

# PLANT A NEW CHURCH INTO BEING

## *Embracing a commitment to:*

- Increasing our pledges to better represent our personal commitments to the priorities and goals of St. Stephen's, specifically our ability to reconnect with our community following this season of pandemic, & creating welcoming and affirming worship and programs for all seekers
- Strategically utilizing the Rector's Chair fund to promote the priorities of our parish in connecting with our wider community
- Discerning and committing to serving the parish through volunteering our time, gifts, and talents, towards a number of ministries and activities over the coming season of re-planting St. Stephen's



## Planting a New Church Into Being

BY FR. NIC

As we bring our attention forward to what is to come, I am inspired by the resiliency that our parish has shown in this current season of pandemic. Throughout this whole time, we have stayed connected with one another, we have continued to live into our commitments whether in meeting our pledges or in caring for our beloved church community through relationship and support.



It is this resiliency that has inspired this year's stewardship theme: planting a new church into being.

St. Stephen's is a firmly established church, worshipping at the corner of 22nd & Louisiana for 91 years. And yet, this time of pandemic is affording us the opportunity to reimagine what it means to be the Episcopal Church in the Lower Columbia region. We have the opportunity to discern where God is calling us to serve our community today and into the future. We have the opportunity to dare to dream the vision that has been promised to us, springing forth with new life from the seeds of what has come before us.

"Trust the  
goodness of  
creation;  
Trust the Spirit  
strong within.  
Dare to dream the  
vision promised  
Sprung from seed  
of what has been.

Let us bring the  
gifts that differ  
And, in splendid,  
varied ways,  
Plant a new church  
into being,  
One of faith and  
love and praise"

# A NEW CHURCH OF FAITH, LOVE, & PRAISE

In planting a new church into being, we are accepting the radical call of Christ to live into our faith boldly. We are committing to this place of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church as a needed, necessary expression of the Christian faith in our wider community.

If you have received these stewardship letters in the past you know that through prayerful discernment, my family practices tithing to our church. For 2022 this tithe will be approximately \$8,300.

What might it look like if you or your family chose to tithe this year?

What might it look like if we all tithed in celebration of the new life that is springing forth from St. Stephen's?

I know that tithing is a goal for many that is not yet attainable, and I ask you to discern what it might look like to continue moving towards that goal in 2022?

And, as you discern how your own pledge can help St. Stephen's plant our new church into being, I want to encourage you to read the following letter addressing the priorities of St. Stephen's for 2022, acknowledging both what we hold deeply important to our experience of church together, and how we might grow into a new expression of that church for our wider community.

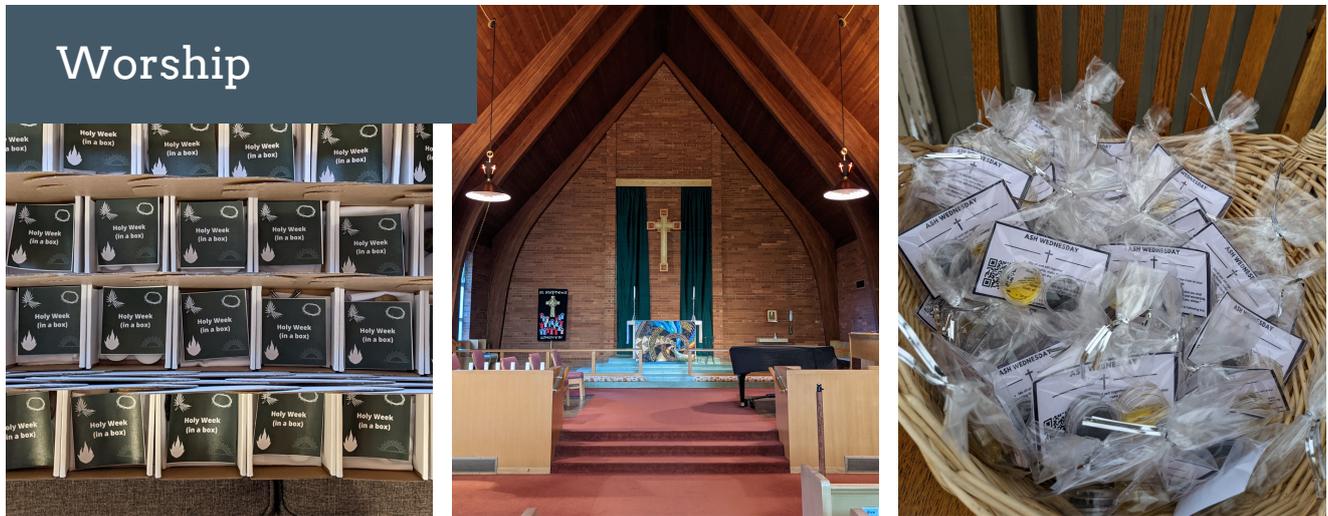
"Summoned by the God who made us, Rich in our diversity, Gathered in the name of Jesus, Richer still in unity"



