christmas Eve featuring anthems by the choir and carol singing by the congregation.

Members include Sopranos: Nancy Fuhr, Carolyn Kendrick, Sue Knight, Mimi Munroe; Altos: Barb Biedenstien, Debbie Sorensen, Michele Zuniga; Tenors: George Biedenstien, John Lanning; Tenor/Bass: Gary Blumenschein; Bass: Bill Hauet, Donne Puckle, Harry Seese, Jim Willis

SUMMER MUSIC AT ST. STEPHEN'S

Once again the men of the congregation were invited to sing one Sunday in the summer. Their selection was a TTBB arrangement of "Rise Up, O Men of God." The women of the choir sang one Sunday in the summer. Their selection was a SSAA arrangement of "You Are the New Day." In addition, summer special music was provided by Carolyn Kendrick, Mimi Munroe and Debbie Sorensen, and Michele Zuniga.

VETERAN'S SHOW: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2019 AT 4 PM

The Canterbury Choir began rehearsals for the Veteran's Show (Honoring Veterans While Longing for Peace) at their first September rehearsal. In addition to adding 30 minutes to each Thursday night rehearsal, they engaged in three 3-hour rehearsals before the show. Set was designed and created by Gary Blumenschein. Bill Hauet provided coconuts for the men of the choir to enhance their rendition of "There is Nothing Like a Dame" from the musical, South Pacific. The show was conceived as a radio show (which meant no one had to memorize!). The script was written by Gwen Blumenschein who also prepared the choir and directed the show. Bill Hauet and Tom Parko were the announcers for the show.

Music representing World War I, World War II, the Korean "Conflict" and the Viet Nam war were included. Carolyn Kendrick and Debbie Sorensen sang "Sisters" and "Bugle Boogie Boy," Our bugle boy was played by Marcus Sutherland. Mimi Munroe sang solos, including a song that she wrote as a teenager and was joined by her partner, Patrick O'Flynn in a duet, "Get Together Now", which encouraged audience participation. Nancy Fuhr became "Rosie the Riveter". The children of the church were

represented in a Little Orphan Annie Skit. Participating were Talia and Tessa Kim, Marcus Sutherland and Kymbrlee Rodasta. Nancy Fuhr played Mrs. Silo. Lillian Nelson participated as a voice from the audience asking one of the announcers, "But what was the war REALLY like?" Special guests included the Heather Gardens Uke Crew under the direction of Darlene Park, Ron Seggerman singing "Bui Doi" from the musical, Miss Saigon, Susan Carl who portrayed her mother, Lucile Wise, who was a WASP during World War II, and Park Peters who sang "East of Eden" while the American Flag was brought forward. The American Flag was carried by Joe Edwards and flags of the military branches were brought forward by Joe Rippetoe. The audience was encouraged to join in the singing of all the anthems of the military branches: Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and Air Force. The program closed with all singing, "Let There Be Peace on Earth."

The choir was most grateful to Don Hayford for his excellent work as our sound engineer. Gwen appreciated the skillful work of the stage crew: George Biedenstein, Gary Blumenschein, Bill Hauet, John Lanning and Jim Willis. We also thank Susan Bailey for the program, Carol Bradsen for designing the publicity flyer, the Vestry of the church for providing the reception (including jello shots!) and Rector, Kate Bradsen for her support.

ADDITIONAL MUSIC & MUSICIANS

Occasionally throughout the year the harpsichord was played, usually for the Prelude music. We welcomed guest flautist, Liz Rutledge several times during the year. Thanks to the following substitute organists who played in Gwen's absences: Mike McBride, Linda Mack, and Kathryn Walsh. All congregation members are part of the music program at St. Stephen's because you all are given the opportunity to lift your voices in song during the services of worship. You are all encouraged to consider a more in-depth participation by singing or ringing in a choir, playing a musical instrument, or providing special music in the summer.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen Blumenschein, Director of Music

Growing Spiritually: Spiritual Formation (Suzanne Klemp)

Our purpose is to support and nurture the spiritual life of the people of St Stephen's.

