

# St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Annual Reports



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To watch a recording of the annual meeting, scan this code or  
go to **[ststephensRVA.org/annual-meeting](https://ststephensRVA.org/annual-meeting)**.







# St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

## Annual Parish Meeting

Sunday, February 4, 2024 | 10:10 a.m.

## Agenda

### CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER

The Rev. John D. Rohrs, *Rector*

### ELECTION OF VESTRY

David Hodge and Anne McElroy

*Nominating Committee Co-Chairs*

### SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Andy Luke

### VICAR'S REPORT

The Rev. William S. Stanley

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Pendleton Rogers

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Fred Staley

### RECTOR'S REPORT

The Rev. John D. Rohrs

### QUESTIONS

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The vestry nominating committee was formed in the fall of 2023 and approved by the vestry on October 24, 2023. The committee consisted of the six outgoing vestry members: Richard Hamrick, David Hodge, Anne McElroy, Penn Rogers, Martha Sherman, and Nancy Thompson, along with five additional at-large members: Kathryn Angus, Richard Kay, Joan Putney, Brandon Spalding, and Lauren Turner.

The vestry nomination period was opened to the parish from October 25 to November 12. Nomination and recommendation forms were submitted online during this time to create a candidate pool. The committee met several times during and after this period to generate a candidate slate from this pool. The nominating committee presented the slate to the vestry on November 28 and received the vestry's endorsement.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in this process, especially those who submitted nomination forms (whether self-nominating or a recommendation) through St. Stephen's website. This participation provides for a democratic process and promotes strong organizational leadership.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Hodge  
Co-Chair

Anne McElroy  
Co-Chair

**The slate** *(to serve through the 2027 annual meeting)*

### **William Davis, Jr.**



Bill has been at St. Stephen's Church since 2019, following his retirement as a minister in the United Methodist Church, through which he was involved in leadership and service on numerous church-related boards and committees. At St. Stephen's, he is a member of St. Stephen's Choir, the creation care committee and the pollinator garden group. He is a reader and intercessor and has been a reflector at the Celtic service. Bill has served on our Rebuilding Together Richmond team, and has represented St. Stephen's at the annual diocesan convention and the electing convention for our 14th bishop.

### **Knox Hubard**



Now retired, Knox was senior international trade manager for the Virginia Economic Development Partnership from 2008 to 2011, and was formerly a senior vice president for Bank of America and its predecessor banks. He's been a member of St. Stephen's Church since 1947 and serves as a volunteer at Fairfield Court Elementary School. In the past he's been a Sunday school teacher, a chalice bearer, and a delegate to our diocesan convention, and was involved in the Center for Interfaith Reconciliation.

### Greta Kidd



Greta is director of marketing and financial education at Call Federal Credit Union. A member of St. Stephen's Church since 2004, she is heavily involved in family ministry, particularly youth ministry. She serves as co-chair of the family ministry guild, is captain of a youth usher team, and is a volunteer in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. She's chaired the outreach committee, served as vergers, helped lead the Many Parents, One Vine group on Sunday mornings, been a chalice bearer and reader, and participated in many other activities and ministries.

### Nan O'Connell



Nan is a retired physician who grew up at St. Stephen's Church. She is coordinator of our lay pastoral visitors team, a food pantry volunteer, a member of the communal care committee, and a May Fair House volunteer. She is a participant in Sacred Ground. In the past she has been a chalice bearer and subdeacon, a lay eucharistic visitor, and has taken part in medical missions to the Dominican Republic and CrossOver Ministry in Richmond. She's also taken part in a St. Stephen's retreat to the Society of St. John the Evangelist.

### Gayle Royals



Gayle is retired, having been both a registered nurse and a high school English teacher. She has been a member of St. Stephen's Church since 2013 and is involved in worship ministries and small groups. She is a healing prayer minister and an anointer (and is formerly the coordinator of that ministry), as well as a reader and intercessor at the Celtic service. She participates in two Emmaus groups, one of them as a facilitator, and also co-facilitates a Being With group. She participates in the Journaling for Spiritual Growth group and is a member of a Universal Christ study group. Previously she served in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, as a greeter, and participated in Sacred Ground.

### Randolph Seibert



Randy is a lecturer at the University of Virginia Darden School of Business, a facilitator for Finance & Resource Management Consultants, and a board director for Manchester Marketing Inc. He's been a member of St. Stephen's Church since 2013. With his youngest daughter now in 5th grade, Randy's family is transitioning from Palmer Hall to services in the main church. He is enthusiastic about helping St. Stephen's increase its endowment fund. Randy frequently attends the Sunday Forum and events featuring guest speakers. He accompanied his older daughter to the inquirers class in preparation for Confirmation.

### Current vestry members

*Service concludes with annual meeting*

Richard Hamrick

David Hodge

Anne McElroy

Penn Rogers, *treasurer*

Martha Sherman, *junior warden*

Nancy Thompson

*Serving until 2/2025*

Jeff Johnson

Andy Luke, *senior warden*

Brenda McDowell

Anne Pinion, *register*

Whitney Van Der Hyde

*Serving until 2/2026*

Robert Birdsey

Kathy Brock

John Crowder

May Fox

Mary Ashburn Pearson

Christopher Smith



## SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

This is a very exciting time at St. Stephen's Church.

Many have noted a renewed energy, optimism, and enthusiasm within our community as we begin a new chapter in the life of St. Stephen's following the arrival of John Rohrs as rector in September 2022. To me it is more than just a feeling. It is also reflected by what we are seeing.

One measure of parish health is attendance. As you will hear today from Will Stanley, average in-person weekly attendance increased 16.5 percent in 2023 over 2022 and virtual attendance 22 percent for total increase in average weekly attendance of 18 percent. Nearly 2700 people attended our Christmas services this year (an increase of 28 percent over last year), with another 1300 joining virtually.

There is no greater evidence of parish vitality than the Palmer Hall service which, as most know, serves children, young families, and the young at heart. The 9 a.m. service in Palmer Hall continues to be our fastest growing service. The return of a children's choir—the St. Stephen's Choristers—and the investment in the audio system in that space have improved the worship experience and are great examples of the church's commitment to serve young families.

Signs of new life are happening across the church. I am particularly gladdened that in the last year we have seen the return of many parishioners who had left St. Stephen's in recent years. It is not just because we have some new faces on staff. It is because good things are happening here.

Among those things:

We strengthened our children and youth ministries in 2023 with the addition of Abby Kocher as director of children's ministry and Caroline Harris as youth ministry coordinator. Abby is doing amazing work with children and young families, and under Caroline's leadership we are seeing increased participation in youth ministry.

In September we welcomed Dogwood Preschool to St. Stephen's. Dogwood is off to a great start, with more than 100 children enrolled. We could not be happier with our partnership and relationship with the Dogwood community. They feel the same way about St. Stephen's.

During the year we strengthened management of church finances with the addition of Susan McNamara as financial and administrative assistant, joining Fred Staley, our executive director of church operations. Susan is a licensed CPA. We recently completed the transition of our financial management system to GuideServe, a leader in providing professional accounting and management solutions to nonprofit organizations. In addition to improved practices associated with that transition, we have developed and implemented standardized processes, systems, and policies to improve transparency and build trust. We are deeply grateful to Fred and Susan for all their good work.

Last fall we launched a renewed and expanded small group ministry designed to welcome new members and build community, including Emmaus groups, Focus groups, and Being With groups.



We introduced a new committee structure to attract, develop, and empower lay leaders of key ministries and to reduce dependency on clergy and staff. Quarterly ministry nights, to which all are invited, provide an opportunity for ministry teams to do important visioning and planning. St. Stephen's is known for our outreach in the community and beyond. That essential work continued in 2023. You can read more about this ministry in the team's report which follows. We extend a big thanks to Nancy Thompson for her leadership of the outreach committee.

In 2023 we conducted a series of listening sessions to invite reflection on the core values and foundational elements of the Celtic service, to learn what those who love the service find meaningful about it, and to surface any concerns. The sessions were well received. The team published a report which is available on the church website. The Celtic service and Sunday evening community—which includes those who attend the Sunday Community Supper and Compline—remain a great source of vibrancy and strength for St. Stephen's.

Under Sarah Bartenstein's leadership we are making progress in developing a new website for St. Stephen's, which is in some ways our front door. Following an RFP process, we selected Landslide Creative of Nashville for this work. Sarah and her colleague Dillon Gwaltney are working closely with Landslide and are providing content to Landslide to populate the approved designs. We will test the new site with a group of staff and parishioners and make adjustments as needed before the launch, which we hope will be in late spring.

Our music program is thriving. Preparations for its chorale pilgrimage in England this summer are well underway. You can read more about our music ministry in Brent te Velde's report.

We are blessed to have a talented clergy and staff. Under John Rohrs' leadership we can point to improved clergy and staff health, including but not limited to improved morale, a strong sense of team, mutual trust, and support for one another.

