

Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church

Port Washington, New York



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

118th Anniversary of the Parish

Sunday — January 21, 2024

10:00am Hybrid Meeting—In Church & Online via Zoom

2023 CLERGY, VESTRY, DELEGATES & STAFF

Clergy
 The Reverend Lauren T. McLeavey
Rector
 The Very Rev. Cn. Mark Kowalewski
Priest in Charge, Pro Tem & Supply

Vestry

Matt Bendix, <i>Warden</i>	2025
Rachel Golder	2024
John Day, <i>Treasurer</i>	
Alan Dinn, <i>Clerk</i>	
Stephanie Anderson	2024
Barbara Keller	2024
Jennifer Wilson Pines	2024
Donna Blankman	2025
Robin Schroeder	2025
Elionora Silbersack	2025
Abby Chromy	2026
Gail Grossman	2026
Susan Dietz Massingill	2026
Milan John, <i>Youth Member</i>	2024

Delegates to Convention

Delegate	Robin Schroeder
Youth Delegate	Milan John

Consignment Shop Advisory Board

Donna Blankman, Abby Chromy
& Susan Dietz Massingill

Parish Staff

Parish Administrator	Bernadette Reyes
Director of Music	Thomas M. Fierro

Parish Staff (continued)

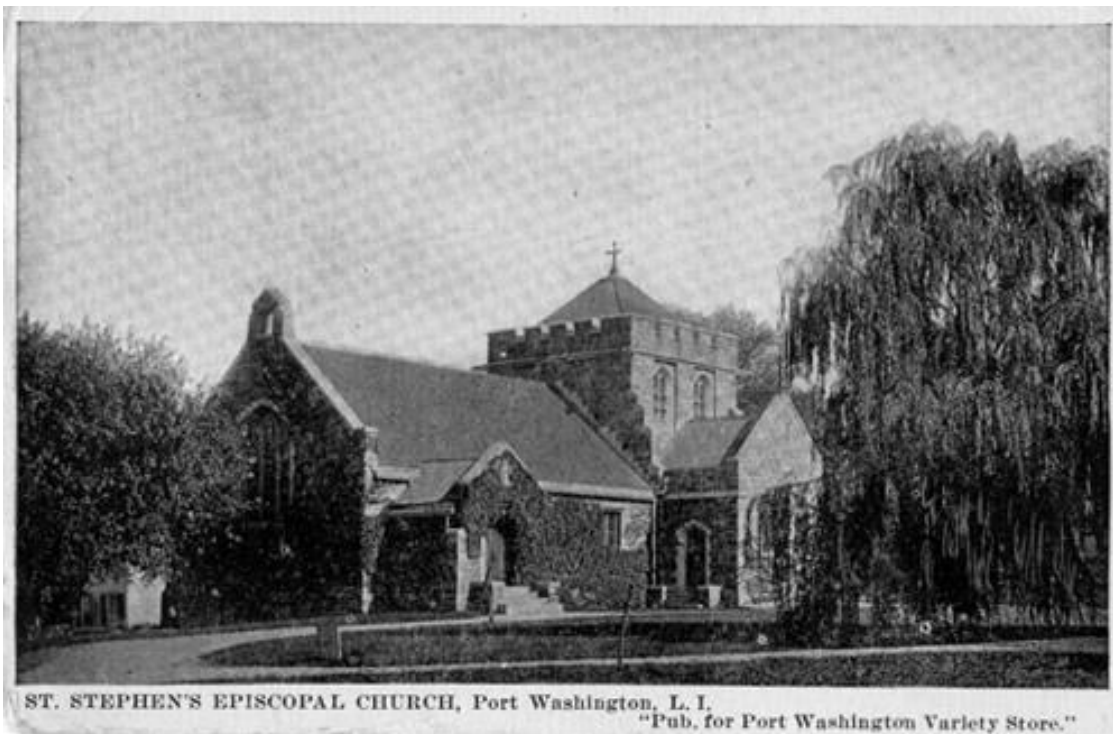
Children & Youth Minister	Rhonda Fay
Consignment Shop Manager	Caren Salkin
Consignment Shop Associates	Efrat Blum
	Susan Snyder
	Susan Stern
Facilities Manager	William (Bill) Stropkay
Accountant	Don Cavanaugh

Volunteer Leaders

Fall Fair	Roopali Gupta
Stewardship	Rachel Golder
Communications	Bill Anderson
	Alan Dinn
	Roopali Gupta
	Robin Schroeder
	Nora Silbersack
	Jennifer Wilson-Pines

Healing Ministry	Bob O'Brien
	Dolores Kazanjian O'Brien

Lay Ministry Team	Alan Dinn
Eucharistic Visitors	Robert Chao
Ushers	Jim Massingill
Altar Guild	Gail Grossman
Coffee Hour	Susan Dietz Massingill
Christ's Light	Rosetta Chao
Parish Historian	Alan Dinn
Zoom Meeting Host	Arthur Golder



ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

Sunday January 21, 2024—10:00am

Prayer	<i>The Rev. Lauren T. McLeavey, Rector</i>	
Opening Remarks	<i>Mo. Lauren McLeavey</i>	
Election of the Vestry		
Report of the Nominating Committee	<i>Matt Bendix</i>	4
Nominations from the Floor		
Appointment of Tellers & Opening of the Polls		
Business Meeting		
Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting	<i>Alan Dinn</i>	5
Treasurer's Report	<i>John Day</i>	7
2024 Budget	<i>John Day & Don Cavanaugh</i>	8
Stewardship Report	<i>Rachel Golder</i>	9
Investment Report	<i>Jim Massingill</i>	10
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Reports		
St. Stephen's in 2023	<i>Alan Dinn</i>	12
Rector	<i>Mo. Lauren McLeavey</i>	17
Priest in Charge Pro Tem	<i>Fr. Mark Kowalewski</i>	18
Wardens	<i>Matt Bendix & Rachel Golder</i>	20
Buildings & Grounds	<i>Matt Bendix</i>	21
Altar Guild	<i>Gail Grossman</i>	22
Lay Ministry	<i>Alan Dinn</i>	23
Music Ministry	<i>Thomas M. Fierro</i>	23
Spiritual Healing Ministry	<i>Bob O'Brien & Dolores Kazanjian O'Brien</i>	22
Annual Diocesan Convention	<i>Robin Schroeder & Milan John</i>	25 & 26
Sunday School & Youth Group	<i>Rhonda Fay</i>	26
Inreach	<i>Nora Silbersack</i>	28
Outreach	<i>Bernadette Reyes</i>	29
Fall Carnival & Bake Sale	<i>Roopali Gupta</i>	30
Consignment Shop	<i>Susan Dietz Massingill</i>	31
Communications	<i>Bernadette Reyes</i>	32
Election Report	<i>Tellers</i>	
Recognition of Retiring Vestry	<i>Matt Bendix, Stephanie Anderson, Barbara Keller, Jennifer Wilson-Pines & Milan John</i>	
Blessing & Closing Hymn	<i>Mo. Lauren & Tom Fierro</i>	34
Dismissal		35
Adjournment		

ELECTION OF VESTRY

Voting Eligibility Requirements

All persons eighteen years of age or over belonging to the Parish who have been regular attendants at its worships and contributors to its support for at least twelve months prior to such meeting shall be qualified voters thereat, and the presiding officer shall be the judge of their qualifications. Such of them as are present in person shall constitute a quorum.

Warden & Vestry Qualifications

To be eligible to serve as Warden, a nominee must meet the Voting Eligibility Requirements and must be a confirmed member of the Episcopal Church. Those nominated to serve as members of the Vestry must meet the Voting Eligibility Requirements.

Report of the Nominating Committee

The St. Stephen's Nominating Committee - Matt Bendix, Stephanie Anderson, Abby Chromy, Barbara Keller, and Jennifer Wilson-Pines - is pleased to announce the **nominees for Vestry**, for terms of 3-years each:

Randy Forsyth
Roopali Gupta.

The Committee invites nominations from the floor for the last available Vestry member seat.

For Warden, the Committee also nominates the following individuals to each serve a 1-year term (as stipulated by *New York State Religious Incorporation Law*):

Rachel Golder
Robin Schroeder.

To fill Robin Schroeder's unexpired term of 1-year, the Committee nominates:

Elizabeth Predmore.

Departing from the Vestry are members **Stephanie Anderson**, **Barbara Keller**, and **Jennifer Wilson-Pines**, Youth member **Milan John**, and Warden, **Matt Bendix**.

We thank all of these parishioners - incumbent, incoming and outgoing - who agreed to serve as our representatives on the Vestry, giving of their time, talent and treasure for the spread of God's kingdom here in Port Washington and beyond.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING—JANUARY 22, 2023

By Alan Dinn, Clerk of the Vestry

The 117th Annual Meeting of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Port Washington, NY, was held in person and via Zoom on January 22, 2023, being the Third Sunday after the Epiphany. The Rector, the Rev. Lauren T. McLeavey, declared the meeting and the polls open at 10:00 AM.

Opening Remarks – Mother Lauren offered thanks to Bernadette, who spent most of the night preparing the Annual Report.

Report of the Nominating Committee – Matt Bendix reported for the Nominating Committee. The committee, consisting of Matt, Rob Knapp, John Longmire, Carolyn Predmore, and Elizabeth Predmore, presented the following names for election to the Vestry:

For Warden (2 years) – Matt Bendix

For Vestry (3 years, Class of 2026) – Abby Chromy, Gail Grossman, Susan Dietz Massingill
Milan John has been reappointed as our youth member.

There being no additional nominations from the floor, the nominations were closed. The nominees were elected unanimously.

Annual Report – A printed Annual Report has been prepared, containing reports of parish organizations and committees. The final copy of this report is considered an attachment to the minutes; only additions and comments to the report are provided herein.

BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes of 2022 Annual Meeting – The minutes of the 2022 annual meeting are provided on pages 5 and 6 of the Annual Report. The minutes were approved on motion.

Treasurer's Report – The Treasurer's Report is provided on pages 7 and 8 of the Annual Report. John Day added that we were anticipating a deficit for the year of \$50-100K but because of an unbudgeted bequest of \$100K, forgiveness during the year of the second COVID PPP loan of \$37K, and donations and payments in advance, we finished the year with a surplus of \$88,741. The Treasurer's Report was approved on motion.

2023 Budget – The operating budget for 2023, approved by the Vestry at its December meeting, is included on page 9 of the Annual Report. It shows an anticipated deficit of \$86,268.

Stewardship/Finance – see Annual Report, page 10. Rachel reported that we had successful pledge and capital drives. The number of pledges and the total amount pledged are slightly below last year, but we still have an opportunity to get a few more. Lizz Predmore was a big help, particularly with the capital campaign. The finance team has been investigating opportunities for generating more income from our portfolio.