This year we formed a core committee to thoughtfully and prayerfully consider a variety of options for both creating and supporting spiritual growth programming and activities. Among those offerings were:

- Sunday morning classes after church
 - Christian art and architecture series
 - Advent preparation series
- Saturday half day retreat addressing end of life issues, considerations, resources

- Support for other formation activities, including:
 - Quiet day in Advent hosted by Daughters of the King
 - Advent prayer stations (labyrinth, coloring page)
- Wednesday spiritual formation - several evolutions of offerings- current forum includes:
 - opportunity to participate in totes for hope, bible study group, noon Eucharist, brown bag lunch

GOALS FOR 2020 - GROWING IN SPIRIT

- To offer a curriculum incorporating the practices outlined by the Episcopal Church for "The Way of Love -Practices for Jesus-Centered Life"
- To begin The Way of Love practices by focusing first on opportunities to "Turn" (Pause, listen, and choose to follow Jesus)
- To develop subsequent offerings for each Way of Love step to focus on for a season

GRATITUDE

Thank you to core committee members, to all who prepared, led and attended classes, to all who provided and attended Advent Quiet Day, to all who provided and partook in prayer stations, to everyone preparing and participating in Wednesday formation activities, to all who supported our efforts and benefited from our offerings, and to our wonderfully generous and supportive clergy.

INVITATION

Contact Suzanne if you are interested in contributing ideas, sharing your leadership talent, and/or participating in spiritual formation classes, retreats, or events. We are in the process of discerning and developing our offerings for this new year!

Growing Spiritually: Altar Guild (Jean Burkhart)

The Altar Guild works with diligence and quiet dignity to see that the Altar area is clean and prepared for every service that occurs at St. Stephen's.

Among the tasks we are responsible for are the laundering and ironing of the linens, maintaining cleanliness and quality of all vestments, the washing and polishing of all of the silver and glass used, preparation of LEM kits, changing candles, filling of the oil candles, selling flowers for Mother's Day, Father's Day and All Saints Day, attending regularly scheduled Saturday morning meetings and most importantly, helping one another accomplish our goals.

Members of the Altar Guild include Jean Burkhart, Joan Earnhart, Vincent Gayle, Celestina Gayle, Jill Goforth, and Kip Rogers. The Rev. Kate and Deacon Marionette are honorary members of the Guild. Though our numbers may be small, our enthusiasm, sense of mission and our love of God help to keep our spirits and

dedication high. Not only do we thank each member, current and past, but we thank the many, many parishioners who lend a hand and support our ministry. The BOBS (beasts of burdens), our husbands and men of the parish who help us decorate the sanctuary for the holiday seasons are especially appreciated by every member of the Altar Guild.

We always happy to welcome new members and lovingly train them in the traditions of an Episcopal Altar Guild.

Growing Spiritually: Daughters of the King (Marsha Botts)

The Order of The Daughters of the King is an Anglican lay religious order for women. It was founded in New York in the 19th century and continues today. A Daughter pledges herself to a life-long program of prayer, service and evangelism. The Rule of Prayer is mentioned first because it should come first in every Daughter's life.

The desire to pray is God's gift to us. We can talk to God in our own words or by praying specific written and/or remembered prayers such as the Lord's Prayer, the Rosary, daily meditations books, and prayers for different occasions. We receive prayer requests from Daughters, church members, friends, neighbors, relatives or anyone who feels that extra prayers are needed.

At St. Stephen's, we are members of Teresa of Avila Chapter. The current officers are Marsha Botts, President; Mary Jane Seese, Vice President; and Sandy Bahr, Treasurer. Other members include Marionette Bennett, Barbara Bureau, Joan Earnhart, Kathy Everett, Marjorie Matthews, Betty Rich and Denise Pentico. Linda Emenyonu is currently in training to become a Daughter.

