

# St Stephen's News

## St Stephen's Anglican Church · Timonium, Maryland

Volume XXVIII, Number 38

*A parish in the classical Anglican tradition*

October 3rd, 2017

FROM THE TREASURER

### Annual report to show an 11 percent drop in giving

My report to St Stephen's Annual Parish Meeting on Sunday, October 29th will show that over the past 12 months giving at St Stephen's has fallen by 11 percent from \$283,173 to \$252,453.

At the same time, the parish's total income has declined by almost 15 per cent (or \$54,032) from \$369,220 to \$315,188. As a consequence, net income after expenses fell by a whopping 80 percent from \$41,767 to just \$8,393.

These declines have caused on-going cash flow problems that have required the parish to meet its obligations by borrowing against its \$50,000 revolving credit facility and by withdrawing a portion of the earnings generated by its modest endowment portfolio.

Earnings from the endowment's investment portfolio went down over the period by just over 21 percent – or \$13,730 – from \$64,861 to \$51,132. But the strong stock market advances of the past 12 months have left the value of the endowment portfolio slightly up on that of October 1st, 2016 – \$226,427 compared with \$223,445.

Despite the precipitate drop in income, St Stephen's remained modestly in the black during the period under review by drastically cutting overheads.

Banking and finance costs, for example, were reduced by 43 percent from \$39,221 to \$22,357, while building and grounds maintenance costs went down by slightly over 51 percent from \$19,759 to \$9,604.

In fact, costs were down in most areas of expenditure, including operations and administration (down 7 percent) and advertising and newsletter (15 percent). Even personnel costs were reduced by 1 percent.

The only major expenditure increase was for the Choir of Men and Boys – up from \$13,548 for the previous 12 months to \$22,644. This, however, reflects increased overheads associated with the rebuilding of the choir. Even so, the cost of the music program still remains far below historic levels.

St Stephen's, financially speaking, runs a very tight ship. There is very little fat to trim. Indeed, the only way to reduce overheads substantially would be to cut programs or lay off personal, neither of which are really viable options.

But the parish has only three full time employees – the rector, the choirmaster/organist, and the director of pastoral care – none of whom are rewarded beyond

their dreams of avarice. And the parish's missions are run on a shoe-string by lay volunteers and our cadre of non-stipendiary clergy.

By proceeding on our present financial course, however, the consequence will inevitably be a continuing erosion of our endowment portfolio. After all, operational costs fluctuate – thanks in large part to the weather -- and, from the investment perspective, bull markets do not last forever.

The members of the Vestry addressed the situation at their September meeting by pledging to increase their personal giving to the parish by 10 percent annually, and they sincerely urge members and friends of St Stephen's to follow their example.

It has been some years since the vestry – mindful of the state of the economy – has formally asked for an increase in giving. However, with the economy finally emerging

### Parish Prayer List

Our Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List as well as the guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice. To add a name to the prayer list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, ring the parish office on 410 560 6776.

**FOR RECOVERY:** Peter, Charlotte, Rodney, June, Sarah, Betsy, Edie, Alan, Terry, Helen, Linda, John, Judy, Neal, Aida, Stephen, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Eunice, Robert\*, David, Jan, Susie, Sophia, Bobby, Lee, Cary, Cour Marie, Jim, Joanna, Kendall, Ian, Gloria, June, John, David, Adrian, Tom, Michell, Aida, Mai, Al, Kathy, Jack, Lewey, Stephen, Pamela, Isobel & Judy

**FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE:** Stephen, Melba, Sam, Vinnie, Doug, Ian, Lisa, Carey, Cindy, Jacob, Casey, Beth, Erin and Aubery

**ON ACTIVE SERVICE:** Lt Alex Bursi, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes; MSGT Michael Holter, USAF; Cpt Fiodor Strikovski, US Army.

from the recession, the vestry asks you prayerfully to consider increasing your pledge.

A 10 percent across the board increase in income would go a long way to putting the parish's finances back on a sound footing.

Respectfully, yours in Christ, WILLIAM HAWKINS

FROM THE RECTOR

### Dealing with the basic human impulse to discount miracles

Have you ever wondered why Jesus chose to inaugurate his ministry here on earth by turning water into wine to bail out a pair of embarrassed newly weds? It used to puzzle me a lot. If I were the Son of God, I would have done something a lot more spectacular.

I would have raised somebody from the dead -- or at the

very least I would have cured a whole load of people of truly horrific diseases. I couldn't help but think that when he changed the water into wine, Jesus wasted a golden opportunity to demonstrate the limitless nature of his power.

Theologians frequently talk about the miracle at Cana as prefiguring the institution of the Eucharist – the Holy Communion. And it is true: You can certainly see that in it. What's more, if Jesus can turn water into wine in industrial quantities -- 819 liters to be precise -- it is proof positive that he can turn the much more modest quantity of bread, wine and water we put on the altar into his body and blood.

Actually there is much more to the miracle than that. In truth, it was precisely the right miracle with which to start the Son of God's earthly ministry. This goes without saying, of course. The very idea that our all knowing, eternal God would make a hash of things is quite outlandish. But in fact nothing demonstrates God's deep and abiding love for mankind than this extraordinarily kindly act to save a young couple from a trivial embarrassment on their wedding day.

If God were willing to use his limitless power to do something as trivial as saving the face of a bridegroom who had been too improvident to order enough wine for his wedding party, what would he not do for us?

The answer to that question came a mere three years later, of course, when he sacrificed himself to save us from the consequences of being all too human. The miracle at the wedding at Cana is a graphic illustration of just how much God loves the world.

FROM THE KNITTING CIRCLE

## Buy a poppy in honor of those who gave all

The armistice that brought an end to "War to End All Wars" was concluded at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918. To honor the dead of that horrific conflict, and to provide some comfort to the injured survivors, hand made poppies -- simulating the flower that covered so many of the battle fields -- were sold to the public in remembrance of the sacrifices that had been made. Since then, the poppy has been worn in honor of all who have laid down their life in the service of our country. Please help us honor the dead -- and raise funds to help the wounded -- by buying one of our beautiful hand knitted poppies. They are on sale in the Cadwalader Room, priced at \$5 each.

### St Stephen's Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093

Office: 410 560 6776 · Rectory: 410 665 1278

Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

[www.ststeve.com](http://www.ststeve.com)

The Rev. Canon Guy P Hawtin, *Rector*

The Venerable Michael Kerouac, *Vicar*

The Rev. Michael Belt and The Rev. John Novicki

*Associate Rectors*

The Rev. M Wiley Hawks, *Pastoral Care Chaplain*

Mrs Happy Riley, *Director of Pastoral Care & Wedding Coordinator*

#### SUNDAY SERVICES

8am: Said Eucharist

9.15am: Sung Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)

11am: Choral Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)

6pm: Choral Evensong (as announced) –

[evensong.ststeve.com](http://evensong.ststeve.com)

#### WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6pm: Evening Prayer

Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5pm: Family Eucharist

### Calendar of Events

#### WEEKLY

Monday, 6.30pm: Bridge Club

Thursday, 10am: Knitting Circle

Friday, 10.30am: Bible Study

#### MONTHLY & SPECIAL

#### Parish Life

Sunday, October 10, 12.00 pm

#### The Ladies Who Lunch

Wednesday, October 18th. 12.00 pm

Barrett's Hunt Valley Mall

To reserve: Call Sara Douglas 410-560-9026

#### Vestry Meeting

Wednesday October 18th, 7.00 pm

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