Investments – see Annual Report, pages 10 and 11.

Parish Register – The register of church services, baptisms, deaths, and facility utilization is provided on page 12 of the Annual Report.

OTHER REPORTS

St. Stephen's in 2022 – see Annual Report, pages 13-17.

Rector's Report – see Annual Report, pages 17 and 18. Mo. Lauren said that it is good to have people back in church and we have had lots of good events. Our visitation team, organized by Bob Chao, has made more than 100 home visits and Eucharistic visitations.

Mo. Lauren then introduced Fr. Mark Kowalewski and Fr. Daniel Ade (retired co-Deans of St. John's Cathedral in Los Angeles). Fr. Mark will be with us as priest in charge *pro tem* during Mo. Lauren's 6-month leave of absence (which begins after the meeting). Fr. Dan will be available to support property management issues in the parish. Both spoke briefly.

Wardens – see Annual Report, pages 18 and 19.

Buildings and Grounds – see Annual Report, pages 19 and 20. Matt Bendix added to Bill Stropkay's report as follows:

There had been a supply issue with the new boilers, but that has been resolved and the boilers will be replaced in the spring.

We had received a \$25K grant from the Diocese toward repairing/replacing the parish hall doors but there was a problem with their recommended contractor so that issue is still to be resolved.

We are still looking into cost-effective ways to improve our leaky roofs.

Another highlight of the year has been the upgrade to our audio-visual system.

Altar Guild – see Annual Report, page 20.

Lay Ministry – see Annual Report, page 21. Alan Dinn added that the Wednesday Zoom services will continue, and that the parish is in dire need of more acolytes.

Music – see Annual Report, pages 21 and 22. Tom Fierro highlighted the "Hymn Request Summer," the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, the "Miracle of Christmas Orchestra" at the 5 PM service on Christmas Eve, and the use of a string ensemble at the 10 PM Christmas Eve service.

Healing Ministry – see Annual Report, page 22.

Diocesan Convention – see Annual Reports, pages 23 and 24. The convention was back in person this year at the Melville Marriott. Reports were prepared by delegate Robin Schroeder and youth delegate Milan John.

Sunday School and Youth Group – see Annual Report; pages 24 and 25.

Inreach – see Annual Report, page 26.

Outreach – see Annual Report, pages 26 and 27.

Fair (Carnival and Bake Sale) – see Annual Report, page 28. Matt Bendix added that the new format of splitting the fair into three pieces (carnival/bake sale, auction, rummage sale) reduced the burden on volunteers and gave us better visibility in the community

Consignment Shop – see Annual Report, pages 28 and 29. Susan Dietz Massingill noted that she is the only face of St. Stephen's in the shop and encouraged others to join her.

Communications – see Annual Report, pages 29 and 30. The website is planned to be updated within next month (refreshing of photos, capability to allocate donations, etc.).

Wardens – In a follow up to their report above, the Wardens offered blessings to Mo. Lauren and a welcome to Fr. Mark and Fr. Dan. There will be a town hall meeting soon to answer questions.

Recognition of Departing Vestry Members – Mo. Lauren led the congregation in thanking departing Vestry members Robert Knapp, John Longmire, and Elizabeth Predmore.

Closing – All sang a final hymn, "There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit in this Place." The meeting was adjourned on motion at 12:05 PM.

TREASURER'S REPORT

By John Day

Following many years in which St. Stephen's operating results benefitted from large one-off items – such as the receipt of large bequests; or of federal COVID relief funds – no such one off benefits accrued in 2023 and, as budgeted, we suffered a very substantial operating deficit of \$117,000.

Budget 2024

The operating budget for 2024 was approved by the vestry in mid-December 2023: the start point in preparing the budget is an estimate of revenues in 2024 from pledges and expected real estate rentals and an estimate of expenses in 2023 – expenses are expected to be flat reflecting an expected reduction in real estate maintenance expenses in the year after an expensive 2023, and a reduction in the diocesan contribution. The budget shows a deficit for 2023 of \$108,025.

On the capital side, we have assumed that we will complete the doors project and pay a withholding on the boilers contract, but not incur any other capital projects in 2024.

The budget is, again, approved by the vestry knowing that it represents a financial outturn that cannot be sustained for very long. We are committed, as a church, to consider how we should organize to operate within our means and to have completed this work and have a plan in place to transition to a new St Stephen's in 2024. It will mean a very different church from the one we know today, but either we control and push forward that process or there will be no St Stephen's three years from now: with no evident additional sources of new funds to come to the church, it is inevitable that we will run out of money within 3 to 5 years.

Cash position and investments

Checking account cash: \$69,000 as at Dec 31, 2023.

The strategic and other fund investments are at ~ \$386k down from \$540k at the start of the year: about \$190k has been drawn down from investments in 2023 to fund our operating deficit and to address the urgent real estate fabric needs of the church.

Thanks to Jim Massingill who looks after these funds.

2024 BUDGET

St Stephen's Result 2023 & Budget 2024 (Budget for 2024 approved at 12/20/23 vestry meeting)		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023	2024
		Actual	Actuals	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Operating fund										
Income	Pledge	194,624	235,859	194,196	203,319	191,815	239,334	175,000	184,599	170,000
	Unpledged envelope	27,721	28,154	30,084	30,762	35,343	35,209	33,000	21,432	30,000
	Contributions and income against active outreach		1,370	179	-	-	25	1,000	4,075	1,000
	Plate	5,985	5,008	5,242	1,154	1,147	1,838	3,000	3,234	3,000
	Rentals	104,060	104,410	104,658	105,144	105,844	87,222	122,100	122,635	120,000
	Parish Hall & St Cecilia	48,299	47,325	49,828	40,001	47,705	59,705	84,600	86,916	80,000
	Fundraising - mainly consignment shop / Fair	59,888	55,885	63,189	22,790	49,337	57,904	55,000	53,244	55,000
	Investment used for operations	20,081	5,000	5,000	4,805	4,622	30,896	5,000	3,665	5,000
	PPP Grant / Cares Credit (Federal Covid Relief)	-	-	-	-	36,804	36,804	-	-	-
	Other	18,286	21,183	36,377	21,136	49,385	18,374	30,000	23,178	19,000
	Bequest	20,100	-	69,834	100,000	-	100,000	-	-	-
	Total Income	499,043	504,194	558,588	529,110	522,002	667,310	508,700	502,978	483,000
Expense	Cergy remuneration - inclusive of medical, pensions etc.	111,097	114,361	117,600	85,615	108,759	128,581	139,825	129,496	139,825
	Supply cergy/ deacon expenses	1,927	-	1,586	2,596	-	1,076	1,000	3,174	2,000
	Musical remuneration	60,589	65,320	62,955	57,577	63,299	60,565	60,000	63,968	60,000
	Administrative and custodial remuneration	33,624	34,097	34,003	43,521	34,553	34,754	34,000	40,298	34,000
	Consignment shop remuneration/ other	22,529	27,054	23,560	23,649	24,344	31,130	32,000	36,997	32,000
	Staff 'on costs' - FICA and workmen's comp	22,640	21,725	21,636	23,815	13,196	11,135	13,000	11,812	13,000
	Rector/lay training and dev. - events subs. books	1,545	694	700	-	487	395	2,000	1,105	1,500
	Rector discretionary	301	-	-	-	172	5,842	500	500	500
	Worship and music supplies	4,595	3,959	3,727	3,712	4,522	11,972	5,000	6,827	6,500
	Diocesan Tithe	37,606	34,958	32,702	36,351	37,867	38,562	36,943	36,943	30,000
	<u>Committee budgets</u>									
	Outreach	1,076	6,564	5,451	420	3,360	3,510	1,000	5,544	1,000
	Communications	745	1,036	1,729	550	671	1,033	1,000	795	1,000
	Christian Formation	3,957	1,673	2,778	2,078	773	2,400	2,000	2,725	2,000
	- Staff	11,320	11,540	11,794	11,661	11,989	12,560	13,600	14,531	13,600
	Welcoming & Connecting (Food & Bev)	2,180	1,776	2,323	527	751	1,149	1,000	1,479	1,000
	Altar flowers - altar guild expense	6,277	5,571	6,073	1,989	1,890	5,843	5,000	4,204	5,000
	Stewardship	-	634	540	-	511	120	500	120	500
	<u>Office expenses</u>									
	Machine rental & office supplies	6,457	6,628	6,419	6,135	6,955	6,892	6,000	7,583	6,000
	Telecoms	6,726	6,996	6,722	6,538	7,594	6,075	7,000	4,641	7,000
	Postage	912	1,021	1,462	1,077	1,394	1,211	1,600	891	1,600
	Printing	2,375	2,507	3,703	1,629	624	5,326	1,500	2,824	1,500
	<u>Buildings and Grounds</u>									
	Repair & Maint. Church/PH	12,658	8,290	5,286	12,523	16,412	17,524	10,000	23,711	10,000
	Repair & Maint. Rectory	75	-	3,409	606	2,051	474	2,000	3,000	2,000
	Repair & Maint. Rental Properties	1,170	565	6,012	1,544	2,066	3,389	3,500	4,000	3,500
	Equipment Purchase	749	410	605	201	-	465	500	830	500
	Equipment Repair & Maintenance	604	1,196	3,220	1,411	4,347	1,765	4,000	5,937	4,000
	Cleaning Service					18,000	25,821	41,400	41,800	41,400
	Contracts	7,502	6,885	8,893	4,128	16,137	9,326	8,000	6,386	8,000
	Housekeeping supplies	3,166	3,569	3,725	5,878	3,285	5,465	5,000	6,178	5,000
	Water, Electric & Gas	24,753	30,877	31,358	29,813	31,414	39,183	40,000	35,710	40,000
	Grounds Maintenance	22,185	24,349	35,280	7,361	15,437	10,215	12,000	18,274	12,000
	Inspections/Permits/Fees	2,154	696	2,275	54	131	1,957	2,000	90	2,000
	Real Estate Taxes	35,120	36,768	38,214	39,142	39,423	39,269	42,000	39,835	40,000
	Insurance (general risk)	25,454	27,274	27,656	28,511	30,909	33,949	35,000	38,353	35,000
	<u>Professional</u>									
	Annual Audit & Closing	4,900	5,100	5,200	5,300	5,400	5,500	5,500	5,800	5,500
	Accounting Services - Monthly	10,228	9,139	9,522	9,182	8,184	8,367	9,000	8,433	9,000
	Payroll & Employee Tax Filing	811	1,037	445	1,041	6,448	1,283	1,500	1,592	1,500
	IT consulting	2,710	2,469	2,445	2,887	4,366	2,586	3,500	986	3,500
	Bank fees and sundry	1,444	1,432	1,352	1,341	4,755	1,899	5,000	1,589	5,000
	Miscellaneous	395	-	-	-	-	-	600	1,047	600
	Total Expenses	494,558	508,173	532,359	460,363	532,475	578,569	594,968	620,009	588,025
	Operating surplus/deficit	4,485	(4,281)	13,862	68,433	(10,474)	88,741	(86,268)	(117,031)	(105,025)
Capital fund										
	Contributions - Capital Campaign	78,395	168,733	1,025	-	69,675	61,138	-	11,951	10,000
	Capital Improvements	(118,953)	(124,021)	(19,909)	(8,549)	(13,575)	(93,731)	(15,000)	(138,620)	(13,000)
	Subtotal	(40,558)	44,711	(18,884)	(8,549)	56,100	(32,593)	(15,000)	(126,669)	(3,000)
	<u>Columbarium Fund</u>									
	Funding - Loan form Reserve Fund (Payment)	-	24,212	(10,000)	-	-	(2,500)	-	(12,000)	-
	Purchase of Columbarium	-	(24,212)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Sale of Columbarium niches	-	-	10,000	-	-	2,500	-	12,000	-
	Net Income	(36,073)	40,430	(5,022)	59,884	45,626	56,148	(101,268)	(243,700)	(108,025)
Capital fund account - running total										
	Carryover - Prior Years	46,750	6,192	50,903	(86,750)	(40,000)	(95,299)	16,100	22,019	(104,650)
	Contributions - Capital Campaign	78,395	168,733	1,025	-	69,675	61,138	-	11,951	10,000
	Capital Improvements	(118,953)	(124,021)	(19,909)	(8,549)	(13,575)	(93,731)	(15,000)	(138,620)	(13,000)
	Subtotal	(40,558)	44,711	(18,884)	(8,549)	56,100	(32,593)	(15,000)	(126,669)	(3,000)
	Carry forward	6,192	50,903	32,019	(95,299)	16,100	(127,892)	1,100	(104,650)	(107,650)