In 2019, we had two successful Quiet Days led by Reverend Kate Bradsen.

Should anyone like to know more about The Order of The Daughters of The King, please contact one of the members.

Respectfully submitted,

Marsha Botts

Growing Spiritually: Eucharistic Visitors (The Rev. Marionette Bennett)

Eucharistic Visitors are an extension of the Body of Christ. They provide a bridge between the community of faith and members who cannot be present. These individuals who are trained by Deacons of the Diocese and licensed by the Bishop take the presence of Christ with them, in the sacrament, to nourish the receivers in body and spirit. With the words *The Gifts of God for the People of God* they join people into one body, allowing all members to gather around the Lord's Table.

I sincerely appreciate the dedication and devotion of all who serve as Eucharistic Visitors at St. Stephen's. The importance of this ministry cannot be overstated as the

ability to participate in the Holy Eucharist is one of the most important rituals of our faith. Your willingness to serve in this ministry is a great gift to the church.

Special thanks and appreciation to Sandy Bahr, George Biedenstein, and Cephas Rogers.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marionette Bennett

Growing Spiritually: Lay Ministers (The Rev. Marionette Bennett)

Always willing, always available describes St. Stephen's Lay Ministers. This group includes greeters, ushers, readers, Eucharistic Ministers, and acolytes. Their main function is to help maintain the flow of our worship services each Sunday and on special occasions such as weddings and funerals. They do all they can to help everyone in attendance have a positive worship experience.

Since October of last year, three of our very young children have served as acolytes. Kymbrlee Rodasta, Mayar Malual, and Joseph Gideon are telling and showing us that you're never too young to serve in God's House. These children have only served four times; however, they have done a tremendous job and they are not afraid to take on added responsibilities. On January 19, 2020 three more children will begin serving as acolytes. They are Lowry Bradsen, Micah Lucas, and Nathan Lucas. Let us welcome these young children and encourage them in their efforts.

To all members of this ministry, please know that the work you do is greatly appreciated.

And just to let you know, there is no age limit in this ministry. All are welcome to join! You can speak with Deacon Marionette after any service or call her at 303 319 1435.

Respectfully submitted,

Marionette Bennett, Deacon

Growing as Stewards: Finance (Molly Link)

A finance committee was appointed consisting of Molly Link, Gordon Heil and Derek Howard. An audit committee was appointed to audit the church records for 2018; on completion a copy of the audit was submitted to the Vestry. A financial policy was established and approved by the Vestry. We reviewed financial assets and established contingency funds for six months and capital expense projections for three years. The budget deficit was addressed and projections made for growth in income and expenses for four years. The budget for 2020 was reviewed and revised to begin to reduce the annual budget, then forwarded to the Vestry.

CAPITAL EXPENSE BUDGET

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Year</u>
○ Water & Foundation:10,000 + landscaping 3,000	13,000	2020
○ Parking Lot resurfacing	30,000	2020*
○ Organ console replacement	20,000	2021
○ Boiler replacement	10,000	2022
○ Xeriscaping	5,000	2022

* If the parking lot doesn't need to be torn up during the Water& Foundation project this expense may be moved to 2021

Molly Link
Finance Committee Chair

Growing as Stewards: Stewardship (John Lanning)

The 2019 Stewardship Committee was formed with Tom Burkhart, Karen Hardy (liaison to vestry), John Lanning, Michele Zuninga, and Rev. Kate Bradsen membership. The Committee decided not to select a chair and to work by consensus. The Committee is committed to changing lives through Christ, visioning the future for St. Stephen's, lowering the annual budget deficit, and implementing the broadest definition of stewardship over the entire calendar year. The fall stewardship campaign ran from 6 October through 24 November.