# The Priorities of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church for 2022

The budget for St. Stephen's Episcopal Church is founded on this core principle: **we strive to make the greatest impact in our community with the resources we have available to us.**

In order to live into this stated goal, we as a parish community have prioritized the work of the church on specific elements of our life and worship together:



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church strives to offer the best Episcopal Worship in the Lower Columbia region each and every Sunday. From a robust music program with both a Music Director and Church Musician to worship leadership and preaching from our full-time Rector and the commitment of many lay volunteers, our worship centers us as a community and informs every priority that follows. We also prioritize exploring new expressions of worship that invite new seekers into our community through opening avenues to prayer and music that are not otherwise available. As we look to 2022, we recommit to our worship as the fertile soil from which new life springs, and pledge to continue evolving our worship offerings to meet the needs of our community in this new season.



Providing formation programming for Adults, a Youth Group for our teenagers (and those seeking an inclusive Christian community in our wider community), and Children & Family Ministries for our younger members and their parents. All of this is supported by the work of lay leaders, our full-time Rector, and our part-time Children & Family Ministries Coordinator.

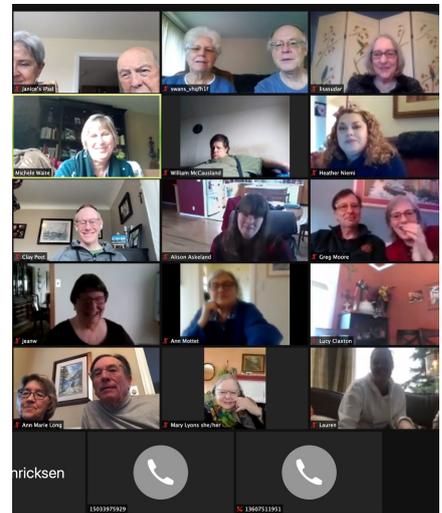
# The Priorities of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church for 2022

## Outreach



St. Stephen's commits to serving our neighbors wherever they may be and whatever their need is. This commitment is most readily seen in our outreach ministries like FISH, Radical Love, and our support of the Severe Weather Shelter. We further serve our neighbors through making our spaces available for 12-Step Groups, Community Yoga, Meditation Groups, Southwest Washington Symphony Free Youth Lessons Program, Longview Ski Club, Neighborhood Meetings, Interfaith gatherings, emergency needs for shelter and feeding, and many more outside groups and uses.