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

By Rachel Golder, *Stewardship Chair*

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee I thank all of our parishioners for their commitments of Time, Talent and Treasure in 2023.

From a financial perspective, in 2023 we maintained the number of pledgers and the pledge total at about the same level as in 2022 (~\$183,000) which was a solid outcome given the uncertainty people are feeling about their finances, and the still suppressed attendance we (and all churches) observe post the pandemic. As we look into 2024, the pledge final tally is still a bit up in the air but we expect a slightly lower number of pledges and total pledge amount, in part as our parish has seen a number of our members ascend to the Church Triumphant in 2023. We are using \$170,000 as our target pledge amount for the year. We continue to see a large gap between our expenses and our contributions (both pledge and plate), and the Vestry, Treasurer and Finance Committee are focused on developing a plan to live closer to our means, as part of our discernment in 2024.

When Bishop Franklin visited us in the Autumn, he acknowledged that many churches are feeling the same financial pinch we are; but he was delighted to see how relatively upbeat we are as a parish, and how committed our parishioners are to putting their oars in the water and rowing our boat towards its next destination. I want to commend the generous commitments of Time and Talent we saw in 2023 and continue to see as we enter 2024. We had terrific volunteer turnouts for our Summer yard sale and our Autumn Carnival and Bake Sale. We saw many hands making light work at the luncheons we hosted for Fr. Mark and Bishop Franklin, and for the Caroling Party in December. We have some of the best chefs in town turning out their signature dishes for our potlucks and bake sales - a wonderfully Christian way of spreading and sharing love. While we are short handed for many of our core support ministries (Coffee Hour, Consignment Shop, Counting, Acolytes), yet we have seen new participants in Altar Guild, we have wonderful Sunday School volunteer teachers, and we have had an encouraging response to our Vestry nominating process.

I can't think about 'contributions of Time and Talent' without thinking about Alan and Sue Dinn. They are preparing to move to Pennsylvania in 2024; please join me in thanking them both for all they have done, and particularly Alan in his many roles of Clerk, Historian and leader of Lay Ministry. And please look into your hearts and ask, what more can I do, as I look to follow Jesus and support St. Stephen's and my community?

Blessings and thanks to all!

INVESTMENT REPORT

By Jim Massingill, *Investment Committee Chair*

St Stephen's has five accounts with the Charles Schwab brokerage firm. Three accounts are true endowments, the Morgan Music and the Chao Music funds and Endowment fund. The Designated account is used to hold money for rent deposit, Sunday school uses, etc. The misnamed little "e" endowment account is used to hold unrestricted money.

Authorized agents for all the church accounts are as follows: Matt Bendix, Gail Grossman, Bob O'Brien, and Jim Massingill.

In 2021 there were many small transfers of dividend and capital gains into the church from the funds. These transfers are now stopped. Dividend and capital gains will now be reinvested or held in cash.

The investment results for 2023 were as follows:

- endowment lost (7.34) %
- Chao lost (6.66) %
- Morgan lost (8.03) %
- Endowment lost (8.33) %
- Designated lost (11.04) %

At 1/10/2024 the funds are invested as follows:

- endowment—12 % cash, 11 % equities, 77 % bonds
- Chao—17 % cash, 1 % equities, 82 % bonds
- Morgan—10 % cash, 2 % equities, 88 % bonds
- Endowment—14 % cash, 1 % equities, 85 % bonds
- Designated—11 % cash, 3 % equities, 86 % bonds

The fund balances at 1/10/2024 were:

- endowment---\$ 223,148
- Morgan---\$ 21,836
- Chao---\$ 63,527
- Endowment---\$ 33,204
- Designated--\$ 44,502

2023 PARISH REGISTER

	2023	2022	2021		
	In-Person/ Online	In-Person/ Online	In-Person/ Online		
Sunday Services	106/51	102/53	74/51	Baptisms	Gwendolyn Hickey
Weekday Services	5/4	7/7	3/50	Confirmation or Receptions	None
Deaths	6	3	6	Marriages	None
Funerals/Burials	4	5	2	Deaths & Funeral/ Burial Services	Man-Chee Cheng Robert Knapp III Thomas Jude Maher Sue C. Mittelstaedt Robert (Bob) Pohl Peter Rowland
Baptisms	1	4	4		
Marriages	0	2	0		
Average Sunday Attendance	51/11	49/12	16/21		
Other: Stations of the Cross	1	0	0		
Home Communion	147	102	20		
Easter Sunday	119/14	122/37	22/71		
Sunday School Enrollment	16	21	17	Transfers	<i>Into:</i> 0 <i>Out of:</i> 1
Daily Office on Sundays	2/1	4/2	7/4		
Daily Office on Weekdays	0/30	0/39	0/50		
Confirmations	0	2	0		
Reception in to the Church	0	1	0		

2023 Use of Facilities

Church

Adult Formation
 Blessing of the Animals
 Caregivers Support Group
 Choir
 Coffee Hour
 Consignment Shop
 Fall Children's Carnival
 Family Game Night
 Parish Luncheon
 Parish Caroling & Potluck Dinner
 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
 Sunday School
 Sunday School Car Wash Fundraiser
 Super Bowl Lunch & Fundraiser
 Trash & Treasure Rummage & Plant Sale
 "Traveling Home" Book Study

Outside

AA—Sound Serenity
 Grupo Serenidad—Spanish AA
 Girl Scouts of Port Washington
 Herrera Family Children's Birthday Party
 Julianne
 Metropolitan Youth Orchestra
 Nassau County Board of Elections
 Opera Concert by Dawn Gutierrez & Mary Gatchell
 Pisnoy Family Children's Birthday Party
 Play Troupe of Port Washington
 Port Summer Show
 Port Washington Children's Center
 Port Washington Senior Center—EAC

ST. STEPHEN'S IN 2023

By Alan Dinn, *Parish Historian*

January

EPIPHANY

On January 8th after the 10 AM service the church was “de-greened.” The poinsettias were distributed, and all the decorations were stowed until December.

Bishop Provenzano attended our Vestry meeting on January 18th. He announced that Mo. Lauren has been granted a 6-month medical leave of absence effective after the annual meeting. She and her family will remain in the rectory for that period. The bishop has appointed Fr. Mark Kowalewski (retired Dean of St. John’s Cathedral in Los Angeles) as priest in charge *pro tem*. He will be with us half time plus Sundays. (We will also have access to Fr. Daniel Ade, another retired Dean of St. John’s, who is a church property expert.)



Fr. Dan Ade (L) and Fr. Mark Kowalewski



Sinkhole

Our annual meeting was held in person and via Zoom on January 22nd. The parish elected Abby Chromy, Gail Grossman, and Susan Dietz Massingill to 3-year terms on the Vestry and re-elected Matt Bendix to a second 2-year term as Warden. An Annual Report was submitted highlighting the activities of the parish for the past year.

On January 26th, a sinkhole opened in the church’s north parking lot by the Main Street entrance. Nobody was injured but a car’s left front tire went into the hole. By the next day a crew from Cow Bay Contracting was already filling the hole with dirt. The fill will have to settle before the area can be repaved.

January 29th – first Eucharists with Fr. Mark and Fr. Dan.

February

February 5th – Fr. Mark and Fr. Dan went back to Los Angeles for the weekend for a farewell celebration; in their absence, the Rev. Canon Patricia Mitchell, Canon for Pastoral Care for the Diocese, served as supply priest. After the service, Adriana Shields was trained as a Crucifer.

On February 12th, the Sunday School and Youth Group held their Annual Superbowl Lunch and Bake Sale Fundraiser during coffee hour to raise money for Blessings in a Backpack. The event raised \$673.

LENT

The season of Lent began on February 22nd with two services of Imposition of Ashes with Eucharist, a hybrid service at Noon and an in-person service at 7:30 PM.

On Saturday, February 25th, at 11 AM the parish celebrated the life of long-time parishioner Man-Chee Cheng, who entered the Church Triumphant on the previous Monday.

Fr. Mark began a Lenten study program after the 10 AM service on February 26th. The program, titled “Remembering Who We Are,” continues Sundays through March 26th. It focuses

on reflecting in what it means to claim the story of the Bible as our own and what it means to claim the name Christian.

March

The Vestry had a combined monthly meeting and retreat on Saturday, March 4th in the St. Cecilia Room. The retreat, facilitated by the Rev. Cn. Claire Woodley, Diocesan Canon for Congregational Support, was billed as a Leadership-in-Training session and was designed to help members become more effective parish leaders during and after Mo Lauren's leave of absence.

