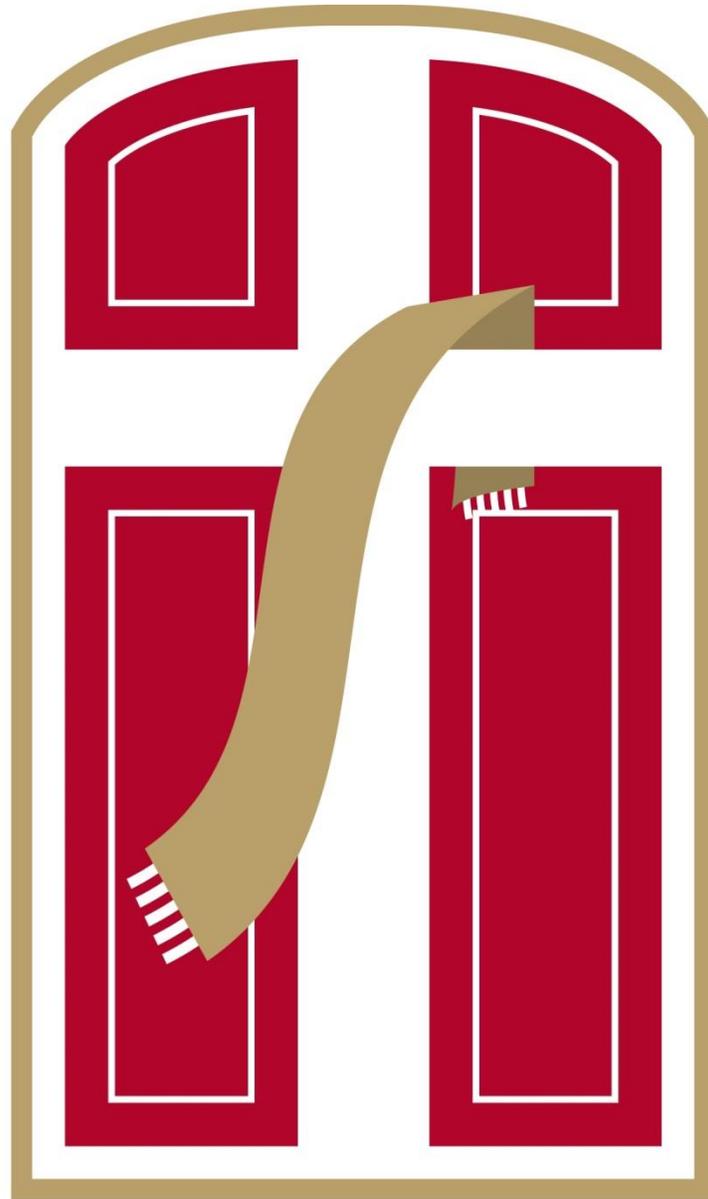


ST. STEPHEN'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

TO BE FULL OF FAITH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT (ACTS 6:5)



Annual Parish Meeting
For year ending 12-31-2016

Agenda

I. Opening Prayer

Prayer for Church Convocations and Meetings

II. Approval of Minutes of January 2016 Meeting

III. Election

A. Reading the Requirements

Minimum Requirements:

1. Confirmed member "in good standing"* of St. Stephen's Parish.
2. Over 18 years of age.
3. A giver of record for at least (1) year prior to the annual meeting.
4. Complete a basic background check. (To be done after election, having an event on record is not disqualifying in itself but may require a discussion or removal at the discretion of the Rector.)
5. Complete Diocesan required Safe Church Training on prevention of child abuse and sexual harassment. (To be done after election, failure to complete will result in removal from the Vestry.)

**"Faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and have been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God" (Title I, Canon 17, sec 3)*

Responsibilities of the Vestry:

1. Maintain the "temporalities" (physical and material aspects) of the Parish. These include all the financial resources as well as keeping the property in good condition.
2. Act as an advisory council to the Rector.
3. Act in assigned liaison or leadership capacities over various aspects of Parish life.
4. Attended all Vestry meetings (third Tuesday each month).

General Expectations:

1. To be a believer in our Lord Jesus Christ as confessed in the Nicene Creed.
2. Be a person of prayer.
3. Dedicated to living out the Baptismal Covenant in consistent attendance of worship, personal discipleship, holiness of life, and outreach to others.
4. Support all the various weekday and weekend events and functions of St. Stephen's.

B. Prayer for discernment

C. Election

1. Vestry (3)
2. Convention Delegates (2)

IV. Lunch

V. Business

- A. Rector Report
- B. Senior Warden Report (Don Tomlinson)
- C. Junior Warden Report (Craig Summer)
- D. Treasurers Report (Carla Self)
- E. Announcement of Election
- F. Recognition of Outgoing Vestry
- G. Installation of New Vestry
- H. Prayer For All Ministries

VI. Blue Sky

VII. Closing Prayer

Almighty and everlasting God, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth, mercifully hear the supplications of thy servants, and grant unto our parish family of St. Stephen's all things necessary for our spiritual welfare: schools to train us in thy faith and fear, ministers to labor in our community of Sherman, a church restored and maintained in the beauty of holiness. Strengthen and increase the faithful; visit and relieve the sick; turn and soften the wicked; rouse the careless; recover the fallen; restore the penitent; remove all hindrances to the advancement of thy truth; and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within the fold of thy Holy Catholic Church; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth one God, world without end. Amen.

State of the Parish- 2016

2016 was a challenging and fruitful year. I thank each of you for your patience and effort as we've worked to honor our Lord Jesus Christ by being part of his Church in Sherman, Texas. I know a lot has been asked in terms of energy, time, and money. Too often the Church can seem ungrateful, as if you merely owe such things as a matter of course, yet each of those is a sacrifice and should be treated as such, with a sense of thankfulness to your willingness to be a part of this parish community. Following Jesus isn't easy and never will be. We'll never do it perfectly. We'll not always make the right decisions, nor always the most faithful ones. But hopefully, by God's grace, we'll be more like Jesus this coming year than this past one.