## Finances

I am pleased to report we finished 2023 with a modest budget surplus, our second in the last two years. And today we are presenting a balanced budget for 2024, approved by the vestry. This is significant progress from recent years and reflects hard work by many. You can read more about our financial performance in the treasurer's report.

We will soon complete our annual giving campaign for 2024, one of the most successful in memory. We recently surpassed our dollar goal and are close to meeting our participation goal, which we hope to achieve in the coming weeks. We are heartened by the 137 new pledges this year and the 254 parishioners/families who increased their pledge (+19 percent) over last year. Just as encouraging, we have seen increased participation from young families. These results run counter to national giving trends and give us great hope for the future. We are grateful to our three co-chairs Debbie Dunlap, Al Albiston, and Will Paulette and, of course, to all who have pledged. We owe special thanks also to Will, Sarah, Dillon, Susan, Mary, and Kitty for their support with the campaign. We couldn't have done it without you.

In 2023 we relaunched the Legacy Society for those who have made a provision for the ongoing vitality of St. Stephen's Church in their estate planning. Growth of the Legacy Society will go far to support the church and our continuing ministry.

### Special thanks

I am deeply grateful to the vestry for their efforts this year and to the parishioners who lead or participate in our many ministries. Thank you for all you do for our common life.

Finally, I offer a special word of thanks to all members of the staff, who work tirelessly on our behalf. I especially want to recognize Larry Bidwell and his team of sextons. This is the group which literally keeps the lights on at St. Stephen's and does so much more. What they do is out of view of many, but their hard work (often at odd hours) and faithful commitment to this community makes what we do here possible.

In gratitude,

Andrew H Luke  
Senior Warden

## TREASURER'S REPORT

In 2023, St. Stephen's Church successfully navigated through the disruptions remaining from the pandemic years and returned to a more stable financial posture, finishing the year with a small surplus from operations and a balanced budget for 2024. These results are due in large measure to the dedication of the church's clergy and staff, who worked tirelessly throughout the year to achieve these results, and to the generosity of our parishioners, who continue to support and expand the church's many ministries with their time, talent, and treasure. Highlights for 2023 and the 2024 budget are summarized below and illustrated in the tables and charts that follow the written report.

### 2023 Operating Results

St. Stephen's began the year with a budget predicated on an anticipated deficit of \$104,000, which we expected to cover with the use of surplus funds carried over from 2022 to avoid any actual deficit. Instead we finished the year with a surplus of \$35,740. The primary driver for this result was revenue exceeding budget by over \$250,000, with the excess attributable to increases in pledge income, other gifts and miscellaneous income. This increase more than offset a negative variance of \$110,000 in total expenses, resulting in a net surplus. On another positive note, the Café @ St. Stephen's finished 2023 in the black for the first time with revenue of \$4,500 over expenses.

The church's invested funds also had positive results in 2023. St. Stephen's endowment, managed by the Trustees of the Funds of the Diocese of Virginia under the supervision of St. Stephen's endowment committee, began the year with a balance of \$5.588 million and ended the year at \$6.660 million, a 19 percent increase. Other designated funds, including the Operating Reserve, the Centennial Fund, the Transition Fund and various Preschool Funds, saw modest investment gains, and several funds were moved into money market accounts yielding higher returns than were previously available at the Trustees of the Funds.

### Process and Reporting Improvements

In 2023 the finance committee and staff also focused on improving internal financial reporting and record-keeping processes to be consistent with current best practices and ensure compliance with auditing standards. As part of that process, the church successfully transitioned to an outside

financial record-keeping and reporting service, GuideServe, which provides a more robust platform for detailed financial analytics.

### **Financial Audits**

As previously reported, the financial audit for the church's 2021 year was finally concluded with a qualified opinion certifying our financial statements but taking exception to some documentation deficiencies in the record-keeping for credit card expenses, the café, and May Fair House. Those deficiencies have been corrected as part of our ongoing process improvements. We expect to commence work on the audit for 2022 shortly, with a goal of completing that by mid-year, then proceeding with the audit for 2023.

### **Employee Retention Tax Credits**

In January 2023, the church filed a claim with the Internal Revenue Service for Employee Retention Tax Credits made available under legislation passed by Congress to provide financial relief from hardships resulting from the lockdowns imposed during the pandemic. St. Stephen's expects to receive approximately \$550,000 as a result of our claim, but the processing of the claim has been repeatedly delayed due to factors not related to our situation. We have now filed a request for assistance with Senator Mark Warner's office, which recently advised us to expect a response within the next 30 days. When received, the vestry anticipates that the proceeds will be used to supplement our operating and capital reserves.

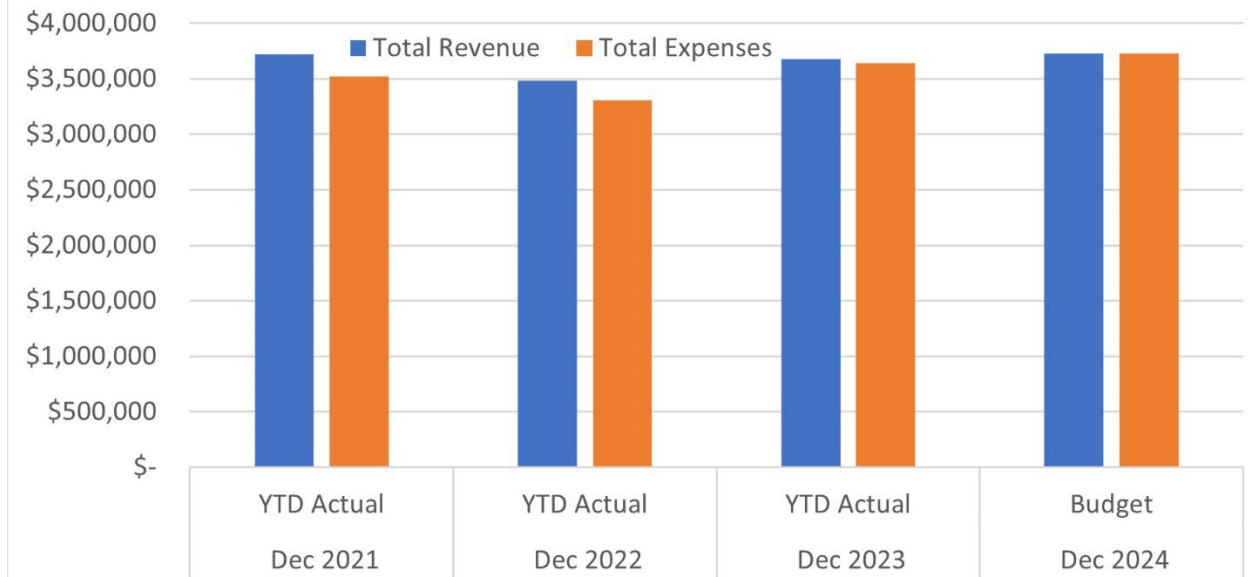
### **2024 Budget**

The vestry recently approved a balanced budget for 2024 predicated on total revenue of \$3,706,497 and a slightly lesser amount of expenses, yielding a small budgeted surplus of \$736. This is an increase of approximately 8.25 percent over the 2023 budget and an increase of approximately 1.5 percent over actual 2023 revenue. Based on the results of our annual giving campaign to date, which are discussed elsewhere, we are confident that the budget is realistic and will provide enhanced opportunities for growth in our various ministries. Details on the budget categories are provided in the charts following this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Penn Rogers, Treasurer