St. Stephen's Caregiver Support Group had its final meeting on March 6th in the St. Cecilia Room. For almost a year, this once-a-month support group, led by parishioners Cathy Adelhardt, LCSW, and Eva Turel, RN, has been meeting on the first Monday of each month, providing a safe and nurturing space for caregivers to ask questions, feel supported and speak with others experiencing similar situations.

Youth Group members and Sunday School students used the funds from their Blessings in a Backpack drive to buy food for children in need.

March 26th was the last day of Fr. Mark's Lenten study program.

On March 27th, Fr. Dan Ade had shoulder replacement surgery.

April

HOLY WEEK

Holy Week began on April 2nd with the Palm Sunday procession. For the first time the procession walked along Main Street from the church entrance to the corner of Carlton Avenue and then up Carlton to the church entrance. During the service, Youth Group members and Sunday School students read the Passion Gospel, then adjourned to the Parish House to make hot cross buns for coffee hour.

The *Triduum sacrum* began with a solemn choral Eucharist at 7:30 PM on Maundy Thursday. Following the Homily, the Liturgy continued with the Washing of the Feet. At the end of the service, Fr. Mark removed the reserved sacrament to the Altar of Repose (in the Baptistry) where it would remain until Good Friday and the Altar Guild stripped the Altar while the choir chanted Psalm 22.

At noon on Good Friday, the church celebrated the Liturgy of the Lord's Death, with communion from the reserved sacrament consecrated on Maundy Thursday. The choir chanted the Passion According to St. John.

At 7:30 on Good Friday evening Alan Dinn led a service of the Way of the Cross.

There was no service at St. Stephen's on Holy Saturday.

EASTER

A single hybrid Festival Eucharist was celebrated at 10 AM on Easter Day, April 9th.

The Vestry was notified that the Church Insurance Company of Vermont has disclaimed coverage for the sinkhole on the grounds that it was caused by the failure of a manmade underground structure that was not adequately repaired. Fr. Mark advised us that we may be able to appeal the decision. Subsequently, on April 21st, Cow Bay Contracting filled in the sinkhole and repaved that section of the parking lot.



Milan John Leads the Procession

On April 23rd, the Sunday school and Youth celebrated Earth Day by cleaning up Baxter Beach. Despite the drizzle everyone was excited to get outside and clean up.

A Family Game Night was held on Saturday, April 29th.

At the end of April, the former Sexton moved out of his apartment.



May



On May 7th, Peter Rowland passed on to the Church Triumphant. Peter was a stalwart member of the parish for over 60 years, He served as Warden, Clerk of the Vestry, and Eucharistic Minister, and was one of the dynamic duo (with Dave Ayers) of emcees of the old Cabarets (he wrote the scripts), to name a few of his many involvements. He led a team to convince Bishop Witcher of St. Stephen's intent to have Fr. Kurt become our Rector. He was active in community affairs, serving as a board member and president of the Community Chest and a board member of the Mertz Foundation, and was an active member and commodore of the North Shore Yacht Club.

PENTECOST

The season of Pentecost began on May 28th.

June

On June 1st, Peter Rowland's remains were interred in our columbarium in a private ceremony.

The 10 AM service on June 4th marked the last Sunday for the choir for the summer. At that service, a cross was presented to Thomas Day in honor of his service as an acolyte and crucifer. After the service, Fr. Mark began a 3-week seminar on the Gospel of Mark. Meanwhile the Sunday School and Youth Group members packed backpacks full of food for "Blessings in a Backpack."

At the 10 AM service on June 11th, a cross was presented to Lian Pines in honor of her service as an acolyte and crucifer. After the service, Fr. Mark continued his adult education seminar, and the young people held a car wash and bake sale.

On Saturday, June 17th, parishioners marched in the annual Pride Walk.

The 10 AM service on June 18th was a Family Service. We celebrated the end of Sunday School and honored teachers Rhonda Fay, Gareth John, Susan Massingill, Marcie Passley, and Jennifer Wilson Pines. We also celebrated college and high school graduates from the parish – Will Buckley (Schreiber), Thomas Day (Portledge), Arthur Golder (Brooklyn College, BS *magna cum laude*), Daisy Griffin (William & Mary), and Lian Pines (Schreiber). After the service, Canon Claire Woodley moderated a parish town-hall meeting in the Parish Hall.

Fr. Mark's adult education seminar ended on June 25th.

July

At the 10 AM service on July 9th Gwendolyn van Tyen Hickey was welcomed into the fellowship of the Church through the administration of Holy Baptism. Gwendolyn is a granddaughter of Nora and John Silbersack and a daughter of Johanna. After the service, Fr. Mark held a final Christian Education class. Attendees had an opportunity to ask Fr. Mark any questions they

might have regarding the Bible and he tried to answer them.

The church received a letter of thanks from Summer Together for our contribution of \$4000 to their summer camp program.

On July 22nd, the parish raised about \$1200 at a rummage sale.

July 23rd marked the end of Fr. Mark's term as Priest-in-charge *Pro tem*. He plans to continue as a supply priest on Sundays until Mo. Lauren's return.

On July 28th, Sue and Alan Dinn turned over management of the cloister garden to Cree Martinez.

In Fr. Mark's absence on July 30th, Matt Bendix led a service of Morning Prayer at 10 AM; there was no 8 AM service.

August

During the final meeting of Fr. Mark's discussion group on the Gospel of Mark, the group decided to continue meeting after the 10 AM service on the first Sunday of each month. The group will remain a lay-led group, facilitated by a rotating volunteer to be decided by the group. They decided to read Fr. Mark's 2019 book *Traveling Home: Tracking Your Way Through the Spiritual Wilderness*, one chapter at a time. The first session was held on Sunday, August 6th.

After the noonday service on Wednesday, August 16th, it was decided to put the services on hold until after Mo. Lauren's return.

September

September 10th was Fr. Mark's last Sunday as supply priest and the parish gave him a sendoff after the 10 AM Eucharist.

Mo. Lauren returned on September 11th. On this, the 22nd anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 9/11/01, the church was open all day for personal prayer and Mo. Lauren led a healing service at noon.

On September 17th, Mother Lauren blessed backpacks and school supplies that had been collected to help families supported by LI Cares. After the service, the parish began a program for building spiritual strength through the Way of Love. The program included several different practices – Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest.

Throughout the summer the church undertook two major facility upgrades, replacement of three hot water boilers in the Parish House and refurbishment/replacement of doors in the church and Parish House. The boiler project has been completed and the door project is still ongoing.

October

On October 5th, we learned of the death last December of Fr. Rand Frew who conducted services before Mother Lauren's arrival.

The parish held its annual Blessing of the Animals in honor of St. Francis of Assisi on October 8th at 2 PM in the courtyard.

On October 19th, long-time parishioner Sue Carol Mittelstaedt passed on to the Church Triumphant. Sue and her husband Art had moved to Cape Cod last year.

November

Mo. Lauren restarted the Wednesday noontime services were restarted on All Saints Day, November 1st.

Our annual Carnival and Bake Sale was held on Saturday, November 4th.

Once again, the Parish Hall was a venue for voting on Election Day, November 7th.



Milan in the Procession

Mo. Lauren, Robin Schroeder, and youth delegate Milan John attended the 157th Convention of the Diocese of Long Island at the Melville Marriott on November 10 and 11. Milan served as an acolyte for Bp. Provenzano at the Convention Eucharist.

The parish had a visitation on Sunday, November 19th, from the Right Rev. R. William Franklin, Assisting Bishop of the Diocese of Long Island. Bp. Franklin presided and preached at the 10 AM Eucharist and blessed the pledges that have been made so far for the 2024 stewardship campaign. After the service, the parish held a luncheon for the bishop and then he met with the Vestry. In the afternoon, parishioners joined in the annual Community Thanksgiving Service, held this year at the Community Synagogue.

The Sunday School fundraiser for Adopt a Family (which ended on November 26th, raised \$550 to provide gift cards for our adopted family.

December

On December 2nd, the Altar Guild and a team of volunteers “greened” the church.

On the same day, Robert Phineas Knapp III (“Rob”) passed on to the Church Triumphant. Rob was a devoted member of the Choir and served several terms on the Vestry.

ADVENT

At the 10 AM service on December 3rd, Mo. Lauren blessed the church Creche and creches brought by parishioners.

We had a parish potluck dinner and caroling party on December 16th in the Parish House. Prior to the party a group sang to homebound members (four separate visits in the Amsterdam, followed by visits to Elsie Wikstrom, the van Schenkhoofs, and the Larsens). Thanks to Sue Dietz Massingill for dinner arrangements, Rachel Golder for leading the caroling, and all who worked to make the evening a success.

After the 10 AM service on December 17th, we had our annual Christmas Pageant in the Parish House, featuring the Youth Group and Church School. Later, at 1 PM, we celebrated the life of long-time parishioner Sue Carol Mittelstaedt, who passed to the Church Triumphant on October 19th in Cape Cod.

Longtime parishioner Robert (Bob) Pohl passed to the Church Triumphant on December 23rd at the age of 99½ years. He served on the Vestry 1980-83 and 1987-90. For many years he assisted with maintenance projects on our campus, often teamed with George LeSavage as volunteer facilities managers in the 1980s.

CHRISTMAS

After a quick turnaround from Advent IV services on the morning of December 24th, the parish celebrated Christmas with two Eucharists (5 PM and 10 PM) on Christmas Eve and a 10 AM Eucharist on Christmas Day.

The 5 PM Eucharist on Christmas Eve featured the Miracle of Christmas Orchestra, led by Rachel Golder.



Miracle of Christmas Orchestra

RECTOR'S REPORT

By The Rev. Lauren T. McLeavey (Mo. Lauren)

Dear Friends in Christ,

In preparation for this report, I read through my report from last year, and wow, what a difference a year makes, but also things stay the same. At this time last year, I was in a bad place with my mental and physical health and was granted leave by Bishop Provenzano. I did not think it would be so long, but it turns out that it was just what I needed. I am so grateful to you, the people of St. Stephen's, for all your prayers and support during that last year. I am so excited to go into 2024 full of hope for the future.



Many thanks go to Fr. Mark and Fr. Dan for filling in while I was out. Since they were here most of the year, Fr. Mark has prepared a report as well.

We had so many great events in 2023. The Rummage Sale was in the Summer, the Kid's Carnival and Bake Sale was a great success this year, thanks to all of you who helped out. The Consignment shop is doing great. We also had a wonderful Christmas Caroling party. Our team of Eucharistic Visits made over 100 visits to our homebound parishioners and neighbors! This is wonderful! All of these events were so much fun and I am sure that I am forgetting many things.