To help us find the right path forward this past year our Vestry met with Carrie Headington, Diocesan Missioner for Evangelism, and after prayer and discussion, we articulated our Mission "to grow in our love of God and unite all people with God through Jesus Christ." We will accomplish that through worshipping God who is revealed in Scripture, being disciples of Jesus Christ the Son of God, through outreach in proclaiming the Gospel to all peoples, and through fellowship in love for one another.

Though not an Anglican document, the Westminster Confession is surely right when it declares that the chief end of man (or woman) is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. Our worship of our Creator continues to be reverent and rooted in the ancient traditions of the Church from the time of Jesus. This is one of our strengths here at St. Stephen's, and so I'm glad to say we continue to provide a place where God is glorified in prayer, praise, and offering of ourselves each Sunday and other Holy Days of the Church.

This past year we did a music survey and have tried to select hymns and music the majority of people here enjoy to sing. We've developed more permanent pew guides and revised our worship handouts in an effort to balance user friendliness, cost effectiveness, and environmental considerations. Our Bishop joined us on Palm Sunday and we enjoyed a great celebration leading into Holy Week, and we will work on having him up here again for another day. Our big worship services, Easter and Christmas, saw many new visitors from our community. We will continue to provide a place of solace, worship, and encounter with God for all people who may walk through our doors.

Jesus' final words to his disciples were to go and make disciples of all nations. Our discipleship is a lifelong process and so we have a lifetime to continue to learn and practice being a disciple of Jesus our Lord. To aid in our discipleship we have been going through the entire Book of Common Prayer in Adult Sunday School. We are learning more about prayer, Christian worship, Church history, and our faith. On Sunday evenings we've presented a class on Anglican History, beginning with the Reformation, through the American Episcopal Church, and into the Anglican Communion. Each third Sunday evening we have offered the opportunity for anyone to give a presentation on a list of church related topics, and so helped to provide the chance for all of us to learn more about Jesus, his Church, and our Christian life. This past Lent we talked about the Christian Life in brief during our Lenten series. We held a Confirmation class, and saw seven people confirmed. This past year we also began a new tradition: a yearly instructed Eucharist during the second service. This is for new members to learn why we worship the way we do, and for long time members to continue in their appreciation of our liturgy.

Outreach was perhaps our busiest, and in some ways, most challenging commitment. Jesus calls us to outreach in two ways: evangelism, to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus' death and resurrection with the call to discipleship for all people, and secondly to serve and love others as the hands of Christ on earth. This is the primary mission of the Church and the main focus of many of our efforts. We experimented with new

avenues of participation in community events such as the Downtown Sherman Mardi Gras Bead Crawl and a Saturday mask making session. Before Easter we created a commercial to play on CableOne and as a result created a Parish YouTube Channel. This prompted us to work on our social media presence and now have several options and a much more active online presence. We created a Rely for Life Team and helped raise money to find a cure for cancer in the Spring. In July we once again continued to be a part of "Christmas in July" and solidify our relationship with Downtown Sherman. In the Fall we begin to take more effort in partnering with Wakefield Elementary by holding a school supply drive that filled backpacks for 30 children, plus many additional resources for the school. In October we put on a massive Halloween Carnival event that drew in over a hundred people from the community, some of whom had never been in a Church! This past Christmas we also supported Wakefield Elementary with our annual Chrismon Tree to help struggling parents provide a Christmas for their children.

In addition, many come to our doors looking for help with buying medicine, keeping their power on during cold months, or paying rent when facing eviction. Though we can't help everyone, we did provide over \$4000 of Alms assistance to area families, in some cases being able to give them just enough help to keep them housed until they were able to find stable jobs.

Fellowship is a vital part of the life of any Church. There was, of course, a day in which the Parish Church was the center of village life. They didn't have fellowship halls, or parking lots, or education wings, but also didn't need them. The village community was a fairly tight knit community and within that life the Church existed as part of that community. Over time we saw the rise of denominations and safer, better travel. People began to move more, society changed, and that assumed community ceased to exist. The Church had to adapt, and we built fellowship areas and established programs to facilitate the community. Before there was an organic community of which a village parish was merely a part. Now we must create community within the parish itself. We have regular First Wednesday Fellowships, and Men's and Women's fellowship groups, and offer Coffee Hour after the 10:30 Sunday service. These are vital parts of our life as a parish and also vital to connecting with visitors.