The 2019 Stewardship Campaign began with a series of envision meetings facilitated by Rev. Kate with the expressed goal of providing feedback to the vestry on issues important to the parish and assisting the vestry in establishing a budget. Of the six meetings planned, four meetings were attended by 28 participants. Discussions were centered on (1) What Do We Love About St. Stephen's? (2) What Is God's Plan for St. Stephen's? and (3) What Is God Calling You To Do At St. Stephen's? While participation was low, discussions were positive and supportive, and comments were compiled into a report submitted to the vestry.

The Campaign continued into November with Sunday service testimonials from members around *What St. Stephen's Means To Me And My Journey In Christ*. Pledge cards were collected throughout November and blessed on Sunday, 24 November.

Following the completion of the Campaign, members of the vestry called all pledging members to thank them for their financial support of the parish, and members of the Stewardship Campaign called members to encourage financial support through pledging. The phone calls initiated many positive conversations with new and continuing members of St. Stephen's.

As of 3 December 2019, a total of 58 (households and individual members) had pledged a total of \$164,474 for the 2020 calendar year. This constitutes a slight increase in the number of pledges and in the pledged income over a similar time in the previous year.

There is reason to believe that additional pledges for 2020 will provide an additional \$10,000 to \$15,000 of pledged income.

While the pledged income does not erase the budget deficit for St. Stephen's, the stewardship campaign continues the momentum shaping the future at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

The Stewardship Committee will continue meeting in order to develop improvements for the fall campaign, coordinate with the Legacy Committee, and develop a plan for submission to the vestry for year-round stewardship.

Respectively Submitted,

Stewardship Committee

Growing Community: Fellowship/Parish Life (Harriett Heil)

The Fellowship Committee worked hard to find activities that would appeal to the entire parish in 2019. It appears that having potluck meals has not gone out of favor at St. Stephens, as our events always had one to kick off the different events.

We started off with Game Night which introduced many of us to new games, and showed us who had special powers at winning! In the summer months, many of us gathered at the Aurora City Municipal Building Great Lawn to listen to the Free Concerts in the Park. There were food trucks available for those who hadn't packed a picnic. The fresh air and music was very relaxing! We have had two movie nights, starting with "Michael". It was about an unlikely angel, portrayed by a younger John Travolta, who impacted the lives of the people around him. It was great fun. Our most recent movie came on "Polar Express Night". After our festive potluck, Mimi Munroe and Patrick Flynn accompanied us on their guitars as we sang Jingle Bells and Feliz Navidad. The big surprise for the younger set came when St. Nick appeared with a special gift based on the movie they were about to see. We had a Chili Cookoff to find out just who among us had the best chili recipe in the Parish. Congratulations to Jean and Tom Burkhart whose chili reigned supreme. Now, more people are also aware of just how great cinnamon rolls are when served with chili!

Thanks goes out to all who helped plan, organize, setup and cleanup each event: Deborah Rice-Cave, Deacon Marionette, Jean and Tom Burkhart, Harriett and Gordon Heil, Cissy Wetzberger, Rachel Samson, Rev. Kate. Also, huge thanks to those of you who came out to have a good time with us all. If you'd like to help us plan more events for 2020, please talk to the Rev. Kate or Harriett Heil. The fun will just keep coming!

Harriett Heil

Growing Community: Women's Group (Jean Howard)

The Women's Group enjoyed visiting two Museums and eating out together. This included visiting the new Gaylord Hotel over the Rockies. We also toured Celestial Tea and Leaning Tree. We spent some months enjoying each other's company, eating our lunches and playing games, the current favorite is Chicken Foot (dominos). During many of our outings, some of the husbands of members and gentlemen of the congregation joined us: remember "all are Welcome" is our Church's promise. Eight Ladies prepared and delivered surprise Christmas Gift Bags to 9 of our congregational shut ins. This is the second year the group has done this.

We are always ready to greet you any Third Thursday of the month, in the Church Library at 12:30. Please come and join us and give us your ideas as to where this group could help you in your fellowship journey.