The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to share and celebrate the year that has passed and look forward to the year ahead. Most of the stress around these meetings centers on the budget and membership statistics. Something I have learned in my years of church service is that when the church is focused on mission, the budget and membership will grow stronger as a result. It is a cycle. When a church focuses on their missional identity, it goes out into the world and makes itself known, then people become interested and will join. Then the membership is stronger, and the circle continues. I was looking over our numbers from 2022, we have had an increase in attendance and participation. That is wonderful, thank you all so very much.

The church is not just the priest, but the people. The church is a vehicle by which the members of the Body of Christ can serve the community in the name of God. So, I encourage everyone to think about different missional opportunities St. Stephen's has in our area. What are you interested in? What do you think the area needs? Not every idea will take hold or be "successful" but it doesn't hurt to try new things. St. Stephen's is ready to jump into the future, holding on to our valued traditions, while simultaneously trying new and exciting missions. This is a key to having a church that stands the test of time. We honor our past, while looking forward. We can't dwell on so-called failures or focus on negative events in the past and how

things were done in the past. We acknowledge them, learn what we can from them, and then look forward with positive energy.

I end with a prayer that helped me a lot over the last year. When I was feeling particularly bad, this prayer would help me refocus.

“God alone is enough.” by Teresa of Avila

Let nothing upset you,
let nothing startle you.
All things pass;
God does not change.
Patience wins
all it seeks.
Whoever has God
lacks nothing.
God alone is enough.

Many Blessings be upon you!
Mo. Lauren

PRIEST IN CHARGE PRO-TEM REPORT

By The Very Rev. Canon Mark Kowalewski

Greetings to the people of God at St. Stephens! A year ago Fr. Dan Ade and I had the opportunity to worship with you in the congregation and attend the Annual Meeting. January has come round again and much has happened over the past year during my time as priest in charge.

Liturgically and pastorally, we experimented with a few new things, like singing the psalm, and some of the service music, including the Lord’s Prayer. Special thanks to the hard work of Tom Fierro and his wonderful collaborative spirit. I had the privilege of being with you during my nearly eight months for both Sunday services; celebrating Lent, Holy Week, and Easter with you; celebrating a baptism, as well as services for those who died. I also was blessed to visit folks who were ill.



We also had the opportunity to engage in adult Christian Formation. During Lent we explored some of the basics of the Christian life, making use of my book *Travelling Home*. We also spent time with the Gospel of Mark. I was impressed at the level of serious spiritual exploration demonstrated by so many of you. I’m also heartened to know that a group continues to meet monthly, and that Christian Formation continues under Mother Lauren’s leadership.

I also was impressed with the level of commitment to children and youth under Rhonda Fay’s leadership, and with such great support from members of the congregation and committed parents. My hope is that you might find ways more fully to incorporate children and youth into

the worship of the community along with the excellent church school and social outreach programs you already have.

Fr. Dan served as a consultant focusing particular attention to Buildings and Grounds/Facilities issues. He reviewed the facility use agreements and made sure they are in compliance with diocesan policies. He also invited the Vestry to explore using the Church as a wedding venue. The vestry looked at several other neighboring parishes to determine best practices. The diocesan policy is that other clergy are welcome to officiate at weddings. A priest needs simply to be there, to address questions etc. Of course, it remains with your rector and Vestry as to whether this seems appropriate for St. Stephens currently.

He also arranged some conversations with an excellent property development consultant in the city, Paul Wolf, of Denham Wolf, who develops properties for nonprofits, churches etc. We worked with Paul in Los Angeles and he did a major development at St. Luke in the Fields in Manhattan where Fr. Dan used to work. The Wardens have already met with Paul. Again, the global issues of how best to manage aging facilities and leverage these assets for the highest and best use is a crucial one, but must be addressed in the context of the developing vision of the congregation in coordination with your Rector and Vestry.

We developed a new job description for the facilities manager, the Buildings and Grounds Committee and Administer, and how they interface with the Rector, as well as an organizational chart. A great deal of capacity is expended on facilities maintenance as you know. While we hope that some of the work we did will make these operations smoother, the bigger issue is how to address facilities in light of the broader missional questions. In short, Fr. Dan and I believe the best operational strategy is for the Rector to manage, but not directly be responsible for facilities operations. We believe this will take a lot of the day-to-day operations off the Rector's plate.

I spent time discussing facility rentals with the PWCC management along with the Senior Warden and how better to collaborate and communicate with them as well as thinking about the possibility of their renting the sexton apartment space for additional offices. Of course, the outcome of these conversations will have happened after my tenure ended or perhaps is ongoing.

I believe the crucial issue we explored involves congregational vision. The Church more generally, and individual congregations are at a critical point in navigating the future course. That is, we are at a moment where the future is undefined, not pre-determined. That's an uncomfortable place to be, but also filled with opportunity.

Key to visioning your future, it seems to me, is to clearly define the relationship between your mission, capacity, and resources. In other words, why you do what you do with what you have at St. Stephens. The answer to the question of mission will define how you expend your capacity (what you can do) and your resources (what you have in terms of people, money, and facilities). Some questions to ask might be: Is what you do currently worth the investment? How do your resources and capacity extend your mission? Since St. Stephen's has fewer resources and less capacity than in the past, change is essential. How do you leverage your resources for greater missional impact?

These are a few questions I left you with as Mother Lauren returned in September. You may have already continued to address some of these questions. Others may have emerged. I believe you have a bright future ahead as you allow the Holy Spirit to fire your imagination.

I have begun my new ministry with Fr. Dan as Co-Vicar of Incarnation Chapel in Carle Place, a ministry of the Cathedral. We hope some of you will come to visit us on Saturday afternoons at 5pm as a few of you have already done. It makes such a welcoming difference to see friendly faces in the congregation. Please know also that I am very happy to be of any help I can as you envision your future.

As I conclude, let me share my profound thanks especially to Bernadette Reyes who is clearly one of the most capable administrators with whom I have had the privilege to work, also your unfaltering Wardens Matt Bendix and Rachel Golder and of course your faithful Vestry who held things together in a very difficult time. My prayers are with Mother Lauren as she ably leads you into this next chapter of your life together and especially with all the members of the congregation whom I remember so warmly as you move into this new year. Please also keep me in your prayers.

With many blessings to you all,
Fr. Mark Kowalewski

WARDENS' REPORT

By Rachel Golder

Matt and I each agreed to extend our Wardenship from 2 years to 3 years, which means we've had 2 wonderful years working together as Wardens. I want to thank Matt for everything he has done for St. Stephen's as Senior Warden and head of Buildings and Grounds for the last 3 years: a heroic effort and record of accomplishment! We are grateful that he will continue his B&G leadership.

We Wardens had an unusual and challenging year in 2023. Mother Lauren's leave had a number of implications for us, in addition to obliging us to taking closer ownership of day-to-day issues that arose at the Church (collaborating with our wonderful and indispensable Office Manager, Bernadette Reyes!). We had a closer working relationship with the Diocese and its representatives than usual, and a chance to work with Father Mark ("Who are we, and why are we here?") and Father Dan (who helped us begin to envision options for our real estate). We've had an early exposure to the discernment process we will be engaging as a Parish in the upcoming months and years, and are enthusiastic about exploring change!

We worked particularly closely with Mo. Lauren following her return from leave, including on job descriptions for the Church's employees, on moving our boiler, door and fire inspection projects towards completion, on growing our relationships with our tenants (particularly Kids' Port), and on bringing our congregation together for fellowship and spiritual development events. It has been a very dynamic and energized period for St. Stephen's, which Bishop Franklin remarked upon during his visit: the positive energy and spirit of collaboration feel strong right now. We are optimistic that this will continue as Mo. Broderick guides the Parish through the "Mission Action Plan" discernment this year.

Just to highlight a few 2023 accomplishments, and things remaining on our ‘to-do’ list:

What we did: remediated the parking lot sink-hole; completed the boiler replacement (subject to final sign-offs), re-contracted for the door replacement and oversaw the first half of the project; negotiated with the Diocese to fully compensate St. Stephen’s for the cost of covering Mo. Lauren’s leave; discussed alternatives for our real estate with several consultants; concluded the vacating of the sexton’s apartment; discontinued the ‘facilities manager’ role; and began discussing what achieving a balanced budget might entail with the broader Vestry.

What we still have to do: receive the Diocese’s grant funds to support our door project; finalize the door project; expand the Kids’ Port relationship to cover more space utilization (e.g. the Sexton’s apartment); replace the Music office flooring and resolve the recurrent flooding problem; and take a profound and prayerful look at our mission, our ministries, and the best utilization of our resources! We encourage everyone in the Parish to pray about the role of St. Stephen’s in their lives and our community, and to roll up their sleeves and get involved as we move forward together.

Yours in Christ,

Rachel (on behalf of The Wardens, Rachel Golder & Matt Bendix)

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS REPORT

By Matt Bendix, *Buildings & Grounds Committee Chair*

Buildings & grounds had a busy year. A lot of major work has been accomplished and started. We’ve also dealt extensively with ongoing maintenance and repair items. Among our many accomplishments this year was the development of an updated buildings & ground committee job description. We owe special thanks to Father Mark and Father Dan for guiding us through our reassessment of our committee priorities and functions. The new committee job description clarifies our mission and objectives for the support of parish activities, mission, and our Rector. The buildings and ground committee is now the first point of contact for repairs, maintenance, capital projects, and leasing. A short list of some of the many projects buildings and grounds undertook this year includes the following:

1. Response to miss me and then a visit the sinkhole in the parking lot concluding in its final repair.
2. The placement of the parish house boilers. The new boilers are fully functional and ready for sign off.
3. Starting the parish house door replacement project. So far on this project we have had three (3) doors replaced in the parish house and repairs made to the main church and St. Cecelia doors. Ultimately all the parish hall keying and electronic access is to be added.
4. Support of the consignment shop in upgrading security in the aftermath of the robbery.
5. Response and repair of numerous roof leaks in the parish hall.

6. Drainage repair in the parking lot.
7. Various plumbing repairs.
8. Upgrade and replacement of exit signs throughout the parish hall and church as well as the addition of carbon monoxide detectors in response to the fire marshal inspection.

We are preparing ourselves for another busy year in our church facilities in support of St. Stephen's mission. As always, the capital expenses of our facilities are exceeding our resources. We are always looking for additional support. Please think about the parish facilities when you're considering your charitable contributions this year.

ALTAR GUILD REPORT

By Gail Grossman

The St. Stephen's Altar Guild is responsible for many tasks related to the smooth running of church services.

We prepare the church for services: regular Sunday worship; Christmas and Easter special services; funerals; memorials; baptisms; weddings. We maintain the vessels, linens, robes and hangings; assist the crucifers, acolytes and Eucharistic Ministers with robing; arrange for the ordering of flowers for the altar and their distribution following services.