## Revenue & Expense Summary 2021-2024



### 2023 Revenues & Expenses

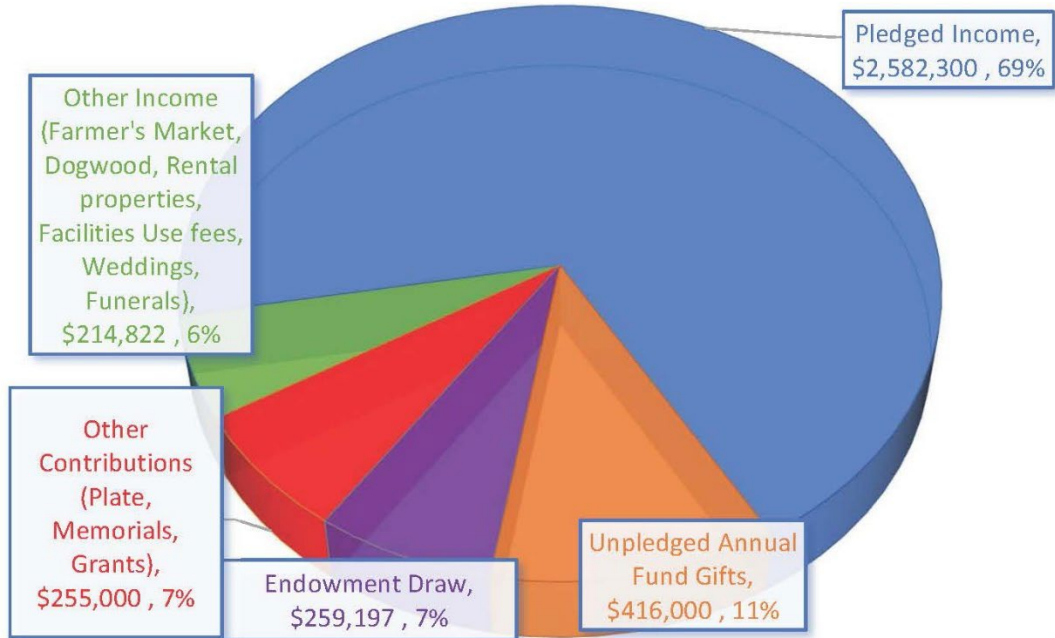
	Dec 2023 <u>YTD Actual</u>	Dec 2023 <u>YTD Budget</u>	YTD Budget <u>Variance</u>
<b><u>Revenue</u></b>			
Pledged Income	2,533,503.00	2,426,000.00	107,503.00
Other Gifts	419,563.00	400,000.00	19,563.00
Endowment Draw	252,959.00	252,959.00	0.00
Other Contributions	258,942.00	178,000.00	80,942.00
Other Income	209,228.00	166,625.00	42,603.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>3,674,195.00</b>	<b>3,423,584.00</b>	<b>250,611.00</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>			
Staff/Clergy Comp. & Benefits	2,157,550.00	2,196,137.00	38,587.00
Outreach	353,360.00	358,000.00	4,640.00
Worship & Music	168,990.00	174,335.00	5,345.00
Parish Ministries & Events	126,098.00	76,635.00	(49,463.00)
Administration/Tech/Insurance	289,014.00	261,500.00	(27,514.00)
Communications	66,913.00	65,400.00	(1,513.00)
Bldg. & Grounds/Security	476,530.00	396,300.00	(80,230.00)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>3,638,455.00</b>	<b>3,528,307.00</b>	<b>(110,148.00)</b>
<b>Rev/Exp Variances</b>	<b>\$35,740</b>	<b>(\$104,723)</b>	<b>\$140,463</b>

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Invested Funds (as of 12/31/2023)

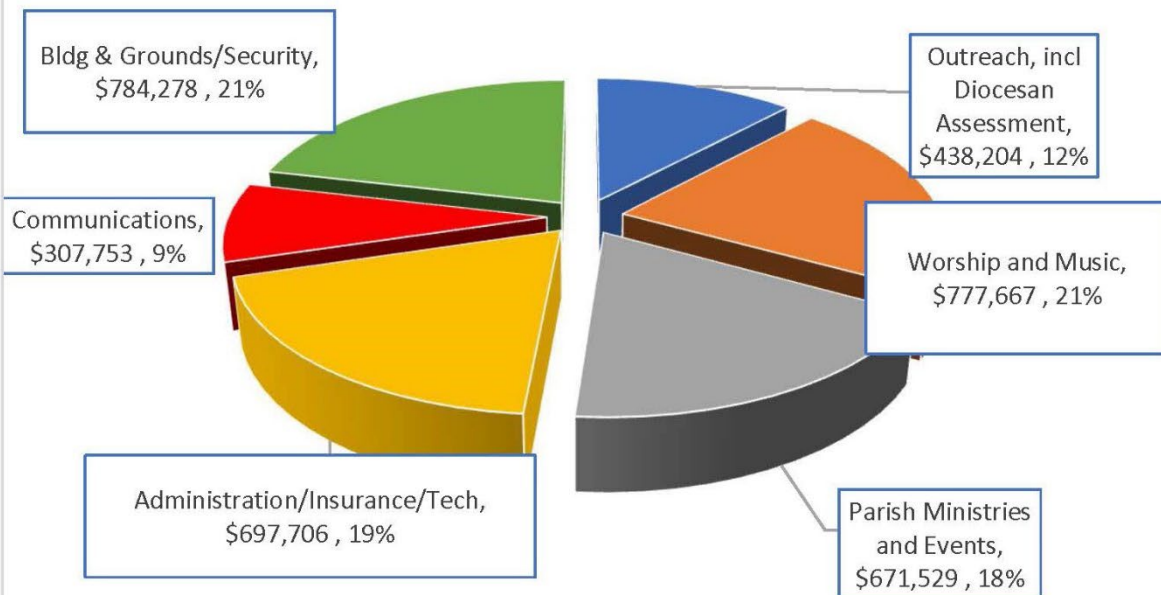
	Fund Balance - 1/1/2023	Fund Balance - 12/31/2023
Total Trustees of the Funds (TOTF) Endowment	5,588,165.09	6,559,192.36
TOTF - Preschool Funds		
TOTF Preschool - Pickney	61,223.54	70,847.14
TOTF Preschool - Investment Fund	56,213.40	65,049.38
TOTF Preschool - SSE Stamp	48,780.63	0.00 *
Total TOTF - Preschool Funds	166,217.57	135,896.52
TOTF Other		
TOTF Operating Reserve	587,854.60	680,257.66
TOTF Centennial	121,917.22	0.00 *
TOTF Transition	399,728.58	0.00 *
Total TOTF Other	1,109,500.40	680,257.66
Designated - Preschool - Schwab	0.00	45,484.88 *
Designated - Centennial - Schwab	0.00	101,365.06 *
Designated - Transition - Schwab	0.00	372,719.93 *
Total Funds invested at Schwab	0.00	519,569.87
All Designated Funds	6,863,883.06	7,894,916.41

\*Funds moved from TOTF to Schwab High Yield Money Market in August/September

## 2024 REVENUE BUDGET



## 2024 Expense Budget (with personnel costs allocated)





## 2024 Budget Expenses

<b>Outreach</b>	<b>438,204</b>	<b>12%</b>
Staff*	87,704	2%
Grants	125,000	3%
Diocesan Assessment	200,000	5%
Food Ministries	15,000	<1%
Other	10,500	<1%
 <b>Worship and Music</b>	 <b>777,667</b>	 <b>21%</b>
Staff*	610,812	17%
Music	156,855	4%
Worship	10,000	<1%
 <b>Parish Ministries and Events</b>	 <b>671,529</b>	 <b>18%</b>
Staff*	564,479	15%
Formation	40,050	1%
Food and Events	49,000	1%
Other	18,000	<1%
 <b>Administration/Insurance/Tech</b>	 <b>697,706</b>	 <b>19%</b>
Staff*	428,392	12%
Administration	151,000	4%
Technology	69,700	2%
Insurance	24,614	1%
Stewardship	18,000	<1%
Other	6,000	<1%
 <b>Communications</b>	 <b>307,753</b>	 <b>9%</b>
Staff*	244,753	7%
Printing/Seasons of Spirit	46,500	1%
Other	16,500	<1%
 <b>Bldg &amp; Grounds/Security</b>	 <b>784,278</b>	 <b>21%</b>
Staff*	394,928	11%
Repairs and Maintenance	154,000	4%
Utilities	153,500	4%
Security	45,000	1%
Other	36,850	1%

\*Total cost of staff includes compensation, benefits, insurance, social security, continuing education, and general personnel costs.



## ST. STEPHEN'S ENDOWMENT FUND INC.

St. Stephens Endowment was established in 1949 to support the financial well-being of the church, and it makes quarterly distributions to support church programs and operational needs. Its Board of Trustees is comprised of five members: three elected and two appointed by the vestry. Church leadership is invited and encouraged to attend and participate in board meetings. As of December 31, 2023, the total balance held was \$6,559,292.36. After a significant pullback in both the stock and bond markets in 2022, the market reversed course and provided surprisingly strong returns in 2023. As of December 31, 2023, St. Stephen's Endowment generated the following returns:

### **Balanced Fund**

(average annual %)

One Year – 16.7%

Three Year – 3.8%

Five Years – 7.3%

Since 2010 – 5.8%

### **All-Equity Fund**

(begun in October 2021)

One Year - 26.3%

Since Oct 2021 – 2.4%

The investment of the funds is overseen by the Trustees of the Funds of the Diocese of Virginia, formed by the diocese and governed by a board comprised of Episcopal Church members. The Balanced Fund holds 62 percent in stocks, 22 percent in bonds, with the other 16 percent in a mix of real assets, private equity, and flexible capital. The All-Equity Fund holds 70 percent in domestic stocks and 30 percent in foreign stocks and was established in October 2021 by Trustees of the Funds to give participating churches more options for asset allocation and diversification. The St. Stephen's Endowment uses both strategies and has a combined overall asset allocation target of 75 percent stocks and 25 percent bonds.

As should be done periodically, the endowment's Board of Trustees is conducting an investment manager review, interviewing and evaluating potential managers, along with our current manager Trustees of the Funds, to make sure we have the best fit for our goals and needs. That process should conclude by late February.