Blessings

Jean Howard

Growing Community: Gastromartyrs (Don & Patti Hayford)

Gastromartyrs is St. Stephen's Supper Club. Our groups have been meeting for over 40 years. We meet September through May to enjoy good food, good company and conversation. The gatherings in September, our "kick-off party", our Christmas Party in December and the May "end of season" party are open to all adults in the parish. The remaining months, dinners are held in various homes normally on the 3rd Saturday of each month with groups ranging from 6-12 people. The host prepares the main course and each couple or individual prepares a dish to enjoy along with the meal. You'll find everything from fine china and crystal to a very casual affair. You can be guaranteed good food, fun and fellowship. Both singles and couples are welcome and you can join on either a full time or substitute basis. If you have any questions please feel free to call Patti or Don Hayford at 303-699-8877.

Growing Outwardly: Outreach (Lu Burton)

The Outreach Committee's most visible project is our Totes of Hope. It is the program that was set up to give food for weekends to the children who attend Lynn Knoll school. We are in constant contact with the school, so the parents are aware of the program. Any food left is distributed to members of the community who are in need.

We also take clothing and sometimes food, if we have any left, to Aurora Interchurch who has a food and clothing distribution program.

We give out grocery credit cards at Thanksgiving so families who need help get to have holiday food. Christmas brings the giving tree where children's gifts are bought for families needing a brighter Christmas.

We are constantly collecting clothes and toiletries for St. Francis Center who has a wonderful program for the homeless in Denver. Once a year we supply skivvies and socks for them.

This year we prepared about 125 bags of food packets and toiletries for Aurora Warms the Night that were distributed by their Minister on street corners for those who were in need.

We try to stay open to new situations that need help.

Growing Outwardly: Communications (Susan Bailey)

Our communications team, the Rev. Kate Bradsen, Dale Nichols, Kip Rogers and Susan Bailey, seek to invite all to experience the welcoming, diverse community that is St. Stephen's. We especially want to reach families with children at home, the nearby medical community—both those in care or those caring for others—and our neighbors in growing neighborhoods nearby with the news that St. Stephen's could be a vital part of their lives. We focused on developing effective information distribution both internally to current parishioner as well as those from outside groups who use our facility and outwardly into our community. St. Stephen's Aurora website (maintained by Susan Bailey) and Facebook page (moderated by Dale Nichols) are gateways for parishioners and outsiders in the community providing information about services, spiritual formation, fellowship, and outreach opportunities. Weekly eNewsletters (edited by Susan Bailey) and our quarterly NewsMagazine (edited by Carol Bradsen and Karen Hardy) provide information on church events as well as the overall mission of the church. Bulletin board displays, monthly or seasonal announcement sheets (new in 2019), flyers for individual events, and overhead announcements at services (new in 2019) invite those who attend services or use the church facilities to grow spiritually and in community. Our street sign board and temporary banners advertise services and events where newcomers and seekers are always welcome, such as the Community Yard Sale (May 2019) and the Family Fun Day (August 2019). An outdoor display box (new in 2019) by the front doors provides basic information about service times and office hours. We advertised Easter services and newcomer opportunities in local Aurora publications. The team appreciates the many volunteers who are photographing church events to share our church life with each other, our online community, and those seeking information about St. Stephen's.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Bailey, Parish Administrator

Growing Outwardly: Newcomers

11 families (25 people) began regularly attending St. Stephen's in 2019
68 names were recorded in our guestbook.

We hope to continue this growth into 2020 and help our newcomers feel integrated into the church.

We have a wonderful newcomer's team who has worked to redo our guestbook, pew cards and information about our church. They also help to host our Newcomer Meet n' Greet on the 5th Sunday of the month. Thanks to Tom Burkhart, Mary Bazel, Molly Link and Earl Shortridge for all their help!

Growing in Faithful Service: Vestry Nominee Biographies *(we will elect 2)*

DEBBIE SORENSEN

My name is Debbie Sorensen and I am interested in running for your vestry.