When we talk about our future we have to know who we are and what we have to offer. We are a Christian Church first and foremost. The Creed we recite each Sunday defines our identity as believers in one creator, the God of all existence, whose Son Jesus is also fully God. He became a human being without losing his Divinity, died for us and rose again to bring us salvation. Christ promised to return again to save the world. We believe in the Holy Spirit that gives revelation of God through the prophets and Holy Scriptures, and in a Church that's One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic, within which are the Sacraments of salvation, and is made up of Christians both living and dead. After the resurrection he sent the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and started his Church, commanding them to proclaim the Gospel to all nations, and make all who receive it disciples through Baptism. Jesus' Gospel is the good news of his victory over sin and death. This Church has now 2000 years of life in which we worship the Triune God revealed in Scripture. We've taught people the Christian faith and Christian life as we've reached out to our communities with both the love of God and the Gospel of Jesus' death and resurrection. We've been communities where people have found friendships, romance, and connections in time of need. We've never done any of these perfectly, of course, but we've had those as goals and standards. For our small part we've been moving forward to be better disciples and to continue to teach the Gospel and the traditions of the Church as we have received them; to pass them on to future generations until the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In our Worship for 2017 we will continue in much the same way. We will make some improvements to our special services, such as the Easter Vigil, but otherwise there is no plan to make major changes to Sundays. On the other hand, we are investigating offering a Friday evening Contemplative service to coincide with our new Friday night outreach and fellowship event. This will be by using some options in our Prayer Book to be in the spirit of the ancient Church, with an emphasis on candlelight, contemplation, and modern chanting,. Advent should also see improvements. We will plan on celebrating the first Sunday of Advent with a special Evening Prayer service (Solemn Evensong) and look into ways to improve our Lessons and Carols service for the community as both worship and outreach. Another idea we're going to attempt is to begin live streaming or recording our special services. This will be helpful to stay connected to our shut-ins as well as provide an outreach with our worship by connecting with people online before they join us in person. We know that many who come to us may need help in being guided through our method of worship. To facilitate this, and to improve our connection to our visitors, we're looking for volunteers to help visitors and guide them on Sunday mornings. Greeters will be expected to talk to each visitor, ask if they're familiar with Episcopal worship, and ask if they would like to be introduced to one of our members who would be honored to sit with them and be their guide for the morning. We're looking for volunteers the Greeters can seat visitors with. You will sit with them, guide them in the service as needed, and then personally invite them and bring them to coffee hour and introduce them to others.

In 2017 we're going to make some changes to our Discipleship. Sunday morning class will morph primarily into a guided Bible study. We will start with a brief series on the Bible, both about the Bible itself and also about interpretation. Later, we'll begin using Sunday mornings to work through, possibly with pre-made resources, various books of the Bible. Sunday Evenings will be used for those who wish to go deeper into their faith and will likely be more academic in focus, covering a variety of topics. The first one coming up will be a general introduction to Theology. During the Summer, and possibly over Winter, we'll use that time as a book discussion group. As we have more children attending services we'll begin working with parents on a solid Children's Education program as well.

2017 will see much of the same emphasis on Missions, Outreach, and Evangelism. We will continue to strengthen our partnership with Wakefield Elementary and our participation in downtown events. One Community event that we will begin our involvement in is the Snowflake Festival in December. We will have a simple parade float and think about how we can use that as a way to invite the community to our Christmas worship. We've added staff and faculty of Wakefield Elementary to our payer list, and we'll also look for other ways we can help them in addition to the supply drive and Chrismon Tree. In May they have asked us to help in providing care packages for STARS student testing. In addition, during Lent we'll do a parish wide project, reviving the tradition of Mite Boxes to raise money for a cause such as Food for the Poor, Episcopal Relief and Development, or another charitable group. In the Spring we will present a movie, planned as an outreach to community families. We're also working on hosting a Child Advocacy Day during Child Advocacy Month in April. We're already working on our plan to greatly improve our Halloween Event as it was such a successful outreach project and we anticipate it continuing to be so. We have a new and exciting ministry for both outreach and fellowship: YatzTea Cafe every Friday night. It's a come and go game night from 5 - 11 PM with snacks and Bubble Tea for donation which has kept it self-supporting. We've seen a good number of visitors attend and see this as a casual way to help us connect with those outside our Church and provide a place for the community to connect

with one other. Other events and projects are in planning, and if you wish to be involved please pray about being a part of our Mission Team which helps guide and organize these efforts.

In terms of Fellowship for 2017 I'm asking us to be more intentional about supporting these fellowship times. There are two major ways to do so. First is to be involved ourselves! If we are not excited and interested about being together, neither will anyone else. Make sure you are being intentional about connecting with people, especially visitors, each Sunday and inviting them to Coffee Hour. I'm also going to start asking the Men's and Women's groups to personally invite visitors to their events based on the contact information we've been given in our connection cards. Those groups will begin to receive those names and call them for the next months' meeting. In addition I'll be asking the DOK to begin calling visitors to take prayer requests. These are a few of the ways we can begin to build a stronger sense of community and offer that community to others.

I know all of us would like to see an improved St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. We'd like to see our worship and Sunday School classes full. However, we can't expect easy or quick solutions, nor can we expect every idea to work. It's also not something accomplished by any one person or small group of people, but something we must do together as a Parish, with each of us using our unique gifts for Gods' glory here at St. Stephen's. What Jesus has given us is a goal, a goal attained by a reliance on his grace and also a courage and faith to do the work of the Church in spite of setbacks, failures, past mistakes, or personal conflicts. We look to the future of this parish, a future that we know Jesus has for us, though we don't know how he plans to get us there. We look to a future where our Parish is a place where Jesus is glorified, his disciples are raised up, his Gospel proclaimed, and his people live and work together in love. To him be the Glory, now and forever, Amen.

Rev. J. Wesley Evans

Senior Warden Report - 2016

This is such an exciting time to be at St. Stephens Episcopal Church, so rich in history and tradition; and yet with new beginnings. We experienced new beginnings with our Rector, Fr. Wesley Evans, a new parish logo, and new Mission Statement, *"To grow in our love of God and unite all people with God through Jesus Christ."* God has truly blessed us with an enthusiastic leader in Fr. Evans, to help us grow spiritually, and carry the Word of Jesus Christ into the community thru evangelism and outreach. Let us offer prayers of thanksgiving for him and his ministry at St. Stephens.

St. Stephens met all its financial obligations this past year, including the Diocesan Assessment, with a small budget deficit. This was due to a slight drop in stewardship pledges and unforeseen building maintenance. The Diocesan Assessment has been lowered some for 2017 due to a drop in pledges and will help with budget concerns this coming year. The Vestry has worked tirelessly to stay on budget. The 2017 Budget as presented has a small shortfall, but we are optimistic in two things this year, the generosity of our parishioners, and some church growth. Stewardship of time, talent, and treasure is essential for a healthy parish, and St. Stephens has always excelled in this and will continue to do so.