The St. Stephen's Endowment plays an integral role in supporting the operations and life of the church. In 2023, the endowment made distributions totaling \$252,959.20 to the church operating fund. A long-term goal has been to continually increase the fund through investment returns and through gifts and bequests from parishioners to enable even higher annual contributions to the church. One way to support future growth is to join the Legacy Society, established years ago to encourage individuals and families to consider making bequests to the church as part of their estate planning.

Gifts and bequests are essential to the growth of the endowment and to ensure a growing stream of income to help keep the church financially strong and support its many ministries.

In December, several parishioners gave generous gifts to the endowment totaling \$107,000—thank you! Please reach out to a board member or the church staff with any questions about the Legacy Society or other ways to provide support.

Respectfully submitted,

Bobby Fauntleroy, Rich Dagger, Eric VanDerHyde, Penn Rogers, and John Crowder

## BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The buildings and grounds committee completed numerous projects in 2023, oversaw others, and took important steps to plan for future needs.

### Key actions:

- Actively participated in onboarding of Dogwood Preschool, including repairs in the preschool space (painting, floor refinishing, plumbing and electrical upgrades) and playground improvements (including new sand and mulch and the removal of damaged equipment).
- Implemented church-wide Emergency Response Plan including CPR training for all staff, installation of three additional AEDs including one in the church sacristy; upgraded all church first aid equipment, and began using two-way radios for communication during an emergency.
- Upgraded security system for preschool and loading dock by adding Bluetooth-accessible video security cameras.
- Completed upgrade of room 14 to a hybrid space with improved teleconferencing capabilities.
- Oversaw installation of PTZ (panoramic tilt zoom) camera in large fellowship hall. Forums and other events in the hall can now be livestreamed.
- Oversaw improvements to the Garden of the Holy Spirit (the memorial garden) including installation of an additional marble slab for memorial name plaques, new plantings of flowers and shrubs, installation of a second engraved verse in the stone walkway, and installation of the plaque for the memorial cross.
- Completed improvements to campus landscaping. Added garden area by church sign and banner. Cleaned up weeds and overgrowth in alley.
- Completed overhaul and rebuilding of café exterior entrance with new steps and deck, eliminating a potential tripping hazard and making café entry and exit much easier.
- Over the summer completed year-one routine maintenance items (plumbing, lights, painting, and floors) of the three-year maintenance cycle instituted at the beginning of 2023.
- Continued work on 20-year capital expenditure program to aid in financial planning and capital budgeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Snowa, Chair

## OUTREACH MINISTRIES

Many St. Stephen's Church volunteers gave their time, talent and love to carry out St. Stephen's outreach mission in 2023:

*The outreach committee has a mission to understand what is happening around us, recognize existing needs, and identify how we can use the gifts of this parish to accomplish God's work in the world.*

### Local efforts

St. Stephen's commitment to students and families in the East End of Richmond remains our primary local initiative. Our major partners continue to be **Fairfield Court Elementary School, Peter Paul, and Anna Julia Cooper School**. St. Stephen's provides close to 25 weekly volunteers to these partners, helping students with math and reading, and serving as classroom assistants and mentors.

Our activities included:

- Tutoring and volunteering at Fairfield Court Elementary School, Peter Paul, and Anna Julia Cooper School.
- Lunch and Learns at Peter Paul and ReWork (sessions to introduce people to these initiatives)
- Weekly delivery of 40 backpack meals to Fairfield students
- School supply drives for East End partners
- Teacher appreciation lunch and graduation party for Fairfield Elementary School
- Holiday meals ("Turkey Boxes") collected and distributed to our East End partner schools
- Christmas shop for Fairfield and Anna Julia Cooper families
- Weekly food parcels delivered
- Food pantry "grocery store" hours on Mondays
- HANDS (Hammers and Nails in Devoted Service) ministry projects for parishioners and outreach partner organizations
- Other special projects throughout the year

Fairfield Elementary School is a part of Richmond Public Schools which is accredited in all areas of state and federal student achievement benchmarks; last summer the school re-opened in late July as part of a pilot program for Richmond Public Schools to help students make up for instructional time missed during the COVID pandemic. Anna Julia Cooper is an independent, faith-based school, providing full tuition scholarships to students in kindergarten through grade 8 with limited resources in Richmond's East End. St. Stephen's Church was a major contributor to the founding of the school and continues to provide important support. Peter Paul supports its neighbors in the East End community and provides an after-school program for 100 students in grade 2-12 and partnered with St. Stephen's Church, the Diocese of Virginia, and other local churches for many years.

In addition to the volunteer activities mentioned above, each week St. Stephen's delivers backpacks from Feed More to more than 40 Fairfield students; these backpacks provide food to these students and their families over the weekend when school breakfasts and lunches are not available.

In August, volunteers took more than 100 students from Peter Paul Summer Experience on a field trip in a joint effort with St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

As we've done for several years, in December 2023 St. Stephen's offered a Christmas shop at Fairfield School, through which hundreds of our parishioners provide items to stock this free "store." This year, the shop was also opened to Anna Julia Cooper School. In this way, parents with students at these two schools can shop from a selection of books, games, toys and clothing. Volunteers delivered and helped families choose and wrap gifts for their students.

We also held several school supply drives to support these East End partners.

In the spring, as part of the effort known as Rebuilding Richmond Together, more than 20 volunteers from St. Stephen's and its HANDS ministry (Hammers and Nails in Devoted Service) went to work repairing an elderly women's home in the neighborhood of Woodhaven on Richmond's south side. Volunteers repaired trim, cleaned up the yard, installed railings and doors, and painted.

Twice in 2023, a group of volunteers worked in the church kitchen to prepare dinner for 60 women of the Healing Place, a long-term recovery program of CARITAS. The Healing Place provides a transitional sober living community for those recovering from substance abuse.

In the fall, St. Stephen's youth sponsored a "Bucket Brigade," collecting cleaning supplies to fill over 25 buckets for men and women transitioning out of CARITAS to living independently.

Throughout the year, volunteers in our food ministry continued to provide groceries for those in our community who experience food insecurity. St. Stephen's oldest food outreach effort, the fruit ministry, delivered fresh fruit to 145 seniors each week. In the food pantry, 234 families made 1,105 visits for groceries (compared to 171 families making 957 visits in 2022). In partnership with Door Dash, we continue to send groceries out for delivery to those who cannot make it to the pantry in person. Fifteen to 20 families ordered groceries for delivery each week (compared to 4 to 5 families per week in 2022). This is all made possible by volunteers from St. Stephen's Church and beyond. Sixty-four people volunteered with the food ministries in 2023! It's also possible thanks to donations of shelf-stable food from parishioners, and fresh food from generous vendors of our farmers market.

In addition, in 2023, the market began accepting SNAP benefits, further extending the reach of our food ministry to allow those of more limited means to enjoy fresh, local, healthy food.!

### Grants and fundraising

The outreach committee hosted two fundraisers in 2023. Gumbo for Good was timed near Mardi Gras in February. Volunteers prepared gumbo and cornbread for sale, and we sold nearly 200 quarts, netting roughly \$4,000. We held the annual golf tournament at Belmont Golf Course and 15 foursomes played. After the round, players gathered for prizes and hors d'oeuvres. It was a day of fun and fellowship, and it raised \$17,000. These proceeds will help fund grants in 2024.

Our grants committee carefully considered many requests from local organizations which serve the marginalized and vulnerable. This year, the outreach grants committee recommended to the vestry 24 applicants to receive \$111,500, and the vestry approved. Funding for these grants came from 2022 fundraising activities and your support of the 2023 parish budget.

### International efforts

We continue to support Heidi Schmidt and Monica Vega, our missionaries who serve communities in a very poor, remote region of northern Argentina called Jujuy (pronounced hoo-hoo-ie). They work closely with women and children suffering from violence and addiction. Their work serves 430 people in direct and 1,500 people in indirect assistance. Heidi and Monica visited St Stephen's Church twice this year and shared stories of the people they serve and the work they do with our financial and prayer support.

The outreach committee coordinated assistance to the Khandi family from Afghanistan as they resettled in Richmond, including helping them obtain driver's licenses, registration for school, finding doctors and other areas of non-financial support.

Not everyone in our congregation is able to take part in the "hands-on" aspects of our outreach ministries. However, it is important to recognize that we all participate through our support of St. Stephen's Church. Our annual pledges help to fund the organization and coordination of hundreds of volunteer hours, and hands-on ministries all year long.

Many thanks to all who supported St Stephen's outreach ministries in 2023. You have shared your blessings to better the lives of those most vulnerable and needy. Thank you for spreading the love.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Thompson  
Outreach Committee Chairperson

Anna Jones  
Farmers Market Manager and Outreach Staff

## FAMILY MINISTRY

### Children's ministry

Over the past year, children's ministry has grown in breadth and depth. As we have continued to be reinvigorated post-pandemic, children and their families have engaged through a variety of avenues.