I am a cradle Episcopalian and almost a cradle St. Stephenite, having attended this church from the time I was a baby. My parents were part of a group of people who felt it was important to start an Episcopal church in this Aurora community. It is one of my goals to see that we continue to have a thriving church in this place.

I have a Bachelors in Business Administration with a concentration in Accounting and have spent my entire career doing financial work for physicians. I am currently the Finance and Business Operations Manager for an ENT practice in Lone Tree where I have been for the past 15 years.

I have had the pleasure of participating in many committees at church including 2 terms in Vestry and as Church Treasurer. My committee participation includes finance, personnel, audit and currently the endowment committee. My biggest love here at St. Stephens is participating in our music program, singing in the choir for more years than I can count, as well as ringing in the recently reincarnated bell choir. I love my church family and would love to be a part of a Vestry once again as we continue to change and grow with our new spiritual leadership.

MARY BAZEL

I was born and raised in Southeastern Kentucky in a town (Middlesboro) that butted into both Tennessee and Virginia. My Dad was the son of a coal miner who insisted that when his boys were big enough to pass for 12, they went to work in the mines. When my dad turned 18, he put down his pick and went back to school and then graduated from Pharmacy school and opened a drugstore. My Mom went to Berea College and became a teacher. When I was born she "retired".

I was raised and Baptized in the Southern Baptist Church. When I was around 10 years old, I broke with the church because of their stand on segregation. My Mom insisted I continue going but my heart was not in it. As soon as I hit my teen years my Mom gave in and didn't insist I attend.

I graduated from East Tennessee State University in 1971 and taught school in both Middlesboro KY and Harriman TN. During this time, I didn't attend Church and had no interest in spiritual matters. After 4 years of teaching I married a man in the Air Force

and we moved to Denver in 1980. I got a job working for the Federal Government and worked at both Lowry (AF Finance Center) and at Fitzsimons. I was supervisor of Accounts payable at Fitzsimons until it closed and then returned to Lowry and worked in Foreign Military Sales until I retired in 2008.

When we moved to Denver, we purchased a house in Montbello and I began Attending St Andrew Lutheran Church. two of my sons were baptized there and it was our church home for many years. After my divorce we sold the house and I bought a condo in Aurora where I raised the boys.

When my youngest Son was a Junior in High School, I met Terry Moses. He has been my partner for 17 years. He rented a house in Leadville and I became interested in all the things going on at St George Episcopal Church. I went to find out more about it and they gave me a job drying dishes. I was hooked and became a devoted member of the church.

After moving back to Aurora full time, I really didn't attend church. One day my dear friend told me about how St Stephens Church had been so open to her Bridge Club. I asked her if she would attend a service with me and she agreed. She is not a church goer but I can thank her for finding me a church home. I feel so at home here. I love the diversity and acceptance of all who come.

Growing in Faithful Service: Diocesan Convention Nominees *(we will elect 3)*

Rachel Samson (vestry)

Tom Parko (vestry)

Growing in Faithful Service: Service Awards

ELIZABETH STARKEY SERVICE AWARD: LU BURTON

Lu is the embodiment of our outreach program. Not only does she chair our outreach committee, she also is here almost every Wednesday to greet those who come to receive food through Totes for Hope. She greets everyone by name and with a hug. She is always reaching out to help where needed in our church and in our community. She sets a wonderful example for all of us who seek to serve Christ in all persons.

ST. STEPHEN'S MVP (MOST VALUED PARISHONER): JOAN EARNHART

Joan is always there to greet people with a smile on Sunday mornings. She regularly sets up beautiful tables for special occasions, keeps the church's membership record books, and has been a faithful altar guild director and trainer. She is such a gift to our church. We would not be the same place without her!

2018 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Annual Meeting St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Aurora, CO

January 27, 2019

The meeting was called to order with prayer by The Reverend Kate Bradsen. At 10:30 am. Rev. Bradsen reviewed the polity and healthy church norms of the Episcopal Church.