St. Stephens was well served by a dedicated Vestry comprised of Elizabeth Bennett, Kenneth Crawford, Helen Perkins, Pam Colvin, Jerry Fillebrown, Steve Keller, Sally Faulconer-Vestry Clerk, and Craig Summer-Jr. Warden. We are extremely grateful to Elizabeth for her time spent on the Vestry as her term expires and to Jerry for filling in a vacated seat. I have also completed a three year term and will be

leaving the Vestry. It has been a labor of love and an honor to serve this parish as Senior Warden. St. Stephens Parish was also served well by Carla Self as Treasurer. Many hours were spent implementing a new bookkeeping system to improve the management of parish resources and Carla was on top of it.

Our ageing facility every year presents more issues that have to be addressed. Maintaining an old building facility is not an easy task. Our Jr. Warden, Craig Summer, and our Sexton, Ed Colvin, have done a commendable job in maintaining the facility and keeping things in good working order. The biggest issue in keeping up a 100 year old facility is money. The Second Century Fund is still functioning and your offerings, marked to be contributed to the fund, are only spent on long term building issues. This is a great way to help keep up the architectural integrity and beauty of our church.

A big thank you goes out to all the faithful parishioners of St. Stephens for your continued support as we strive to grow our parish through evangelism and outreach into the community. It is the future for St. Stephens and what we are called to do as Christians.

Respectfully submitted, **Don Tomlinson**, Senior Warden

Junior Warden Report - 2016

2016 has been a busy year for those involved in the preservation, upkeep and improvements to our buildings and grounds. So many people have taken on a role of caretaker and curator of our facilities. Each member of the parish must be commended for their support and concern for our parish home.

The appointment by your Vestry of Ed Colvin as Sexton has provided an invaluable asset to St. Stephen's. Ed & Pam have offered their time, talents and treasure to insure that each member of the parish has clean, well maintained and comfortable surroundings in which to worship and bring friends and newcomers.

This year began with "The Wall Repair Project" underway. The structural integrity of our east Sanctuary wall was addressed by Piazza Construction. Installation of tension bars and other structural modifications stabilized our 100+ year old building. The final cost of the Wall Project was **\$66,703.00**.

In addition to structural repairs, Site Scape Landscape tackled a long standing issue of poor drainage that had weakened the foundation of the building and led to the wall weakening. The final cost of the Drainage Project was **\$10,451.42**.

Payment for both of these major projects was made possible by cashing in an annuity from Bankers Life, obtaining funds from the St. Stephen's Endowment fund, and receiving a grant from the Episcopal Foundation of the Diocese of Dallas.

Our most pressing maintenance problem is the condition of our 50+ year old Heating and AC units. These outdated, inefficient, and decidedly unreliable systems must be replaced in the near future. The constant failures and stop-gap repairs to units that have long outlived their purpose are a drain on our parish resources and replacement of these systems is our only recourse.

**The following is a partial listing of Building & grounds projects competed this year:
February:**

- Hauled off 3 loads of brush, 1 load of trash
- Took truck load of unwanted items from “junk collecting areas” to 4 Rivers
- Removed Trash Compactor – Replaced with door & Shelves
- Re-worked Hangers for Stations of Cross
- Repaired one of our drop leaf tables (glued leaf support)
- Built & installed screens on 2 windows Rector’s Office
- Re-installed missing kneeler in Choir seating area
- Installed door stop on Parish Hall exterior door
- Repaired electrical short in east entry light
- Exit lights in ground floor Garrard education wing re-lit

March:

- Replaced can lights above altar
- Trimmed hedges
- Secured several pews that were loose
- Installed security gate on stairs
- Handrails on Cherry St. completed
- Cut/edged grass; cleaned Garth in preparation for Palm Sunday
- Installed cork board in Sacristy
- Tightened handrails leading to Choir
- Changed all light bulbs in Garth
- Installed photo electric cell on Library entry light
- Installed holder for candle snuffer in Chapel
- Installed holder for brass cross in sacristy
- Glued leg on table in Parish Hall
- Replaced Altar light (again)
- Repaired & replaced kneeler in choir area

April:

- Repaired door closer upstairs men’s restroom
- Cut/Trimmed grass for Easter Sunday
- Changed out Altar can light & all light bulbs
- Replaced flapper in handicapped bathroom
- Cut & edged grass twice
- Secured cover on slider at Altar railing
- Replaced both air registers under Altar benches
- **Pruitt Plumbing: Bring Cherry St. water meter up to city code (\$265.86)**
- Repaired flooring in Rectory
- Cleaned out Rectory clothes drier vent & installed new flex hose
- **Markl & Sons’ HVAC :Replaced AC compressor Parish Hall (\$2,050.00)**

May:

- Cut & edged grass
- Vacant lots on Travis mowed (thanks Steve Keller)
- Changed out all AC filters
- **Site-Scape completed drainage project (\$10,451.42)**

June:

- Replaced light above Altar
- Installed transition plate between Parish Hall & Church
- Cut notch in Cherry St. curb to facilitate new drainage
- Replaced bathroom lights
- Replaced broken door stop between offices & classrooms
- Re-set AC units following power outage

July:

- Repaired shelf - kitchen
- Replace ballast in ceiling light- counting room
- Replace broken window pane- Library
- Bent pipes on South side parking lot removed
- Contacted city to repair North parking lot driveway
- Replaced drain pipe –kitchen sink #2
- Located damaged electric line-reported to Oncor for repair
- Cleaned up storm related debris outside
- Set up Resource Center- Parish Hall
- **Markl -AC repair –Rectory (\$254.32)**
- **Markl- AC repair- lower classrooms (\$331.98)**
- Washed & flushed 14 Compressor units
- Installed 3 safety chains per light on Chapel lighting following failure of hanger loop; 1 fixture destroyed as result of metal fatigue

August:

- **Markl repaired east side AC- Church (\$150.00)**
- **Markl repair AC- Rectory (\$263.56)**
- Kitchen cabinet hinge replaced
- New AC unit installed accessible bathroom
- Repair Ceiling fan light –Rectory
- Replace all AC filters

September:

- Install emergency light-accessible bathroom
- Repair all exit lights- education wing
- Repair panic bar –upstairs exit door

October

- Trimmed trees; hauled off limbs
- **Changed out 20 incandescent light bulbs Nave. Installed LED long life bulbs (\$109.00)**
- Relocated Vestry Photo board to Parish Hall corridor
- Secured loose pew (Epistle side)
- Secured disconnected kneeler (Epistle Side)
- Serviced church heating system

November:

- Changed out all AC Filters
- Installed Supply line, Filler Valve & Flapper in upstairs men’s toilet
- Serviced Church heaters (again) 2 units not working
- Cleaned out janitor closet; moved paint & related materials to Jr. Warden/Sexton storage
- **Markl Heat & Air replaced west unit run capacitor; east unit ¾ hp fan motor (\$631.27)**

December:

- 12/2 All church Sanctuary heaters out of service.

Markl replaced:	Run Capacitor- East unit-	51.10
	• ¾ hp fan motor-West Unit	505.17
	• Service call	<u>75.00</u>
		\$631.27
- 12/20 Sanctuary heaters down.

Markl replaced: Integrated Control Boards	408.58
• Service call	<u>75.00</u>
	\$494.22
- Ed Colvin works on church heaters weekly to keep them running
- Replaced AC Filters N/C
- Added bottom rail to folding chair storage area

Respectfully submitted, **Craig Summer**, Jr. Warden, **Ed Colvin**, Sexton

Treasurer Report: Year End 2016 Financial Reporting

The year of 2016 continues as a transition year to work toward complying with the Diocese Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs. The focus in 2015 was combining 2 accounting systems to the new Power Church accounting system and since a certified public accounting (CPA) financial audit had not been completed since around 2009 it became the focus in 2016 to assure that the books meet Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The CPA audit was completed successfully for 2015 by Kelly Grimes CPA firm and that report is available for review in the parish administrator's office. The results of the audit were 6 minor adjustments and those will be made to the Power Church system as closing entries for 2016. The audit recommendation regarding the Endowment Fund is being actively addressed by the Vestry.

BANK ACCOUNTS balances from the Bank Statements as of 12/31/16:

- ◆ General Fund \$19,938 - have not completed reconciliation
- ◆ Ministry Fund \$ 958
- ◆ Temporary Restricted Funds \$79,963 after the transfer to general fund of Flowers \$ 1,508
 - Memorial \$ 6,870
 - 2nd Century \$27,743
 - Altar Guild \$ 1,780
 - Organ \$10,219
 - Missions \$ 1,657
 - Choir \$ 1,395
 - Columbarium Cost \$ 3,615
 - Columbarium Donation \$19,982
 - DOK \$ 1,270
 - Brotherhood \$ 492
 - Mini Shop \$ 996
 - EYC \$ 1,144
 - Special Projects \$ 284
 - Fellowship \$ 1,008

As required by policy all Temporary Restricted bank accounts were combined into the one bank account indicated above. The Power Church system allows for maintaining separate accounting of contributions and expenses related to the Temporary Restricted Funds. Those funds are balanced monthly and the necessary transfers and journal entries are made to maintain accurate balances between the General Fund and the Temporary Restricted Fund bank accounts. Father Evans maintains the Ministry Fund and it is audited monthly.

Activities not accomplished or in progress:

- Audit Program Checklist required by the Diocese was not completed by the reporting deadline as the financial audit was just completed. The Finance Committee will meet in the next several weeks and complete the checklist and file with the Diocese.

- File amended 941 tax reports for quarter 1, 2, and 3. These will be filed as the W-2's are prepared for 2016.
- Complete W-2's for the 4 employees by the deadline.
- Complete closing of the books and reconciling bank statements for 2016. Once the books are closed the December Income Statement and Balance Sheet will be made available in the Parish Hall and posted on the bulletin board.
- Post audit adjusting entries from the 2015 audit to the December 2016 balance sheet.
- Helen and Craig Summer continue their yeoman's effort to organize the records based upon the retention requirements for the church.

Activities accomplished during 2016:

- Individuals providing services to the church were converted to employees 1/1/16 as required by the Diocese.
- W-2's and 1099's were prepared for 2015 by the deadline.
- Tax reporting for 941's was filed timely. Kelly Grimes, CPA, indicated that Father Evans should be included in Gross Wages even though he pays his own withholding and social security tax. Amended 941's will be submitted with no effect on dollars.
- Vestry voted to close all the separate checking accounts and this was accomplished late in the year. All Temporary Restricted Account balances reside in one bank account that is reconciled monthly.
- Vestry voted to create a Finance Committee late in the year made up of 2 vestry members, Father Evans, and the treasurer.
- Vestry appointed a budget committee chaired by Craig Summer and budget was prepared using the zero-based budget concept for majority of the expense accounts.
- Treasurer resigned effective after closing the books for 2016.

Respectfully Submitted, **Carla Self** , Treasurer January 2017

Ministry Updates

Altar Guild - 2016

The Altar Guild exists to assist the clergy and is directly responsible for care of all the altar linens, vestments, brass, silver, and such. They prepare for each service held in the church or chapel, including funerals and weddings, and the ministry of preparing and maintaining everything that relates to the altar.