**Palmer Hall** has grown both in attendance and in spirit. Each week we regularly fill five child acolyte positions and additionally have one child reader. Children are eager to lead in these ways, and parents have stepped up this year to expand the Palmer Hall altar guild and flower guild, and the usher and chalice bearer teams. Once a month, the St. Stephen's Choristers sing in Palmer Hall, and it is a blessing to have their musical leadership each time. The soft space added the corner nearest the annex last fall has been welcomed wholeheartedly by children. This area with a rug and floor cushions gives space for movement or a chance to take a break for children within the context of worship. Palmer Hall is regularly attended by parents with infants in arms and toddlers hand in hand. The wondering time continues to be a signature feature, inviting children to join the adult wonderer on the floor to think together about the scripture for the day.

Our children continue to be formed through **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**. Our dedicated catechists (adult guides) create a beautiful environment for children to work, wonder, and reflect on God, the church, and the stories of the Bible, in specially-prepared rooms called atria. We offer three age levels: ages 3-6, 6-9, and 9-12. These mixed age groups allowing children to learn from and with one another are a hallmark of the Montessori philosophy on which Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is based. The youngest group include many children who are also Dogwood Preschool students, a lovely overlap. The oldest group, comprised of 4th and 5th graders this year, has been involved in outreach ministries alongside their Catechesis experience; they have particularly enjoyed sorting and shelving food donated to St. Stephen's food pantry. Our group of volunteers in the atria on Sunday mornings continues to increase and we are exploring ways to further equip and train them in this beloved ministry.

During the summer, we hosted **Vacation Bible School** along with monthly “playground hangs” during the farmers market. We also added story time for preschoolers once a month during the summer. The Advent and Christmas seasons brought robust participation in the Advent Fair and the Live Nativity.

### Ministry to parents

Our **ministry to parents** continues to grow and strengthen. Our most significant offering for parents is Many Parents, One Vine, a parent-led small group offering parents a space to grow alongside one another as they navigate what it looks like to raise a family in faith. This year leadership of this group transitioned to a team of four parents of children of all ages. With clergy support, these leaders design and facilitate the group MPOV each Sunday, using readings, podcasts, and guest speakers to generate conversation and learning. As we look toward the future, we hope that our ministry to parents will expand to include regular fellowship opportunities and to add additional small groups for parents of young children. Finally, we hope to offer yearly special events for our parent community, such as day-long retreats or guest speakers focused on issues of faith, parenting, and families in the modern era.

### Youth ministry

Youth ministry at St. Stephen’s has seen continued renewal and energy brought forth by the methodically sustainable infrastructure implemented the year prior. We held our 98th annual **youth Christmas pageant** with over 45 participants who came together to bring the Christmas story to life in our parish. We honor middle and upper school youth as full participants in the life of the church, particularly our worship life, by incorporating them into liturgical leadership roles. Seventy-four youth currently serve either as **ushers** or **acolytes** on a rotating basis. This year we have begun to bring back a pre-pandemic tradition of acolyte wardens, with 10 seniors serving as wardens for their teams this year. This role holds significance for our acolyte teams, providing leadership and support to younger team members.

Our **youth formation** program remains rooted in deepening spiritual awareness, following the Episcopal Church’s Journey to Adulthood model and curriculum alongside fellowship events. Our evening youth group, held on alternating Sundays, features community meals, engaging activities, worship, and age-based group discussions. In September 2022 we introduced a new Sunday evening youth group to better mesh with the schedules and needs of our youth. This change in time and setting has proven effective in creating an inclusive space for youth to connect and grow together. With an average attendance of 15-25 participants, these gatherings provide an environment for meaningful conversations, group formation, and spiritual growth.

Recognizing the diverse schedules of our families, we continue to offer a youth Bible Study group during the Sunday morning formation period. This group serves as a space for critical thinking, deep questioning, and the development of skills and confidence necessary for a personal relationship with the Scriptures. Every Sunday, we gather in community and fellowship, enjoy some sweet breakfast treats, and engage in a daily devotion written for youth and adults called D365. Each week follows a different theme, and the daily devotions follow five steps: Pause, Listen, Think, Pray, and Go.

For ninth graders preparing for the Rite of Confirmation, in 2023 we introduced an additional track for formation, meeting approximately once a month. Shaped around the Rev. Jennifer Gamber’s *My Faith, My Life*, this program aims to guide our youth on a meaningful journey of faith. Confirmation preparation offers youth a path for spiritual growth and maturation, an experience of Christian



community among both peers and adults, and a safe space for authentic and brave conversations about faith.

In addition to regular formation and liturgical offerings, the year featured a variety of community-building events. Highlights included a thrilling whitewater rafting trip to kick off the program year, bowling on Super Bowl Sunday, outreach projects with CARITAS, and a white elephant gift exchange. The annual Christmas Holiday Lights Tour was rained out, but we enjoyed one another's company during activities at church.

As we reflect on the achievements and growth of St. Stephen's youth ministry in 2023 we are grateful for the dedication of our youth, families, and volunteers. Together, we look forward to continuing this journey of faith, community, and spiritual formation in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

The Family Ministry Team  
The Rev. Cate Anthony, Associate Rector  
Caroline Harris, Youth Ministry Coordinator  
The Rev. John Jenkins, Associate Rector  
The Rev. Abby Kocher, Director of Children's Ministry  
The Rev. Will Stanley, Vicar

## ADULT FORMATION

The adult formation committee promotes coordination among the wide range of educational programs for adults at St. Stephen's Church. The committee's focus in 2023 was the Sunday Forum, held at 10:10 a.m. in the fellowship hall between the 9 and 11:15 a.m. services.

In 2023, the range of programs, grouped thematically, included one series on "What We Stand For" and another on mission and public service. In addition to our clergy, various notable speakers spoke at the forum, including Jamelle Wilson of the University of Richmond's School of Continuing Studies; Richard V. Spencer, former Secretary of the Navy; and the Rev. Martin Smith, a renowned teacher, author, and retreat leader. Father Martin led an Advent Quiet Day in addition to speaking in the forum.

With First Presbyterian Church and St. Paul's Church, St. Stephen's sponsored a return visit by John Philip Newell accompanied by Cami Twilling, director of Earth and Soul.

While the forum and appearances by notable individuals featured presentations before sizeable audiences, in other adult settings discussion is emphasized. Thus, a presentation on conflict in the Holy Land was followed by a Sacred Conversation that invited people to share their views on the conflict. Wednesday evening classes on such themes as grief and periodic Thursday morning Bible studies also sought to balance content with response to it.

Inquirers classes also blended content and personal perspectives on faith. Formation became more than education through opportunities for open-ended discussion.



Two newer offerings extend this blend of presentation and response. Sunday evenings included new opportunities for learning and occasions for building relationships in a weekly series titled Trailheads. The series paused for the summer and fall and resumed this January with improvements informed by the Celtic listening sessions. Two Universal Christ Reflection Groups, which engage with Richard Rohr's book The Universal Christ, launched last spring and generated a cadre of lay facilitators who are leading four new groups throughout this winter and spring.

In addition, St. Stephen's launched an expanded small groups ministry in the fall of 2023. Building on St. Stephen's long tradition of Emmaus groups, our expanded framework includes three types of small groups:

Emmaus groups, which gather participants for prayer, fellowship, and spiritual connection  
Focus groups, which gather participants for shared study or faith practice  
Being With groups, which use the Being With curriculum designed by the Rev. Sam Wells to grow in relationship with Jesus and one another

In the fall we launched five Being With groups comprised of 45 participants and 10 facilitators. In addition, parishioners joined pre-existing groups for study and prayer. As the groups drew to a close in December, Cate Anthony met with facilitators and participants to learn and adjust the ministry. We are excited to offer a full menu of small groups for the winter/spring 2024 covenant period. We are always looking for facilitators for all three types of small groups!

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. William L. Sachs

The Rev. Cate Anthony

## YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

St. Stephen's young adult ministry continues to expand. In 2023 we offered a number of fellowship opportunities, including monthly summertime gatherings at the VMFA and an Advent holiday party. Young adult small groups and the young women's book club continue to thrive. As we strive to expand this ministry sustainably, we are forming a young adult ministry planning team comprised of young adults from across the parish. It is our hope that, alongside clergy and staff, this team will design, host, and facilitate a schedule of offerings for this community throughout the program year. We are committed to creating a strong ministry for adults in this stage of life.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Cate Anthony, Associate Rector

## MUSIC MINISTRY

The past year was a rewarding one for the music team: Diana Chou, Associate Director of Music; Chris Edwards, Director of the St. Stephen's Choir; Ingrid Keller, Palmer Hall pianist, Mary Sherman Willson, Handbell Choir Director; and Brent te Velde, Director of Music. The richness of the musical offerings that we are privileged to offer across the spectrum of our ensembles and worship services—the Palmer Hall service, traditional Holy Eucharist, Celtic Evensong and Communion, and Compline—inspires us, and hearing from parishioners when you are spiritually fed by music sustains us. Discovering the ways that music draws us closer together, regardless of where we find ourselves in our spiritual journey or which paths we've chosen in life, continues to define our work.