During the church year we purchase basic supplies and replenish items which are outdated or which are in short supply. This year in an effort to reduce expenditure we started to order the liquid wax for the candles as a bulk purchase. The wax is one of our highest expenses.

The Altar Guild administers the Memorial Flower Fund which solicits donations for flowers for the altar as a Memorial, a Thanksgiving or a Celebration. and we also arrange for donations to purchase lilies and poinsettias to help to decorate the church for Easter and Christmas Services. This year we continued for financial reasons to use either greenery from members' gardens during the summer months or else dried or artificial arrangements whenever we did not have a donation for flowers. If you would like to see live flowers every week, please make a donation to the Memorial Flower Fund.

As always we urge anyone who would like to participate in the altar guild to volunteer for any Saturday or Sunday.

LAY MINISTRY TEAM REPORT

by Alan Dinn, *Lay Ministry Coordinator*

From the Catechism: *“The ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons.”*

From the Catechism: “The ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons.”

Our mission is to encourage lay people to participate in the public worship of St. Stephen’s to the extent permitted by the Canons of the Episcopal Church. We carry out the mission maintaining a roster of Eucharistic Visitors (EVs), and by recruiting, training, and scheduling Eucharistic Ministers (EMs), Lectors, and Acolytes.

Until recently I managed the recruiting, training, and scheduling tasks, but with my pending move the scheduling effort has been taken over by Rachel Golder and the training by Jonathan Fielding.

Eucharistic Visitors – Eucharistic Visitors (EVs) must be confirmed adults (16 or over). Their ministry is to administer Communion from the Reserved Sacrament to the sick and shut-ins. EVs are trained at the Mercer School and licensed by the Bishop for a three-year term. Our active EVs (Bob Chao and Ellen Shields) work with Mother Lauren and Fr. Fred Miller in this ministry.

Eucharistic Ministers – Eucharistic Ministers (EMs) are authorized to administer the chalice at regular celebrations of the Holy Eucharist. EMs must be confirmed adults (16 or over). Candidates are selected by the coordinator with the consent of the Rector; after training in the parish, they are commissioned during a celebration of the Eucharist. We have six active EMs (Matthew Bendix, Alan Dinn, Jonathan Fielding, Tori Gebbie, Rachel Golder, and Ellen Shields).

Lectors – Several of our congregants serve as Lectors, reading Scripture lessons at the principal Eucharists on Sundays and Feast Days. Lectors must be active in the parish and be of good voice. (At our family services, lessons are read by our young people and their families.)

Acolytes (Servers and Crucifers) – Duties involve lighting and extinguishing candles, assisting with the offering, and assisting with the preparation for Communion. Older Acolytes also serve as Crucifers, carrying the Processional Cross. Candidates are eligible when they reach 4th Grade and serve until graduation from high school.

We have four active Crucifers and four Servers.

MUSIC MINISTRY REPORT

By Thomas Fierro, *Director of Music*

This is the middle of my third year at St Stephens. When I started in September of 2021, St Stephens was going through changes due to the Pandemic and its impact on the months to follow. I found that people were very hesitant to make changes as in some cases this is still the case. As we found over the past two years, change is necessary, and we must accept it.

The Adult Choir. We have had a great year singing for our weekly Sunday Services including Holy Week and Easter. We were busy learning new music and brushing up and improving our current repertoire. Unfortunately, we have lost several volunteer members, due to health reasons and/or moving away from the area. We are always in recruit mode, so we hope to see new members this season as we prepare for Holy Week/Easter and the Spring Season.

Our **“Hymn request Summer”** was very well received, and we were happy to fulfill all the hymns and songs that you are fond of. Many have a personal connection to a particular hymn, and we plan on doing the same for this summer.



Our young performers again this year did a great job at the Christmas Eve Family Service directed by Rachel Golder. Rachel does a great job in coordinating and conducting the “Miracle of Christmas Orchestra” and Mother Lauren joined with her talents on the Trombone.

The **Christmas Eve 10pm Service** was once again beautiful this year. The music selections sung by the Choir, along with the Strings and Organ made the night so special.

On my wish list for next Season is to plan on other musical offerings and make use of our young talent from the Miracle of Christmas instrumentalists as well as the children’s choir. Also, Lessons and Carols and a Spring Concert with other local church choirs as a possibility.

The Pipe Organ is now 22 years old. It is mechanically still in good shape. We are having some issues with pipe voicing and bugs getting into the pipes. We will keep a watch on these issues and try to mitigate the problem before it becomes an expensive repair.

We welcome and encourage your thoughts, comments and support in our music and liturgical ventures (musicoffice@ststephenspw.org).

SPIRITUAL HEALING MINISTRY REPORT

By Bob O’Brien & Dolores Kazanjian O’Brien

Members, International Order of St. Luke (OSL)

The healing ministry has been suspended indefinitely because of Bob and Dolores's health issues.

ANNUAL DIOCESAN CONVENTION REPORT

By Robin Schroeder, *Delegate*

The Diocesan Convention was held on November 10 and 11 at the Marriot hotel. There was a full house of clergy and lay people in attendance.

The convention started with a liturgy and there were liturgies, including Saturday morning communion throughout the program. Our youth delegate Milan Johns participated in the communion. The pomp and circumstance on display was quite impressive. The Bishop's address this year was on bridge building, crossing and maintaining our bridges to move toward servitude, working with those most closely living the life. Bridges can provide new ways for learning and formation, bringing in our youth, healing and reconciliation within the life of Christ. This was tied into the MAP program, a program of discernment for the church to form a vision and plan to move the church forward.

Highlights of the convention included recognition of the formation of a new church in Suffolk County to serve the migrant population, video clips from churches who received grants from Episcopal Ministries of Long Island that showed how they put grassroot activities into practice during the convention, including a vegetable garden which provides fresh produce to the food insecure, creation cares which provides support for initiatives to care for our planet, i.e. planting trees, and about the beekeeper for the Diocese.

The One Mission Campaign reported on the tithing parishes of the Diocese with monies going to the Diocesan wide programs. One major area is Episcopal Real Estate of Long Island (ERELI). They reported on the numerous projects that their construction team has overseen, with 30 completed projects, 10 on going projects and 22 upcoming projects. St. Stephen's has two of the projects that ERELI is involved in, the new boiler and the installation of new doors for the parish hall and refurbishing of the doors in the church. ERELI also reported on its asset management and assisting parishes in setting prices for leases.

Voting for elective offices within the Diocesan was fast and painless with few contested positions. The Diocesan budget was passed with a voice vote, which in my opinion should have been done with the electronic voting units and cards they provided to us as it felt that there was some dissension and pressure provided in the voice vote. The budget did restore the office for youth ministry and that is suppose to be a focus moving forward.

At the Convention there are a variety of exhibitors that highlight local church programs, diocesan wide programs and outside vendors (like travel opportunities) which provide information on what is going on outside our local area.

I find the convention an interesting opportunity to learn about what is going on with the church, what opportunities there are to get involved in or bring back locally and to make connections with other like minded people.

ANNUAL DIOCESAN CONVENTION REPORT

By Milan John, *Youth Delegate*

The youth convention began in the main ballroom for a short introduction, where we were then brought to another room and began playing icebreakers to start. The first day mainly consisted of just getting to know the others in the group. After these activities, we then began with a lesson on prayer and the significance, use, and history of prayer beads. We spent that afternoon making our own prayer beads until the end of the first day.

The second day began first with the morning session in the ballroom, for which I was an acolyte candle bearer. This is where we heard the bishop's address, and upon its conclusion, we left the ballroom. Soon after, we partook in a scavenger hunt that involved meeting many different figures in the church and asking them to do an activity with us or sign our scavenger hunt paper, including getting Bishop Provenzano to take a selfie. Once we had left the ballroom and the diocesan convention had officially reconvened, we began a blindfolding exercise where we had to navigate the floor level of the hotel area with a partner. We soon reconvened for afternoon prayer, in which the youth delegates all stood near the bishop and began to hand out candles to be placed on each of the tables in the main ballroom. We used the lunchtime break to finish the scavenger hunt. We reconvened in the youth room, reading some interesting literature about god and the civil rights movement. For our final activity, we made decorations to sit on the windowsills of an Episcopalian Hospital on Long Island. Youth delegates began slowly trickling out at that point, and we finished the final day.

Overall, it was an enjoyable experience, and the integration of youth participation into more of the afternoon/morning prayer sessions made the event more engaging. I am glad I have had the opportunity to participate in these conventions over the past few years.

SUNDAY SCHOOL & YOUTH GROUP REPORT

By Rhonda Fay, *Children & Youth Minister*

Our Great Sunday School teachers are **Susan Massingill** (Chapel), **Marcie Passley** (music), **Rhonda Fay**, **Gareth John**, **Jennifer Pines** (teachers).

Attendance for Sunday School is usually around 9-14 kids most of the time. Sunday School has a lot of fun with chapel, class time with bible lessons, arts and crafts, music, singing and hand bells.

Our Highlights January through June

January Sunday School and Youth Group welcomed Fr. Mark and Fr. Dan with a "Disciple Skit" during the 10AM service

February Superbowl Lunch and Bake Sale – Raised \$673.00 for "Blessings In A Backpack"

Hosted "All you can Eat" pancake night



March Sunday School and Youth Group went to Stop N Shop to buy food with the money that was raised for “Blessings In A Backpack”
After shopping, we went back to Parish Hall to pack 45 “Blessing” backpacks

April They read The Passion Of Jesus Christ during the service on Palm Sunday, and afterwards colored Easter eggs and baked hot cross buns for coffee hour

On Easter, There was an Outdoor Easter Egg hunt on church grounds, with Easter Bunny

We did our part for Earth Day, and cleaned Baxter Estate Beach (along Shore Road)



May We welcomed a new Sunday School student. Great addition to our group

June We packed 45 more bags of food for “Blessings In A Backpack” from money left over from the Superbowl fundraiser

Held our 2nd Annual “Car Wash” after the 10AM service. Raised \$534.00

Our Highlights September through December

September 1st day of Sunday School, we welcomed 16 students, Sunday School and Youth Group

October We collected School Supplies for Long Island Cares

November Sunday School and Youth Group performed our very first “Fruit of the Spirit” Skit during the family service
The “Fruit of the Spirit” Giving Tree was a great success.

Raised \$550.00 for Our Lady Of Fatima Christmas Adopt a Family

Donated paper goods and personal products to the Lutheran Church Paper Pantry

Collected food for “Blessings In A Backpack”



December The kids had their very first Storytime with Mother Lauren during coffee hour
They performed an amazing Christmas pageant

Thank you For Your Sunday School and Youth Group Support!!