The Altar Guild is divided into five teams, with each team serving one week a month throughout the year. Team 5 serves when the month has a fifth Sunday. Our Verger, Craig Summer, assists with the candles and set-up for the various services. The members of Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church Altar Guild are:

Team 1 – Pam Colvin, Sally Faulconer; Team 2 – Connie and Mike Mitchusson, Carol and David Griffith;
Team 3 – Betty and Bob Rice, Lola Keith; Team 4 – Anna Keller, Kelly Lopez; Team 5 – Carla Self and Joe Nedley.

New members are trained by the Altar Guild Directress and their respective team members and serve with experienced members of their team. Each team takes the responsibility of preparing for scheduled services during their week. In addition, a team is responsible for any unscheduled services during their week, such as weddings, baptisms or funerals.

Contributions to the Altar Guild Fund have provided for several new items of altar linens and supplies for our services. Upon the installation of Father Evans as Rector, the members of the Altar Guild donated an

Alb for Father Evans. Mike and Connie Mitchusson donated the prayer candles for the Candle Stand. A donation box is to be installed for contributions toward the cost of prayer candles.

Our goals continue for the next year:

- to continue training of new Altar Guild members in the tasks required
- to update the check list of weekly tasks and clarify duties which will ensure all areas are covered.
- to inspect vestments and arrange for repair of worn vestments.
- to encourage parishioners to join our Guild so each Team will have a minimum of two or three members.
- to encourage parishioners to contribute to the Altar Guild Fund to support the purchase of altar linens, altar and priest vestments and Eucharist silver and brass vessels.

The Altar Guild always welcomes new Guild members or subs to assist when Team Members are unable to serve because of individual schedule conflicts. For more information or to become a member of the Guild, please contact Anna Keller at 214-538-6145 or e-mail to annask@mindspring.com or contact the church office.

The Altar Guild works quietly behind the scenes preparing for all services held in the church and chapel, polishing brass/silver and cleaning the linens to have our church ready for all parishioners to worship our Lord with ease and dignity. Their work and dedication is deeply appreciated by members and lay leaders of our congregation.

Respectfully submitted, **Anna Keller**, Altar Guild Directress

Brotherhood of St. Stephen's: 2016

The Brotherhood represents all the men in the parish. We meet each month on the second Wednesday of the month. In 2016, we continued that schedule except for one month in the summer and Easter. This year we voted not to join any national Episcopal Church organizations, but to remain a social group within Saint Stephen's.

The goal of each month is to have a speaker or topic presented by a member. We also have traditionally sponsored:

- Saint Peter's Day fish fry in June
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
- Advent Feast in December

As you can see, Brotherhood is about sharing a great meal!

Brotherhood is also about our congregation and church, developing prayer lists and participating in any cause which would benefit Saint Stephen's and the community.

In 2016 we also participated in a fish fry contest to support Hospice in Sherman. We won the best fish fry!!

Goals for 2017 include:

- Continue our monthly gatherings with speakers or presentations.
- Reach out to both Bonham and Dennison to join our meetings.
- Continue to help sponsor Christmas food for our families in need.
- Assist our Sexton with church work projects.
- Identify community projects which Brotherhood can actively join.
- Develop additional weekly prayer lists for Fr. Evans.

Respectfully, **Joe Nedley**, President Brotherhood of St. Stephen's

Children's Christian Education

The Children's Education has much to offer to our young Christians. Erin and I have many projects for each Sunday. Attendance has been low, but there are new members joining. We have reached out to them and are hopeful for growth.

Respectfully, **Kenneth Crawford**

Choir Report - 2016

St. Stephen's Joyful Noise continues its efforts to provide leadership in congregational singing of familiar Episcopal hymns and service music. The choir is not a performing organization for entertainment but rather a humble group at the front of the church joining the entire parish in the worship of our Lord. Our forces remain quite small, from a single member to as many as seven in any given service. We welcome any parishioner who wishes to sing (or who wishes that the choir sounded better) to join us. On August 31st, Fr. Evans took advantage of a 5th Wednesday to sponsor a **Hymn Fest** in the Parish Hall, inviting the entire parish to participate. Choir members, Linda on keyboard, and several parishioners participated in a most enjoyable evening singing familiar hymns, snacking on good food and engaging in special fellowship. For the most part we sing the hymns and the service music but have been making efforts to expand our offerings to the service during the Offertory. We also participated in a special service of **Advent Lessons & Hymns on December 3rd**. This celebration of Advent was originally planned to be a part of Sherman's Snowflake Festival; inclement weather prevented the Snowflake Festival Parade from going forward and as a result the attendance at our service was rather small. The plan at this point is to continue to link this service to the community celebration in an effort to reach out to the community. During the most sacred services during Holy Week and Christmas, the choir participated in all **Holy Week** services and for the **Christmas Eve** service, adding additional anthems and hymns.

Another challenge that faces *St. Stephen's Joyful Noise* is the impending departure of our organist, Linda Pease. If anyone in the parish knows of an organist who might be interested in joining us, please contact Fr. Evans. We have often conducted service *a cappella*, especially in times when the power is out, and we can do it again. However, the organ music adds so much to the service, it is important that we find another organist to step in once Linda departs. I'd like to take this moment to thank Linda for all her service to St. Stephen's and her leadership to our choir and to wish her well as she joins husband Michael at St. Charles the Martyr Anglican Church in Denison.