## Pastoral Care & Fellowship

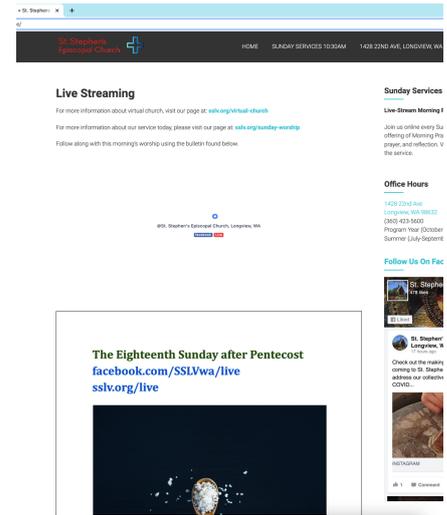


St. Stephen's prioritizes pastoral care for all its members, providing care and attention to an aging congregation through regular prayer, community, fellowship, and the presence of a full-time priest who can respond both for emergencies and regular on-going care.

We also continue to support opportunities for members to seek fellowship with one another building deeper relationships together. This space for fellowship and relationship making is a different form of pastoral care, that feeds the soul through relationship, through practicing the love of neighbor that God calls us to live into.

# The Priorities of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church for 2022

## Maintenance & Administration



As we look at our annual budget, specifically the operating expenses, we see unnamed support systems that enable the rest of our priorities to be met:

- Regular care and maintenance of our building and property
- Administrative support of all worship, fellowship, formation offerings, and staff members, including technology supports such as live streaming and our web presence

All of these priorities combined influences how our vestry and finance team take into consideration our operating income to create our annual budget, knowing that many of our expenses must be met to continue the operations of the church as we currently experience them, with little room for growth into new ministries.

Even in that understanding, and operating with a “maintain” budget, our income and expenses are not in alignment.

# The Priorities of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church for 2022

**For 2021, there was a projected budget deficit of nearly \$50,000**, of which we expected to cover the majority by pulling from our Rector's Chair investment fund.

The good news is that we are currently on track to only need to close the deficit by \$30-40,000, due to sustained regular pledge payments in 2021 and an increase in non-pledged income which has largely been driven by the ability to meet in-person once more.

The challenging news is that our expenses are only going to increase year over year due to inflation, cost increases for programming and maintenance, and staff cost of living adjustments as determined by the Diocese.

Due to this season of pandemic, we have an opportunity to see our place in this community in a new light, and enter into discernment on what God is calling the Episcopal Church to accomplish in our community.

In many ways, 2022 offers an opportunity for a new St. Stephen's Episcopal Church to emerge. A church that is being "re-planted" here in our community. A church that sees a gap in the landscape of our community among both churched and unchurched alike. A church that can stand in that gap, offering a church community that welcomes all, affirms all, and calls all to live into the way of Jesus, the way of love, that we as the Episcopal Branch of the Jesus Movement express through our worship, formation, fellowship, and outreach.

As we begin to think about how we can live into this new expression of St. Stephen's, we must consider how we can support the work of this place through financial support, a commitment to volunteering our time, and a commitment to volunteering our various gifts and talents to enable St. Stephen's to make the biggest impact in our community that it can.

Part of this consideration and discernment is to consider the budget through a different lens than simple operating income and expenses. Rather, we are called to view the budget through the lens of our stated priorities, committing ourselves to those priorities, and understanding that our income must then reflect that commitment.

## **Projected Operating Expenses for 2022 Priorities: \$315,000**

- Full-time Rector: \$130,000
- Music Program: \$26,220
- Formation Program: \$11,000
- Community Awareness of St. Stephen's: \$5,000
- Administrative Support: \$50,000
- Building Maintenance: \$50,000
- Diocesan Assessment: \$45,000

# The Priorities of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church for 2022

## **Current Projected Income for 2022 (with no Rector's Chair draw): \$235,000**

As we can see, our priorities for St. Stephen's necessitates an increase in our operating expenses, but it **only represents a roughly 11% increase** in spending year-over-year.