Making space for music in our young people's lives has continued to be of highest importance in our work, and the **St. Stephen's Choristers**, founded in 2022, continued to grow in 2023. In May, seven choristers were recognized as having completed the first year of the Royal School of Church Music's curriculum, earning their cottas, and we welcomed seven new members of the choir. The choristers have kept a busy service schedule, singing for services in both Palmer Hall and the church. Second-year choristers began receiving individual lessons with our two voice teachers, Kelsey Snyder and Gaelyn Krickovic, and have been preparing the music they will sing as part of our choir pilgrimage to the United Kingdom this summer. The full choir also joined **Sanctuary**, our Compline choir, in singing for our annual **Winter Solstice Concert** in December. Alongside the St. Stephen's Choristers, the music rooms at St. Stephen's have been kept busy on a nearly daily basis with the private music studios of Kelsey Snyder, who teaches voice, piano, and ukulele, and Kimberley Ryan, who teaches viola.

**The St. Stephen's Choir** was hard at work in 2023, taking on the twin challenges of offering music of a greater depth in weekly services and continued preparation for the pilgrimage to the UK this summer. The musical richness in worship included the addition of services of choral Eucharist, Communion anthems, and a greater number of sung psalms. Our music library volunteers, Nan Hall and Ruth Prevette, have made this possible by managing the busy rotation of music distribution. The year began with a new offering, a Service of Epiphany Lessons and Carols and Burning of the Greens, which was well-received and added to our observance of the Epiphany season. The chili cook-off that followed was both an opportunity for intergenerational fellowship, as well as fundraising for the UK pilgrimage.

Our annual **Masterworks Concert** celebrated 20th century sacred music, including composers Charles Ives, Benjamin Britten, and Morten Lauridsen. Both the St. Stephen's Choir and Sanctuary participated, along with a chamber orchestra, and soloists Ingrid Keller, Nathan Bick, and John Bitsas. The 2022-2023 program year came to a close with our first **Spring Music Gala**, which included an entertaining program by our staff singers, a delicious UK-themed supper prepared by Claire Hackley, and a silent auction to support the pilgrimage.

As new traditions were begun, we also celebrated the return of the established **"Three Choirs" tradition**—an annual collaboration between the choirs and music leaders of St. Stephen's, St. Paul's, and St. James's. In 2023 it took the form of a traditional Choral Evensong in observance of All Saints' Day. The St. Stephen's Choir also mourned the loss of two of its saints in 2023, members Stew Cole and Doug Carleton, who both dedicated many years of service to St. Stephen's. We have sought to support each other in those times as a choir family with opportunities for fellowship, such

as our annual fall choir retreat, caroling for the Christkindlmarket, and our Christmas choir party and cookie exchange.

As we reflect on the year past, we are excited for this year that is already well underway. Thank you for your support. We look forward to sharing much more beautiful music in the months ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

Brent te Velde  
Director of Music

## FRONT PORCH MINISTRIES

St. Stephen's Front Porch Ministries is an umbrella group encompassing the church's outward facing (or "retail") ministries, including the Farmers Market @ St. Stephen's, the May Fair House, the Café @ St. Stephen's, our art ministry, and Dogwood Preschool.

While the work of each is different, these ministries have much in common, including:

- having shared vision and mission
- fostering community and fellowship
- being places where the many communities of St. Stephen's Church come together
- offering opportunity for connection and conversation in a world often characterized by isolation and division
- acting as entry points into the life of St. Stephen's
- supporting the church's operating budget and outreach ministry

Our purpose is to bring together staff leaders, at-large members, and representatives from these ministries to provide oversight, develop collaborative strategies, and promote resource-sharing in areas of marketing, accounting, and event planning – just to name a few.

The front porch ministry committee has met three times since the first quarterly ministry night in August 2023. Much of our energy has been given to exploring how these ministries might support one another, identifying opportunities for cross-promotion and marketing, and brainstorming ways by which the new church website (in development) might enhance our common work. Immediate areas of opportunity include joint ministry events to broaden engagement, leveraging social media to drive awareness, and creating a common calendar to improve visibility to upcoming events.

Brief overviews of these ministries follow.

### May Fair House

Carrying on work begun over 100 years ago by dedicated women of St. Stephen's Church, the May Fair House—now in its 47th year—is an outreach ministry of the Women of St. Stephen's. See the Women of St. Stephen's report for additional information on the ministry's work and impact in the community.

### Farmers Market @ St. Stephen's

Our farmers market, one of the best in Richmond, is a self-supporting ministry of St. Stephen's Church. Each week local purveyors offer seasonal vegetables, fruit, eggs, poultry, beef, pork, flowers, bread, cheese, pasta, and other foods in addition to the work of local artisans (jewelry, clothing, stationery, etc.). In December the market hosted a Christkindlmarket—like the Christmas markets held in many European cities—with art, crafts and other gifts, as well as food, hot beverages, and caroling by the St. Stephen's Choristers and adult choirs. In an example of front porch ministries cooperating and assisting one another, the May Fair House and café were open during this Christmas market, as they are during regular market Saturdays.

In 2023, the market averaged 834 customers per week—ranging from as high as 1200/week in the summer to as low as 500/week in the winter, and averaged 37 vendors per week. We also started accepting SNAP benefits this year! This allows folks who use SNAP to feed their families to have access to fresh, local food. Customers spent \$900 in SNAP and Virginia Fresh Match funds from May to December.

### The Café @ St. Stephen's

The Café @ St. Stephen's offers parishioners and their guests a welcoming and relaxing setting for fellowship and connection. The café also hosts small groups and events (e.g., Trailheads, our Sunday evening formation offering; featured speakers and artists) and as such plays an important role in supporting adult formation, youth, and outreach ministries, among others. Thanks to the team charged in 2022 with rethinking café operations to ensure financial viability and to current café management, the café broke even in 2023 as called for in the budget.

### Art @ St. Stephen's

Many are drawn to St. Stephen's Church by our music ministry or beautiful worship services. Some find their way here having first shopped at the farmers market or May Fair House. Still others first cross our threshold to participate in our summer icon writing workshop or to enjoy paintings, photography, or pottery displayed in the café, art gallery, or May Fair House.

For many people, the visual arts offer a path to God, just as music and poetry do. At St. Stephen's Church, several avenues are open to artists and to those who want to see their work. St. Stephen's has a long tradition of showcasing local artists, including parishioners. Some work is available for purchase, and a percentage of the proceeds given to the church.

Following a successful 2023, we began 2024 with our annual exhibition of work by students in the lower, middle, and upper schools at St. Catherine's and St. Christopher's schools on display in the café and adjacent corridor. The exhibit will be available through the end of February. A calendar of upcoming events will be published soon.

We are deeply grateful to Susan Dull for her many years of leading our art ministry. Susan has elected to step down from the leadership role at this time to pursue other interests. Thank you, Susan! We will miss you!

### Dogwood Preschool

For 50 years, St. Stephen's was home to an outstanding preschool for the benefit of the children of the parish and the wider community until its closure in 2020. Not long after, Dogwood Preschool was born, growing out of a desire by families and staff of the former St. Stephen's Preschool to

continue and build on the work of that beloved program. Dogwood's approach, philosophy and even some of its leaders and staff are familiar to those who've had a past relationship with the church's preschool. In September 2023 we welcomed Dogwood Preschool to our campus.

While Dogwood is an independent preschool, school and church leaders are already working together in areas of shared mission. We look forward to increasing our connections around Christian formation, children ministries, and outreach in the year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Wilkinson, Co-Chair

Andy Luke, Co-Chair

## COMMUNAL CARE

This standing committee formed in 2023 to ensure that the pastoral needs of the congregation are met through cohesive, integrated communication among the various ministries. The committee facilitates on-going congregational care of members who are recovering from surgery, navigating an illness or loss, or facing other challenges. It also serves as a liaison to outside groups focused on health and wellness.

Through this umbrella committee, representatives from St. Stephen's pastoral care ministries (lay eucharistic visitors, lay pastoral visitors, recovery groups, the prayer shawl ministry, Daughters of the King, and Gracious Gourmets) meet quarterly with representatives of the vestry, clergy, and staff.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Rogers, Chairperson

## HOSPITALITY

While St. Stephen's Church has at various times had a hospitality committee, the current committee was formed in 2023 as a standing committee of the church. Our first meeting took place in May.

Working with staff leaders and key parish volunteers, the committee's purpose is to foster a culture of hospitality and inclusion that helps visitors and newcomers feel welcome and at home, and helps them connect to the life of St. Stephen's in meaningful ways.

For many years, St. Stephen's Church has held receptions for newcomers. Last year, the hospitality committee added some structure to these receptions designed to ensure more engagement during and after each reception. Following the September 2023 reception, parishioners made additional contact and follow-up with over 30 newcomers, supplementing that of the clergy and staff. In addition to making these newcomers feel more welcome, these contacts also assist in connecting folks to outreach opportunities, small groups, service ministries, etc., which align with their interests and schedules.