Respectfully submitted, **Sally Faulconer**

Fellowship Ministry - 2016

The family and friends that make up our parish have gathered at least once a month to celebrate the love and companionship that is the hallmark of a thriving Christian community. It is our desire to open both our doors and hearts to the church and un-churched by offering a warm and inviting venue where people can gather and experience fellowship, acceptance and the joy that comes with being a part of the community of Christ. To date we have presented a variety of opportunities for the parish family to reconnect and bring others into the church home we love.

January: The "Christmas Revels 2016" marked the end of the Twelve Days of Christmas with dinner and our take on fine dining. Assorted appetizers & salad, roast pig with onion-apple gravy, herb crusted chicken, marinated carrots, buttery southwestern corn, broccoli with cheese sauce, loaded smashed potatoes, a host of decadent dessert choices and twinkle lights made for a memorable evening.

February: An evening of "Comfort Foods" filled us up with Mac & Cheese, Meatloaf, Chocolate Cake, Meatballs & Spaghetti and other foods that spell homemade comfort.

The "Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper" was well attended and waffles, pancakes, sausage and bacon helped us celebrate "Fat Tuesday." Thanks to those Brotherhood cooks who flipped cakes and wrangled bacon.

March: Each Wednesdays during Lent a special study was offered along with a simple “Meatless Soup and Bread” meal.

Following Easter Day service we held an “Easter Brunch” using leftovers from the night before “Easter Vigil Reception”.

April: The smell of “Barbeque and Beans” signaled a roundup of St. Stephen’s cowpokes.

May: “Bring Your Favorite Comfort Food” filled us all with delightful favorites.

June: We sampled a variety of Sandwiches, potato salad, apple pie and other picnic goodies.

July: “God Bless America Hot Dog Roast” Patriotism, potato salad, wieners celebrated our national birthday.

August: To beat the heat we enjoyed a “Salad Supper” night with some ice cream thrown in for good measure.

September: Bingo, sandwiches and dessert prizes... an evening of spirited fun!

October: In October the annual “Chili Cook-Off” spiced up our fellowship. The nearby firemen acted as judges and everyone enjoyed chili, nachos, guacamole and good times.

November: The “Day of the Dead” was celebrated with Mexican food and a Dias de las Muertos altar

December: To prepare for Advent a Pot-Luck dinner with a presentation by Fr. Evans was offered.. This low key affair was a great help in focusing on the season of expectation that is Advent.

With your participation in the worship and your attendance at these parish events we will continue building the bonds that make us a family in Christ. It is essential that all of those who claim membership in this parish support one another through prayer and fellowship. If you need help with transportation to and from the church for any reason please contact the office and arrangements will be made to insure your inclusion.

Respectfully, **Craig & Helen Summer**, Chief Cooks & Bottle Washers

Lay Server- LEV-Worship Ministry- 2016

The role played by our laity in the worship offered at our altar is an integral part of the inclusive nature of our church. Joining together with clergy to offer ourselves and souls to the praise of our Lord makes the Episcopal Church “hands on” worship. We are not observers, but rather active participants in the worship. We are so grateful for the continued participation of the following members of this parish:

Mark Beardsley, Elizabeth Bennett, Ed Colvin, Pam Colvin, Erin Crawford, Ken Crawford, Jerry Fillebrown, Carol Griffith, David Griffith, Pat Hunt, Anna Keller, Steve Keller, Joe Nedley, Helen Perkins, Naif Risk, Carla Self, David Stone, Don Tomlinson.

More volunteers are always welcome... some of these folks are called on to serve each and every week. We are fervently calling for more volunteerism. “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace...” Peter 4:10

Please search your hearts and take a more active role in the worship that means so much to us all. If you are currently serving, please volunteer to add another task to your repertoire of good works.

We have positions available for:

- ❖ Ushers
- ❖ Acolytes
- ❖ Readers
- ❖ Chalice Ministers
- ❖ Prayer Leaders

These positions are a crucial part of our worship and your gifts are needed!

In addition to increasing the number of lay volunteers in all positions, it is our goal to implement hands on cross-training for volunteers. This will insure that servers will feel more at home when pitching in as needed in other service roles.

Respectfully, **Craig Summer**, Lay Server Coordinator

H: 903-892-0045 Cell: 903-818-7376 hcsommer123@gmail.com

Mission Team - 2016

Because St. Stephen's wishes to go into the community to spread the good news, practice acts of charity, and attract new members, the name of this ministry has been changed to **Mission Team**. Fr. Evans works tirelessly in the community to find opportunities for St. Stephen's to become a force for good in the greater Sherman area.

EVANGELISM

Purpose:

To help St. Stephen's proclaim the Gospel and call to discipleship the people of Sherman and the surrounding area.

Definitions:

Gospel: God in Jesus Christ died on the cross for sin and rose again, triumphing over death and sin. In short, Jesus Christ is Lord.

Evangelize: To proclaim the Gospel of Jesus' death and resurrection to the world regardless of background.

Make Disciples: To call all people into a relationship with God through Jesus, and thus calling them to live their lives following Him as a member of His Church. Entrance into discipleship is through the sacrament of Baptism.

Methods:

- Evangelism Training for the Congregation
- Create evangelistic events
- Participate in appropriate evangelism opportunities in the community
- Organize mission trips (local, national, or international as able) – this method may be best accomplished in concert with other churches in the area.

SOCIAL SERVICE

Purpose: To help St. Stephen's engage the community and the world in performing acts of mercy and charity to demonstrate the love of Christ to all people.

Methods:

- Organize works of social benevolence for St. Stephen's
- Provide awareness of human physical and emotional needs in the world
- Assist St. Stephen's to spread the love of Christ and continue his ministry of service.