INREACH REPORT

By Nora Silbersack

Purpose: To work in close association with the Christ's Light Committee to plan regular parish events/activities that support fellowship and spiritual formation.

Our focus in 2023 was to invite all St. Stephens parishioners to gather together, and to connect with those both new and well known.

Last year our efforts overlapped with the Christ's Light Committee under the leadership of Rosetta Chao, as well as the Outreach Committee headed by Susan Massingill. All Committee members who contributed their time and talent helped involve the St. Stephen's community in these events and activities:

April 2023:

- Family Games Night.

September 2023:

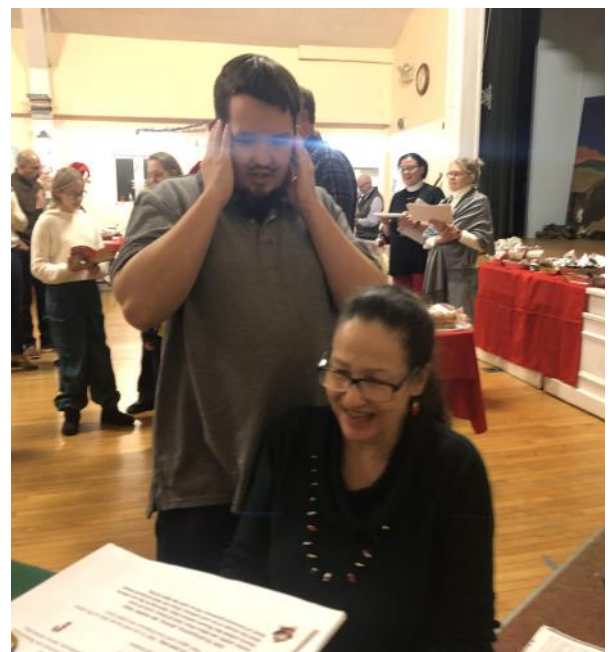
- We welcomed Mother Lauren back from her leave with a 'Welcome Home' Potluck Lunch.

December 2023:

- Caroling Night: Once again, Rachel Golder organized a small group to visit some of our homebound parishioners and sing Christmas carols. They did short sets of a few songs (a cappella) at each parishioner's home on December 16, 2023 just before the *Parish Potluck and Caroling Party* held in the Parish Hall (thank you to Susan Dietz Massingill who coordinated the potluck part and Rachel who led the caroling and accompanied on the piano).
- The Christ Light Committee sent 19 Christmas cards sent to all homebound parishioners.

Christian Education:

- *Remembering Who We Are* Lenten Study (February-April)
- *The Beginning of the Good News of Jesus Christ: Reading the Gospel of Mark* (June-July)
- *The Way of Love* Group Discussion (September - December)
- *Traveling Home* Book Study (ongoing)



OUTREACH REPORT

By Bernadette Reyes

The Sunday School & Youth Group continue to be the “outreach superstars” at St. Stephen’s. You can read the details about the various projects they took on this past year in Rhonda Fay’s report on page 26, as well as in Alan Dinn’s 2023 recap on page 12.

St. Stephen’s continues the tradition of donating the use of our facilities, either free of charge or for a deeply discounted rental fee, to community organizations such as the Girl Scouts of Port Washington, Port Summer Show, and Play Troupe of Port Washington. Our longstanding relationship with Alcoholics Anonymous continues too – they hold their meetings on Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays either in the Parish Hall or St. Cecilia Room. 2023 was the third year that the Nassau County Board of Elections has used St. Stephen’s Parish Hall as a polling site for one of the Port districts. They offer the church small stipend of \$70 per use.

St. Stephen’s Caregiver Support Group ended in March 2023. Started in April 2022 and led by Eva Turel, RN, and Cathy Adelhardt, LCSW, meetings were held on the first Monday of each month, and provided a safe space for adults caregiving for other adults to ask questions, feel supported, and speak with others experiencing similar situations. The sessions were free and open to all in the community, both within and outside of St. Stephen’s. We thank Eva and Cathy for this wonderful and beneficial ministry.

In June, St. Stephen’s once again celebrated Pride Month, by partnering up with the local LGBTQIA+ organization, Be The Rainbow. Some parishioners participated in the Port Pride Walk. The church displayed “Port Pride” and “Love is Love” signs to show its support.

Thanks to Rachel Golder, St. Stephen’s raised money again this year for Summer Together. The funds donated by our very generous parishioners went toward funding 90 children to attend two weeks at local day camps. Such as Bach To Rock, Camp Invention, FAST Sports Camp at PAL, Language Anywhere, PYA, Science Museum of Long Island, and Unlimited Sports Action. They also helped support Summer Together’s fee-reduction program for income-eligible families at Manorhaven and Whitney Pools. In 2023, 195 qualified families participated and were able to obtain a seasonal passes at a 60% reduced price.

St. Stephen’s continued its involvement with initiatives led by the Port Washington Clergy Association such as its “Laundry Love” program at the Port Washington Super Laundromat in Manorhaven, and the “Paper & Personal Care Pantry” program at Lutheran Church of Our Savior.

Donald Miller continues his yearly donations to the The Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Miller Fund, established to honor the memory of his father and mother by helping people in need. As Mr. Miller has stated in his letter that accompanied his donation to St. Stephen’s, his parents’

desire was “always to help people less fortunate than themselves”. In 2023, Mr. Miller’s end of year 2022 donation was used to to purchase more Stop and Shop gift cards to distribute to individuals coming to the church office looking for food assistance. We handed out 14 Stop & Shop gift cards totaling \$280. We will be using the Mr. Miller’s December 2023 gift to purchase more Stop & Shop gift cards to distribute in 2024.

The Rector’s Charitable Fund also remains in place to help people looking for assistance with things such as purchasing gas, help with utility bills, etc.

Finally, through World Vision, we have continued sponsoring our boy adoptee from Lesotho, Africa named Paballo Chalatsane, with a small monthly donation. He is now 11 years old and is an only child living with his mother in Phamong who struggles to provide for her family. St. Stephen’s sponsorship helps pay for Pabaollo’s educational needs, and helps his community with access to clean water, healthcare, and spiritual enrichment.

FALL CARNIVAL & BAKE SALE REPORT

By Roopali Gupta, *Chair*

On November 4th, 2023 we held our annual Fall Carnival and Bake Sale. The Carnival was a great success in building friendships and connections within the parish as well as our community. We had volunteers from other churches come and help as well as Schreiber High School Key Club. The Carnival generated a total of approximately \$5,200 in revenues with expenses of approximately \$1800. The net carnival receipts totaled approximately \$3400. Although not our best year certainly not a bad one.



We should count amongst our successes at the carnival the inspiration of the great parish and community participation and a generally very enjoyable day for all who volunteered and participated. We received excellent feedback regarding how much people enjoyed working together to make the carnival happen. The community came out in good numbers, especially families with smaller children, and seemed to have really enjoyed being at St.



Stephen's for the day. The Square Up online platform for online ordering was used for bake sale pre-orders. Many of the bake goods sold out fast online.

We hope to continue to see the Carnival and bake sale grow. The Carnival and Bake Sale committee is already working on 2024 Carnival and Bakes Sale. The date is TBD as we are working around the 2024 General election and Halloween.



CONSIGNMENT SHOP REPORT

By Susan Dietz Massingill

The mission of the St. Stephen's Consignment Shop is "Good deals...Good works."

We have over 300 active consignors. The community and parishioners also donate, which represents almost 50% of revenue. The shop is a method of repurposing clothes and housewares, while helping the community and the church. We have been actively encouraging donations.

Caren Salkin, and our part time shop managers, Susan Snyder and Susan Stern are supported by 5 volunteers, Susan Dietz Massingill, Katherine Crean, Agnes Dickson, Christine Cheng and Kerry Curan. Although the numbers of volunteers is slightly up their number of hours is down.

If you can spare a few hours on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday from 10 to 4, please stop by the shop and see any one of us or email Caren at shop@ststephenspw.org.

Our contribution to the church this year was about \$14,000 which is a decrease since last year because of decreasing volunteer time and increase cost of shop managers.



COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

By Bernadette Reyes

The tasks that the Communications Committee undertakes include: managing our social media presence; submitting press releases or calendar notices to local publications; creating and distributing promotional content for church events to print and online media outlets, as well as to the parish, in both paper and digital formats, for posting in windows or bulletin boards of local businesses, to email to friends and family, and to promote on social media; editing and emailing the monthly Banner and Sunday School e-newsletters, and updating the church's website.

The website is an important vehicle for “church shoppers” who are looking for more information about our parish, as well as for current members. Thank you to Bill Anderson who not only maintains and updates the church's website, but also puts together both our Banner and Sunday School & Youth e-Newsletters. In addition to input from the Parish Administrator about what content should be added, removed or updated, Bill is also aided by feedback from the Website Committee, consisting of Robin Schroeder, Nora Silbersack and Jennifer Wilson Pines. Their task is to go through the website to make sure that the content is up to date and to figure out how to make the site engaging and easier to use/navigate around.

The Banner is the church's electronic newsletter which is emailed monthly . Rhonda Fay also puts together a Sunday School and Youth Group newsletter that also gets distributed via email to the parish within a week of the regular Banner. These newsletters are also mailed out to a group of parishioners who do not use email or prefer a printed copy. If you or someone you know wishes to receive a hard copy of the newsletter or any parish communications, such as this Annual Report, please let me know—office@ststephenspw.org or (516) 767-0363. I want to make sure that all parishioners are reached.

Thanks to Jennifer Wilson Pines for documenting our various church events with her beautiful photography. She has also placed press releases, pictures and ads with the local papers, like Port News.

St. Stephen's has a social media presence on Facebook and Instagram.

- The church's Facebook page, *St. Stephen's Church - Episcopal, Port Washington, NY* (<https://www.facebook.com/StStephensPW>), is managed by Roopali Gupta, Alan Dinn, Jennifer Wilson Pines, Mo. Lauren and me; it currently has 465 followers.
- We also have a Facebook group that is linked to the St. Stephen's Facebook page called “St. Stephen's Episcopal Church PW Community”. Created by Roopali Gupta, this parish community forum exclusively for parishioners and friends of St. Stephen's only, where they can share church events, ideas, and prayers. To date, the group has 100 members (up 34

from last year). If you would like to join, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/5478290122243552>.

- Sue Snyder, one of the Shop Associates, has taken over maintenance of the *St. Stephen's Consignment Shop, Port Washington* Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ststephensconsignmentshop/>). It currently has 506 followers.
- The church's Instagram page (<https://www.instagram.com/ststephenspw/>) has 82 followers and is managed by Mo. Lauren.