In contrast, our current projected income (with no Rector's Chair draw), **represents a flat year-over-year total.**

In order to better live into the priorities that we as a collective community have for St. Stephen's, we have to commit to the following:

- Increasing our pledges to better represent our personal commitments to the priorities and goals of St. Stephen's, specifically our ability to reconnect with our community following this season of pandemic, & creating welcoming and affirming worship and programs for all seekers
- Strategically utilizing the Rector's Chair fund to promote the priorities of our parish in connecting with our wider community
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This coming season of planting a new church into being is both exciting and a little terrifying due to the unknown of what is to come.

And, as followers of Christ, we know that through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can accomplish all things that have been set before us.

So, you are invited to join us in prayerful discernment on how we all can make the largest impact on our wider community through supporting the re-planting of St. Stephen's, a church that is already centered in faith, love, and praise, is daring the dream of the vision promised, and is ready to be a beacon of Christian life through our unique Episcopal lens here in the Lower Columbia region.

If you would like to discuss your personal pledge, supporting specific ministry goals through financial gifts, or how your gifts, time, and talents may be best utilized in this coming season, please feel free to reach out!

206-334-3983

[nicesslv.org](http://nicesslv.org)

In God's Peace & Love,





Find your **current pledge** on the **left hand** side of the chart, and then consider how you may be able to foster new life and growth through an increase in your pledge (middle/right hand side charts)

<b>WEEKLY/MONTHLY PLEDGE</b>	<b>TO KEEP OUR PARISH STRONG</b>	<b>FOR THE GROWTH OF OUR PARISH</b>
\$6 / \$25	\$6.50 / \$27.25	\$7 / \$29.50
\$10 / \$45	\$11 / \$49	\$11.80 / \$53
\$17 / \$75	\$18.50 / \$81.75	\$20 / \$88.50
\$23 / \$100	\$25 / \$109	\$27 / \$118
\$28 / \$120	\$30.50 / \$130.80	\$33 / \$141.60
\$29 / \$125	\$31.60 / \$136.25	\$34.25 / \$147.50
\$37 / \$160	\$40 / \$174.50	\$44 / \$189
\$46 / \$200	\$50 / \$218	\$54.25 / \$236
\$48 / \$208	\$52.50 / \$226.75	\$56.64 / \$245.50
\$58 / \$250	\$63 / \$272.50	\$68.50 / \$295
\$69 / \$300	\$75.20 / \$327	\$81.40 / \$354
\$75 / \$325	\$81.75 / \$354.25	\$88.50 / \$383.50
\$77 / \$333	\$84 / \$363	\$91 / \$393
\$83 / \$360	\$90.50 / \$392.40	\$98 / \$425
\$90 / \$390	\$98 / \$425	\$106.20 / \$360.20
\$92 / \$400	\$100.30 / \$436	\$108.60 / \$472
\$100 / \$433	\$109 / \$472	\$118 / \$518
\$104 / \$450	\$113.40 / \$490.50	\$122.75 / \$531
\$115 / \$500	\$125.35 / \$545	\$135.70 / \$590
\$138 / \$600	\$150.40 / \$654	\$162.84 / \$708
\$144 / \$625	\$157 / \$681.25	\$170 / \$737.50
\$154 / \$667	\$168 / \$727	\$181.75 / \$787
\$163 / \$708	\$177.67 / \$771.72	\$192.34 / \$835.44
\$192 / \$833	\$207.40 / \$899.64	\$226.50 / \$983

# 2022 Pledge

**Daring to dream the vision promised, I/we pledge to support St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in 2022.**

**Name(s):**

**I/we plan to give a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
in 2022 in the form of (please circle):**

**One (1) Payment**

**Monthly (12 total)**

**Weekly (52 total)**

**Other (quarterly, prepaid, etc):**

## Ways of Giving:

**Online @ [sslv.org/give](https://sslv.org/give)**

**Pay online with Credit Card** (one-time or recurring)

**Online Direct Deposit from your bank account** (one-time or recurring)

**Via Mail** to 1428 22nd Ave, Longview, WA 98632  
with check marked "2022 Pledge" in the Memo Line