INCREASED EXPOSURE

- Commercials specifically targeted for Holy Week to invite viewers to attend our services at St. Stephen's. Commercials ran on selected Cable Stations March 7-27, 2016
- Investigated the possibility of local TV coverage (i.e. KTEN) of our Holy Week activities and of our Palm Sunday Procession around the Court House.
- Increased our presence on Social Media. Benefits of using Twitter and Instagram? Continued and increased our FB presence. Photos, photos, photos...
- Additional signage – looked into the feasibility of having some kind of sign that will advertise current services and special events.
- List of Advertising Locations – Fr. Evans distributed brochures and other materials to area retail establishments, apartment complexes and any other venues that would allow our information to be displayed. As the year progressed, material advertising special events were also distributed.

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES, 2016:

- Meals on Wheels – increased participation on the part of SS parishioners in this wonderful service to those in need
- Pantry/Grand Central Soup Kitchen – parishioners regularly contribute non-perishable food goods to the collection area
- Wakefield Elementary School Partnership expanded
 - Chrismon Tree – The Parish Hall Christmas Tree decorated with Angels containing the names of families (especially the children) who, w/o our help would not have Christmas – Connie Mitchusson, liaison.
 - Back to School Project – collected materials for 30 backpacks and classroom materials
 - Included SS information in packets distributed to all elementary school children in SISD

- Carla Self offers a Chair Yoga class at SS for anyone wishing to attend. This class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays of every week. There is a nominal charge for each class, and all the money is donated to the Pantry or to Fr. Evans' discretionary fund.
- Relay for Life, May 20th – "Cruisin' for a Cure" project with "home-made box cars" – good participation from SS
- Christmas in July, July 9th – Sherman Square
- Halloween Carnival, October 22nd – very successful event – plan to do this every year

FOR THE FUTURE:

The Parish is committed to looking for new ways to interact in the community and to invite the community into our beautiful Church. All members of the Parish are invited to participate with the Mission Team in some manner, whether it be brainstorming, decorating, being available to participate in any event or any other way you can imagine.

Respectfully submitted, **Sally Faulconer**

Order of the Daughters of the King- 2016

Daughters of the King, Saint Stephen's Chapter for 2016 accomplished the following:

1. Each month a prayer list was prepared for each member by the chapter prayer leader. Names are added and deleted as needed.
2. Our members completed the study of "Mere Christianity " by C.S. Lewis and is in the process of a new study of the book "Read the Bible for All Its Worth" by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart.
3. In February the Daughters of the King and St. Stephen's Sisterhood hosted a baby shower for Jennifer MacIntosh.
4. Each fifth Sunday of the month DOK was the host of coffee hour following the 10:30 Church service.
5. DOK hosted the Palm Sunday reception when the Bishop was present.
6. Cards with our prayers have been sent to Church members and members of our community by our corresponding secretary.
7. DOK members participated in Christmas in July on the square in Sherman.
8. Blankets are monogrammed by Cindy Risk that will be given to the seriously ill. Sue Fillebrown received our last blanket, and with gifts in her memory, more blankets will be given to the ill.
9. The DOK hosted the reception following Sue Fillebrown's funeral.
10. The Daughters of the King participated in a meeting hosted by St. Luke's DOK October 1, 2016. This meeting included DOK chapters from the Sherman area. St. Stephen's Chapter will host the 2017 meeting in October.
11. Our DOK chapter participated in St. Stephen's Halloween Carnival.
12. Our DOK chapter hosted the reception following the service which installed Father Evans as the rector of St. Stephen's. He was installed by the Diocese of Dallas.
13. As the DOK Chaplain of our chapter, Father Evans was given the Chaplain's cross which was a gift from its members.
14. The Chrismon tree with its symbols of Christ was a project that enabled St. Stephen's members to give gifts to Wakefield Elementary School students in need. Connie Mitchusson is the liaison between St. Stephen's and Wakefield Elementary School and oversaw the project doing most of the work herself. The DOK members participated enthusiastically.
15. The DOK members took a very large box of gifts to the Clyde Cosper Veteran's Home in Bonham, Texas. Tamala Van Deren was in charge of this project, and her mother made a lot of lap blankets for the veterans.

Respectfully submitted, **Elizabeth Bennett**, President

Stephen's Own Shepherds (S.O.S.)

Stephen's Own Shepherds (S.O.S.) is a voluntary committee begun in the 1970s under Fr. James Garrard and his S.O.S. activist wife, the late Mib Garrard. Our purpose is to assist Fr. Wesley Evans when parishioners experience physical needs, want a visit, or require help in getting to church or to doctors. Our hope is that our visits and attentions convey good cheer for the church at large. We meet the 3rd Thursday

of each month either in Fr. Evans' office or via email and/or telephone. We meet expenses personally and with contributions.

ACTIVITIES: Because our group is small, we lean on the kind offers of other members to help us. To those of you who have done so this year we extend warm thanks:

Vestry members who take consecrated Communion to members unable to attend church: Craig Summer, Don Tomlinson, and Steve Keller, and their wives, Helen Summer & Anna Keller, who accompany them at times.

To the many who SIGN CARDS to people with various needs and add a personal note, we thank you!

To those who help TAKE FLOWERS, please know those living blossoms bring fresh hopes.

To those who bring food and invite SOS to take left-overs to someone at home, many thanks.

To the Daughters of the King, who initiate many kindnesses, we say, "You go, girls!"

To Pat Hunt & Wanda Bush who have driven Doll Watson to church, merci!

HIGHLIGHTS:

We ask prayers of remembrance for two dear ladies, long beloved among us, who're now above: Sue Fillebrown & Joan Schrock. We ask for prayers for those listed in our Intercessory Prayer list available at church and online

S.O.S. NEEDS MORE PEOPLE! S.O.S. NEEDS YOU.

With thanks and regards to all, **Frances Neidhardt, Lola Keith, and Kelly Lopez**