The committee added another newcomers reception to the calendar in 2023 to increase the opportunities for people to attend and to be welcomed and engaged.

In the new fiscal year, the committee plans to expand on what they've begun while devoting attention to opportunities in consultation with clergy, staff and parishioners.

Respectively submitted,

Mary Virginia Scott, Chairperson

## ST. STEPHEN'S NEEDLEPOINT GUILD

St. Stephen's Needlepoint Guild is pleased to report that the project to cover all the kneelers in the church with hand-stitched canvases is nearing completion. Each kneeler honors or remembers a loved one.

The project was conceived by parishioner John Phillips and launched in 2015 with the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. **The Holy Spirit kneelers** include art reflecting images in the stained glass windows. The canvases were painted by artist Nancy Luboski, who has designed needlework for the Washington National Cathedral. The next phase was **the Chapel of the Good Shepherd**. The kneelers in the first pew were designed by parishioner Jessica Tongel and depict scenes from across the Diocese of Virginia. The other kneelers in Good Shepherd, also painted by Jessica, carry back the beautiful red and gold color scheme on the kneelers at the Communion rail. Each includes a shield with a biblical symbol. **The final phase is the Nave, launched in 2020.** Each kneeler includes a verse from the King James Version of the Bible, selected by the donor. These canvases, which include art appropriate for the verse, have been hand-lettered and painted by parishioner Anne Pennypacker. Anne's idea to incorporate scripture on these kneelers was as immediately embraced by our clergy who helped us identify verses to offer to donors. While many churches have beautiful needlework, we may be the only Episcopal church in the country that has Bible verses on its kneelers.

Donors have purchased all of the kneelers available for the front part of the Nave, and we now launch the last phase for the kneelers behind the baptismal font. Throughout the project, the guild has stayed within its budget and has extra funds available for additional, smaller projects. We recently partnered with St. Stephen's Altar Guild to replace the "Reserved" pew signs currently in use with needlepoint signs. These signs are used as needed to set aside seating for readers or other worship leaders, or for family members at special services such as weddings and funerals.

In addition to Jessica and Anne, guild members are Marie Carter, Robyn Kay, Sally Lester, and Helen Sarrett. The guild greatly appreciates the support of all the donors and skilled stitchers who have contributed to this project. Additional information is available on the church website.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Carter, Chairperson



## THE WOMEN OF ST. STEPHEN'S

*Almighty God, we pray that You will bless our work in mission and ministry in the world. Help us pray fervently, labor diligently and give liberally to make known the power of your love given through your Son Jesus Christ. Let us not forget the lessons from the past nor fear the challenges of the future. Anoint us with your grace and shine in our hearts as we reflect your light throughout the world. Amen.* Prayer of the national Episcopal Church Women

Although the Women of St. Stephen's are not known by the traditional name used in most parishes—the Episcopal Church Women or ECW—we are united in ministry with the ECWs of parishes in our area, our diocese, and throughout the Episcopal Church. Since 1911 our purpose has been faithfully supporting the work of the parish, assisting our clergy, staff, and vestry; raising money for ministries helping women and children; and providing fellowship through our educational and volunteer opportunities.

Working together in prayer and with faith, the Women of St Stephen's provide programs, award grants, and manage the May Fair House. From October through May, we host diverse and inclusive programs open to all. Details about our programs are available at [ststephensRVA.org/woss](https://ststephensRVA.org/woss), on Facebook and Instagram, and in emails sent to any woman wishing to be on the distribution list. A printed brochure with program information, grant recipients and current ministry chairs is available at Information Central. We end the program year in May nourished by a service of Holy Eucharist in the Bishop's Chapel at Roslyn followed by lunch.

In keeping with our purpose to follow the program of the church and make Christ known through service and gifts in the parish, community and our diocese, we award grants, complete social outreach projects, deliver meals or snacks through "Gracious Gourmets," and remain responsive to the needs surrounding us. In 2023, we served as hostesses for evening music events in support of our music department.

Outreach by the Women of St. Stephen's seeks to minister to women and children in need. A grants committee carefully reviews proposals and choose recipients in the fall. Grant funds are generated by your support of May Fair House and other revenue sources, including gifts to the Women of St. Stephen's and proceeds from activities. In November, we provided grants of \$26,000 to 18 organizations in the Richmond area and \$1,000 to the fruit and pantry ministries in house. May Fair House provided \$20,000 towards this total, and the Women of St. Stephen's contributed \$6,000). In addition to the formal grants awarded each fall, the Women of St. Stephen's gave donations to fund multiple ministries of the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of Virginia and gifts to the Salvation Army and three Christmas Mother programs. A list of grant recipients is available at [ststephensRVA.org/woss](https://ststephensRVA.org/woss) and posted in the May Fair House. More details about May Fair House are at [ststephensRVA.org/mayfair](https://ststephensRVA.org/mayfair) and on Facebook and Instagram.

*Working diligently, the Women of St Stephen's serve our community in many ways.*

**May Fair House** was established by the Women of St. Stephen's Church to foster fellowship among parishioners and raise funds for the community. The shop features merchandise comparable to what is sold in local specialty and gift shops and offers delicious casseroles and other foods prepared by volunteers in the parish kitchen and frozen for the convenience of our customers. Our efforts are powered by more than 100 women and men who provide customer service in the shop and prepare tried-and-true recipes for sale.



The Art Annex started in 2022 continues to showcase local artists. Our artists share their talents and a 25 percent commission with May Fair House.

Come visit the shop **Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m.–3 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m.-noon during the farmers market and most Sunday mornings, 10 a.m.1 p.m.** Visit us on Facebook and Instagram. @mayfairhouse6000

**Outreach:** In addition to grant recipients and year-end gifts to diocesan ECW partnerships, our Christian social outreach chairs responded to requests from Elijah House Academy and Housing Families We provided a Christmas party for Elijah House, a private Christian school serving the city of Richmond, and collected cleaning supplies for Housing Families First, a non-profit organization providing rapid rehousing and support services for families in Richmond. In addition to these efforts, we will organize additional support for four of our grant recipients: Caring Closet, Sprout School, Little Hands, and Doorways.

**Coffee Hour:** Each Sunday, October through May, the community worshipping at the 11:15 service enjoys a light reception after the service. This hospitality is coordinated by two busy co-chairs and we thank all of the groups at St. Stephen's Church who take turns hosting. Please let us know if your group would be willing to help host a Sunday coffee hour. In addition to the popular Sunday coffee hour, we help with special receptions throughout the year.

**Gracious Gourmets:** A team of volunteers provide TLC to families experiencing joy at the birth of a child or grief at a family member's death. We offer a meal or goodie bags at these times representing our love for each other.

**Additional board ministries:** Our corresponding secretary writes condolence notes to families whose have suffered the loss of a member of the Women of St. Stephen's (a female parishioner). The names of the deceased are inscribed in the Book of Remembrance maintained by the Diocese of Virginia. Deceased female parishioners are honored by a memorial donation in their name to the Diocesan Scholarship Fund. This fall seven applicants received grants from this Diocesan Scholarship Fund.

*St. Stephen's past, present and future.*

The Women of St. Stephen's work faithfully within and beyond the St. Stephen's Church. The fellowship activities and volunteer opportunities are many and varied. All are encouraged and welcomed to join us on this journey. Together, our past, present and future ministries are shaped by and in faith. It is the heart of our story.