The Parish Directory is available through the church office. If you would like a copy, please contact me to get one. If you have had a change of address, email or phone number since last year, please let me know so I can update your record in the database.

Wondering how you can help the Communications Committee's efforts to get the word out about our wonderful parish?

Here's how:

- Get on our email list. Much of our communication is now digital, and we'd like to be able to include all parishioners. Send your email address to office@ststephenspw.org.
- Like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram. Please comment and share our posts. This helps us grow our presence. You can have your church-related pictures posted to our Facebook page (let one of the Facebook editors listed above know) and then tag friends.
- Send your pictures of church events to office@ststephenspw.org and banner@ststephenspw.org.
- Forward our Banner and Sunday School e-newsletters to friends in the community who may be interested in visiting St. Stephen's.
- Invite friends or family members to attend on-line or in-person services or any of St. Stephen's free events during the year, or register their child for Sunday School.
- Put up any of the church's event flyers in your workplaces or places you patronize if they allow it.
- Use your St. Stephen's "swag" - tote bags, car magnets, water bottles and/or coffee travel mugs out in public. **What??...you don't have any of these?!!** You can purchase any of these through the church office or on the Square Up online platform that was set up for our last Carnival and Bake Sale in November.
- Spread the word! Word of mouth is still an effective tool, even in this digital age.

The Blessing

Hymn *There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit in this Place*

1. There's a sweet, sweet Spir - it in this place, _____ and I
 (2.) bless - ings you can - not re - ceive _____ till you
 (3.) say He saved you from your sin, _____ now you're

know that it's the Spir - it of _____ the Lord. _____ There are
 know Him in His full - ness, and be - lieve. _____ You're the
 weak. you're bound, and can - not en - ter in, _____ you can

sweet ex - pres - sions on each face, _____ and I
 one to pro - fit when you say, _____ "I am
 make it right if you will yield; _____ you'll en -

know they feel the pres - ence of _____ the Lord. _____ }
 going to walk with Je - sus all _____ the way." _____ }
 joy the Ho - ly Spir - it that _____ we feel. _____ }

Sweet Ho - ly Spir - it, Sweet Heav - en - ly Dove,

stay right here with us, _____ fill - ing us with _____ your

love. And for these bless - ings _____ we

lift our hearts in praise; with - out a doubt we'll know _____ that we have

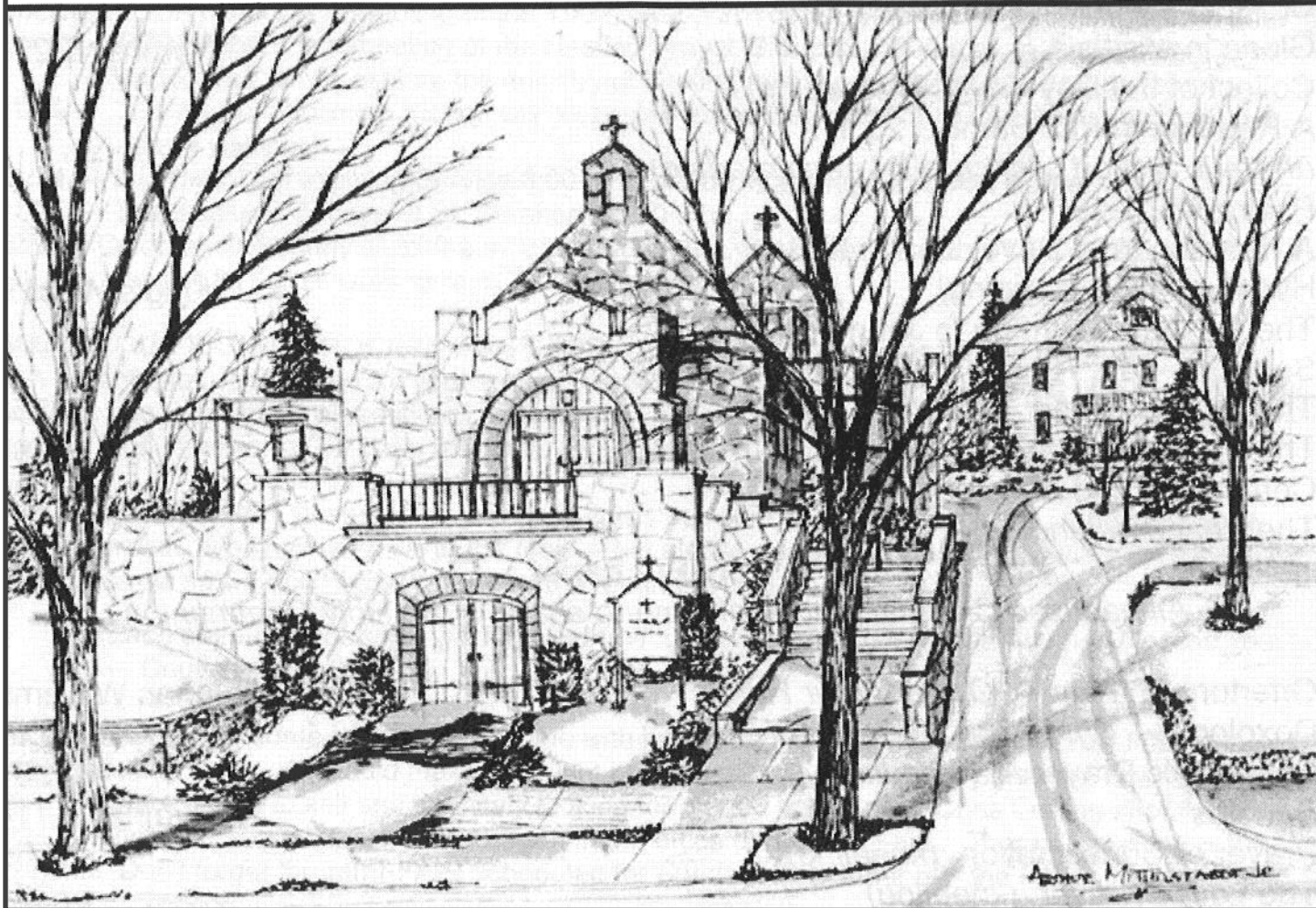
been re - lived, when we shall leave this place. 2. There are place.
 3. If you

Dismissal

Let us Bless the Lord. *Thanks be to God*

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

We are a family sharing God's love, transforming Christ's teachings into action, and rejoicing in the Holy Spirit.



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

9 Carlton Avenue

Port Washington, New York 11050

(516) 767-0363 office@ststephenspw.org

www.ststephenspw.org

Sunday Services

8am (*in person*)

10am (*in person & via Zoom/YouTube*)

Wednesday Noonday Prayer

12 pm (*via Zoom*)

Sunday School & Youth Group

10am in the Parish Hall, September-June

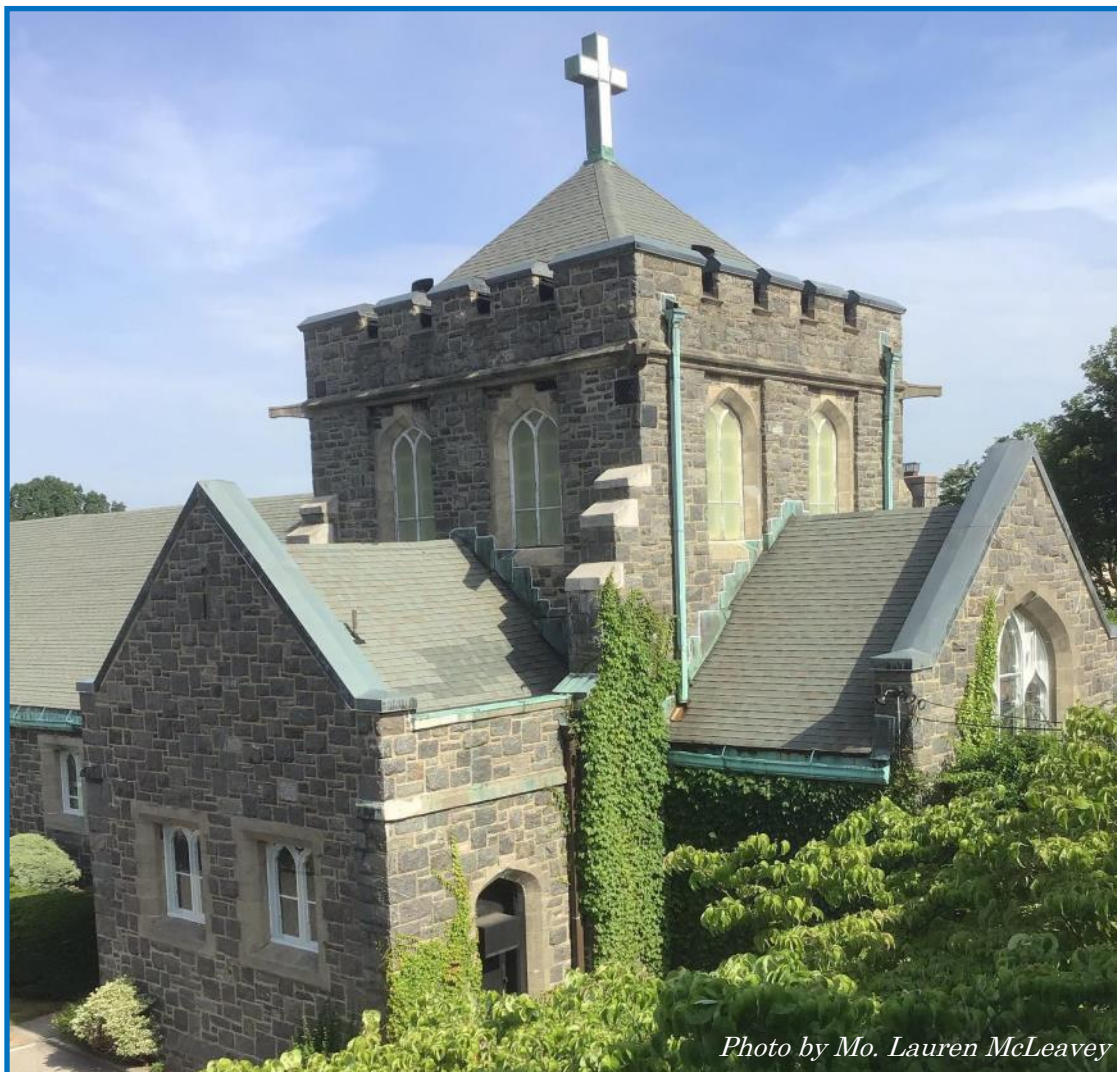


Photo by Mo. Lauren McLeavey