A quorum was declared with sixty members (including proxy votes) present.

Reflections and Gratitude – The Rev. Bradsen acknowledged the long tenure of Sandy Bahr as Clerk of the Vestry and this meeting. First order of business was to elect a new Clerk. Ruth LaFrance was nominated as Clerk. Her nomination was approved by acclamation.

Minutes from the January 28, 2017 Annual Meeting were approved by acclamation.

The Rev. Bradsen thanked The Rev. Marionette Bennett for her support and dedication to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, also acknowledged were The Rev. Dr. Douglas Dunn, The Rev. Delores Shortridge and The Rev. Curtis Wait. Additional thanks to Music Director, Daniel Romero; Organist, Gwen Blumenschein; Parish Administrator, Susan Bailey; and Sexton, Patrick Wilson. Each volunteer group was acknowledged and thanked by The Rev. Bradsen noting that when all groups were asked to stand, just about everyone in the church stood.

Joe Edwards, retiring Vestry Warden, Harry Seese, retiring Jr. Warden and retiring Vestryperson, Jean Howard were acknowledged and thanked for work and dedication.

The Elizabeth Starkey Service Award was given to George and Barb Biedenstein for their service and ministry.

St. Stephen's Most Valuable Parishioner Service Award was given to Mike Kendrick and Greg Rindone for literally changing the face of St. Stephen's.

Financial Report – Treasurer, Kendy Rindone presented the 2018 Treasurer's report and 2019 Budget with the help of graphic slides. The 2018 report indicated expenses were kept low and income was flat. Due to bequests we were able to pay off the Mortgage, repair the church roof, turn St. Nicholas House into a Rectory, return the offices to the church building, made sewer/boiler repairs and finished the kitchen. Special contributions and volunteer time made it possible to complete several other projects around the facility. The 2019 Budget indicates a deficit of \$41,250.00. Current Plate & Pledge, Fundraising and Facility use minus fixed and anticipated expenses. In response to questions, Kendy Rindone indicated the Vestry has approved the purchase of a \$200,000 CD at 1.79% interest and the Calendar of Events for 2019 (in the annual report) has scheduled two Congregational Meetings to update the church members to the health of St. Stephens.

Elections - Karen Hardy has accepted the position of Sr. Warden. George Biedenstein was elected by acclamation as Jr. Warden.

Gwen Blumenschein nominated Jim Willis for a 3 year term on the Vestry, nomination was seconded. The Rev. Bradsen noted Tom Parko who had completed a vacant Vestry term would, if elected, continue on the Vestry for 3 year term. Both were elected by acclamation. The Rev. Bradsen said a prayer with the congregation laying hands on the new Vestry members.

Review of Goals & needs for 2019 – Goal of welcoming 15 new families; updating our policies and procedures in writing; providing programs for our Spiritual life; community events and fundraising. How do we help? Pray for the Church, invite someone to church, personally welcome all newcomers, join a committee or established volunteer group, participate in the upcoming Church Directory.

In answer to questions – The current newsletter may become bi-monthly or quarterly with announcements in the Sunday bulletin and sent out as e-blasts; Sunday sermons are recorded and available on the Website under worship/sermons.

The Rev. Bradsen adjourned the meeting at 11:33 am

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth LaFrance, Clerk for this meeting

Nursery Wishlist

We recently put up new dry wall and repainted our nursery. (Special thanks to George Biedenstein, Harry Seese, Sheldon Hardy and Betty Parko for all their work!)

We need donations to replace items that had to be thrown out as part of the mold remediation. All toy donations need to be washable. Please bring new or clean, gently used items and leave them in the nursery or speak with the Rev. Kate. Our wishlist:

Two washable area rugs

Children's books (religious themes, especially appreciated)

Washable small toys for babies and toddlers (no stuffed animals please)



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