Gratefully submitted,

Marilyn Kirkpatrick  
Executive Co-Chair

Clarice Dibble  
Community and Social Outreach Co-Chair

## THE PARISH REGISTER 2023

### Baptisms at St. Stephen's (46)

Thomas Llewellyn Ashbridge VI (Thomas V and Amanda Ashbridge)  
Carroll Lebo Bacigalupo (Adam and Elly Bacigalupo)  
Matthew Baker Beard (Patrick and Catherine Beard)  
Sadie Evelyn Blackwood (Nolen and Mary Elizabeth Blackwood)  
Wyatt Patrick Byrne (Patrick and Barrie Byrne)  
Charles Brandt Carr (Brandt and Elizabeth Carr)  
Charles Ruffin Carrington (John and Elizabeth Carrington)  
Emma Suzanne Chesebro (Margaret Brown and Andrew Chesebro)  
Wyatt Matthew Clites (Matthew and Madeline Clites)  
George Jones Cooper (Bejamin and Massie Cooper)  
John Edwin Corey II (John and Katherine Corey)  
Henry Cabell Daigh (Kevin and Elizabeth Daigh)  
Summerfield Virginia Dietz (Adam and Elizabeth Dietz)  
Eloise Elizabeth Doerr (Michael and Elizabeth Doerr)  
Charles Lawrence Englert (Alexander and Caroline Englert)  
Louise Graham Forrester (Patrick and Melissa Forrester)  
Ellie Anne Francis (John and Janaina Francis)  
Cooper James Garbett (Bryan and Laura Garbett)  
Caroline Sommers George (Justin and Kathleen George)  
Rebecca Grace Goldman (Ashton and Margaret Goldman)  
Dylan Theodore Harris (Patrick and Emily Harris)  
William Oliver Harris (Patrick and Emily Harris)  
Luke Davis Hoffman (James and Ellen Hoffman)  
William Macon Hollingsworth (Cooper and Margaret Hollingsworth)  
Mildred Thompson Hooe (William Hooe and Maria Cain)  
Mary Alice Joyner (Jason and Liza Joyner)  
Huntley Bernard Lambert (Andrew Lambert and Jordan McConnel)  
Elizabeth Ann Laskey (Barrett and Sally Laskey)  
Marietta Millington Mejia (Christopher and Marietta Mejia)  
Arthur James Milby (Willard and Alexis Milby)  
Scarlett Penelope Murcia (Reinaldo Mucia and Alexis Martirosian)  
Charlotte Wortham Palmer (Andrew and Jenny Palmer)  
Thomas Pratt Palmer (Andrew and Jenny Palmer)  
Hannah Lathrop Peebles (Christopher and Sarah Peebles)  
Charles Gibbs Peple (William and Catherine Peple)  
Caroline Rosewell Rider (Edward and Caroline Rider)  
Katherine Lee Roberts (Matson and Elizabeth Roberts)  
Camilla Jane Schneider (Vincent and Jane Schneider)  
Nellie Grace Sims (Stephen and Elizabeth Sims)  
John Sterling Svendsen (Calder and Kate Svendsen)  
Harrison Emory Taylor (Brian Taylor and Victoria Ellmore)  
Peter Owen Thomas IV (Peter and Jamie Thomas)  
Luke Patrick Toohers (Patrick and Carter Toohers)  
Mary Elizabeth Wagner (Seth and Cassandra Wagner)  
Virginia Bridgers Wall (Sanford and Brittany Wall)  
Virginia Cabell Zalesiak (Chad and Sarah Zalesiak)

### **Marriages at St. Stephen's (6)**

Eleanor Emory Goode and Hunter Jennings Cowan, June 10, 2023  
Emma Rose Roney and Adriana Elizabeth Bailey, June 17, 2023  
Dianne Marie Carter and Paul Nathan Ballard, June 24, 2023  
Mary Anne Newbill Burke and John Philip Hart, July 29, 2023  
Patrick David Rinaldi and Margaret Stewart Barton, September 2, 2023  
Greta Kells Hiestand and Adam Conrad Richardson, September 30, 2023

### **Transferred in or joined (69)**

Richelle and Howard Anderson from the Fork Church of St. Martin's Parish, Doswell  
Adam and Elly Straske Bacigalupo from St. John's Episcopal Church, Tampa, FL  
Andrew and Katie Bell  
Michael Broome and Lisa van Devender from Holy Innocents Episcopal Church, Atlanta, GA  
Maggie and Andrew Chesebro from Parish of the Epiphany, Winchester, MA  
Ann and William Coulter from St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Lynchburg  
Alston and Alex Daigh from St. John's of Lattingtown Episcopal Church, Locust Valley, NY  
Leslie Dering from St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Richmond  
Stephen Falk from St. David's Episcopal Church, Austin TX  
Melissa and Graham Forrester  
Paige and Ted Fox from St. James's Episcopal Church, Richmond  
Geoff Garner from Grace Episcopal Church, Keswick  
Winston Garnett from Christ Episcopal Church, Charlottesville  
Johanna Gatusso  
Martha Gilliam from St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Richmond  
Sandy and Ted Graves from St. John's, Lafayette Square, Washington, DC  
Liza Hall from St. James's Episcopal Church, Richmond  
Charles Hall III from Grace and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Richmond  
Deborah Hayes  
Bert and Lisa Hopgood from St. George's Episcopal Church, Fredericksburg  
Melissa Pierce Hunter from St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Norfolk  
Nancy Jensen  
Celestine and Philip Jones from Church of the Holy Comforter, Vienna  
Agnes and Walter Kump  
Kenneth LeFevre from Bruton Parish Church, Williamsburg  
Anne and Preston Lloyd from St. James's Episcopal Church, Richmond  
Dan and Glenn Ann Martin from Grace St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Memphis, TN  
Anne Masich  
Sallie Moncol  
Nancy and Gene Moss  
Wendy and Daniel Naret from St. David's Episcopal Church, Richmond  
Wallace Young Parker from Grace Church Cathedral, Charleston, SC  
Susan and Carl Patow  
Emily Pratt and Patrick Harris from Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, NC  
Elizabeth Dallas Rawles from St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Goochland  
Philip and Sarah Reed from St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Goochland  
Elizabeth and Matson Roberts, Jr. from St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Goochland  
Joanne Scully  
Joanna and Kyle Simmons from St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Richmond  
Virginia Harrison Spratley  
Theresa Stenger

Shawwna Stone from St. John's Episcopal Church, Tappahannock  
Hayden Vick from St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Wilson, NC  
Susan Weber from St. John's Cathedral, Knoxville, TN  
Brad and Megan Williams from St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Goochland  
Janet and Bruce Willis from Christ Church Episcopal, Glen Allen

### **Transferred out (33)**

Patricia Atkins-Smith to St. James the Less, Ashland  
Max and Holland Bent to St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Darien, CT  
James W. Clement to Grace Church Cathedral, Charleston, SC  
Stephen and Beatrice Cope to All Saints Church, Chevy Chase, MD  
Anne Gordon Curran to Grace and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Richmond  
Maureen Field to St. Matthias Episcopal Church, Chesterfield  
Ann Hedberg to Trinity Episcopal Church, Staunton  
George (Tripp) Hudgins to St. James the Less Episcopal Church, Ashland  
Hunter and Sheryl Jenkins to St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, Blanco TX  
Betsy Johnson to Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, Midlothian  
Richard Kaufman to St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Herndon  
Wallace and Elizabeth Millner to St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Goochland  
Walter and Karen Moore to St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Goochland  
Marie and Gregory Moyer to St. James Episcopal Church, Lancaster, PA  
Scott and Stevie Sheble to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Wilmington, NC  
Helen Warner Sorensen to Christ Episcopal Church, Charlottesville  
Megan and Patrick Standing to St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Goochland  
Virginia Stone to Christ Episcopal Church, Amelia  
The Rev. Dawg Strong to St. John's Episcopal Church, Columbia  
Victoria and Charles Terry to St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Goochland  
Cameron and Catherine Warner to Good Shepherd, Lake Wales, FL  
Amelia and Jack Wilson to St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Goochland

### **Burials from St. Stephen's (36)**

James Travis Branch, January 1, 2023  
Doreen Emma Treseder Simmonds, January 2, 2023  
Marianne Elizabeth Owens, January 16, 2023  
Barbara Clark, January 23, 2023  
Paul Jefferson Brown, January 25, 2023  
Susan Reynolds, January 30, 2023  
Elizabeth Cone, February 4, 2023  
Marjorie Woods Benedict, February 8, 2023  
George Holmes Ginn, February 24, 2023  
Geoffrey Roy Simmonds, March 1, 2023  
William Franks, March 17, 2023  
Victoria Sanger, March 22, 2023  
Lorraine Suggs Woodley, March 30, 2023  
Mary Frances Siersema, April 5, 2023  
William Mason III, April 6, 2023  
Anne Fox, May 7, 2023  
Keith McMullin, May 25, 2023  
Ann Bemiss Fry, May 27, 2023  
Stewart Hampton Cole, June 7, 2023

Mary Mason Converse, June 8, 2023  
Chad Russell Campeau, June 12, 2023  
Carter Smith Pollard, August 5, 2023  
Malcolm Matheson Randolph, August 14, 2023  
Anne Homes Bussells, August 21, 2023  
Georgene Kaufman, September 16, 2023  
Doug Carleton, September 18, 2023  
Nancy Myers Frazier, September 19, 2023  
Archer Burke, September 26, 2023  
John W. Christian III, October 1, 2023  
Frank “Rusty” Bruni, October 7, 2023  
Molly Hyer, October 24, 2023  
Joanne McElman Reiners, October 31, 2023  
Sidney James, October 31, 2023  
Anne Bell Turnbull, November 17, 2023  
Barbara Brierre, November 28, 2023  
Jeanne Bounds Hamilton, December 14, 2023

**Confirmed or Received (27)**

Hayes Carithers  
Laudie Carney  
Preston Cochran  
Evelyn Covert  
Tyler Curtis  
Bower Edmunds  
Harry Ellen  
Caroline Everett  
Debbie Ferguson  
Johanna Gattuso  
Eliza Hershey  
Tay Kemp-Pherson  
Alice Kidd  
Bella Lambert  
Emma Peay  
Lucy Phillips  
Robert Proutt  
Gail Pyle  
Palmer Rabb  
Anna Rohrs  
Carley Rose  
Constance Scott  
AC Seibert  
Stella Valentine  
Mary Page Waechter  
Julia Hunter Williams  
Brooks Wright

# Notes

