

st.stephen's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH+SCHOOL

BECOMING the Cornerstone

STEWARDSHIP



ST. STEPHEN'S 2025 BUDGET AND 2026 GOALS

OUR PEOPLE: 53% OF 2025 BUDGET

Goal - increase compensation with inflation and skill development.



Carissa Baldwin-McGinnis: Rector



Ashley Dellagiacoma: Associate Rector and
School Chaplain



Grace Sung: Director of Music



Rochelle Butler: Business Manager



Miguel Zuniga: Director of Technology



Ben Flannery: Maintenance Technician

OUR PEOPLE: 53% OF 2025 BUDGET

Goal - increase compensation with inflation and skill development.



Whitney Corson: Campus Administrator



Andrés Herrera: Communications Assistant

STAFF SINGERS



Amia Langer



Chris Truong



Andrew Nelson



Siwei Zhang

NURSERY STAFF



Patricia Hernandez



Lisa Martinez

Our people make our community special, and we invest in skilled leaders as staff. This team supports evangelism and communications, including worship, fellowship and formation.

OUR CAMPUS: 23% OF 2025 BUDGET

Goal - increase resources to match maintenance/repair cost inflation.

St. Stephen's is a house of worship and center for faithful community. Our campus provides a home for all to flourish.

Our Nave is a beautiful Norman building. Made a touch more beautiful by the careful cleaning of stonework, restoration of stained-glass windows, and expanded native gardens performed during 2025. However, it is an old building and requires loving care in the form of maintenance and repair.



Beyond the Nave, the church holds staff offices, education rooms, and meeting space across our W. Alabama Campus. In addition to hosting festivals and service for the congregation, Pecore Hall and the Havens Center serve as critical gathering space in our community for things like 12-step meetings, civic groups, gaming clubs, and Scout troops. These facilities require cleaning, insurance, and electricity in addition to maintenance and repair. They also require security appropriate for the children whom we safeguard both in our church activities and in our school.



Our Buildings and Grounds committee monitors preventive maintenance and repairs to systems including air conditioning, heating, water runoff control, electrical wiring, kitchen appliances, roofing and landscaping.

Our care of creation is reflected in our care of our exterior grounds. Through collaboration with the school, we cultivate meaningful green spaces so our community can enjoy new life, fountains, flowers, and sometimes a baby owl sighting.

OUR SHARED LIFE: 23% OF 2025 BUDGET

Goal - return community partners budget to 2024 plus inflation.

As with many churches, rector transitions can be a time of difficulty in maintaining giving. Churches need to respond to such decreased pledges with changes to expenditures to maintain a responsible and sustainable budget. Thus, as our people and campus costs are fixed, we were forced to make the unfortunate decision to reduce the Justice, Advocacy & Service (JAS) budget for direct community financial support in 2025. For 2026, we would like to embrace the opposite result: responding to a renewed commitment and energy in the church and returning to our 2024 giving commitments. These commitments fall into three categories:

Community Partners:

Through the Justice, Advocacy, and Service (JAS) Team, St. Stephen's makes annual financial contributions to the following local service organizations doing the work to meet the needs of our neighbors.



Diocesan Commitment:

Through our annual Diocesan contribution, St. Stephen's also supports the Diocese and its Bishops in efforts to provide asylum seekers with food, shelter, and advice on legal rights; in protesting "the conditions in detention centers at our border because we are Christians, and Jesus is unequivocal;" and, through the Episcopal Health Foundation, "tackling the unequal and unacceptable health realities faced by Texans." We are active participants as we send delegates annually to Diocesan Council for this shared work of the church.



Parish Life:

We also support activities of evangelism and communications, including worship, fellowship and formation. To ensure responsible financial interactions with our community we audit our budget process, protect our computer systems from attacks and create new ways to connect.



MUSIC

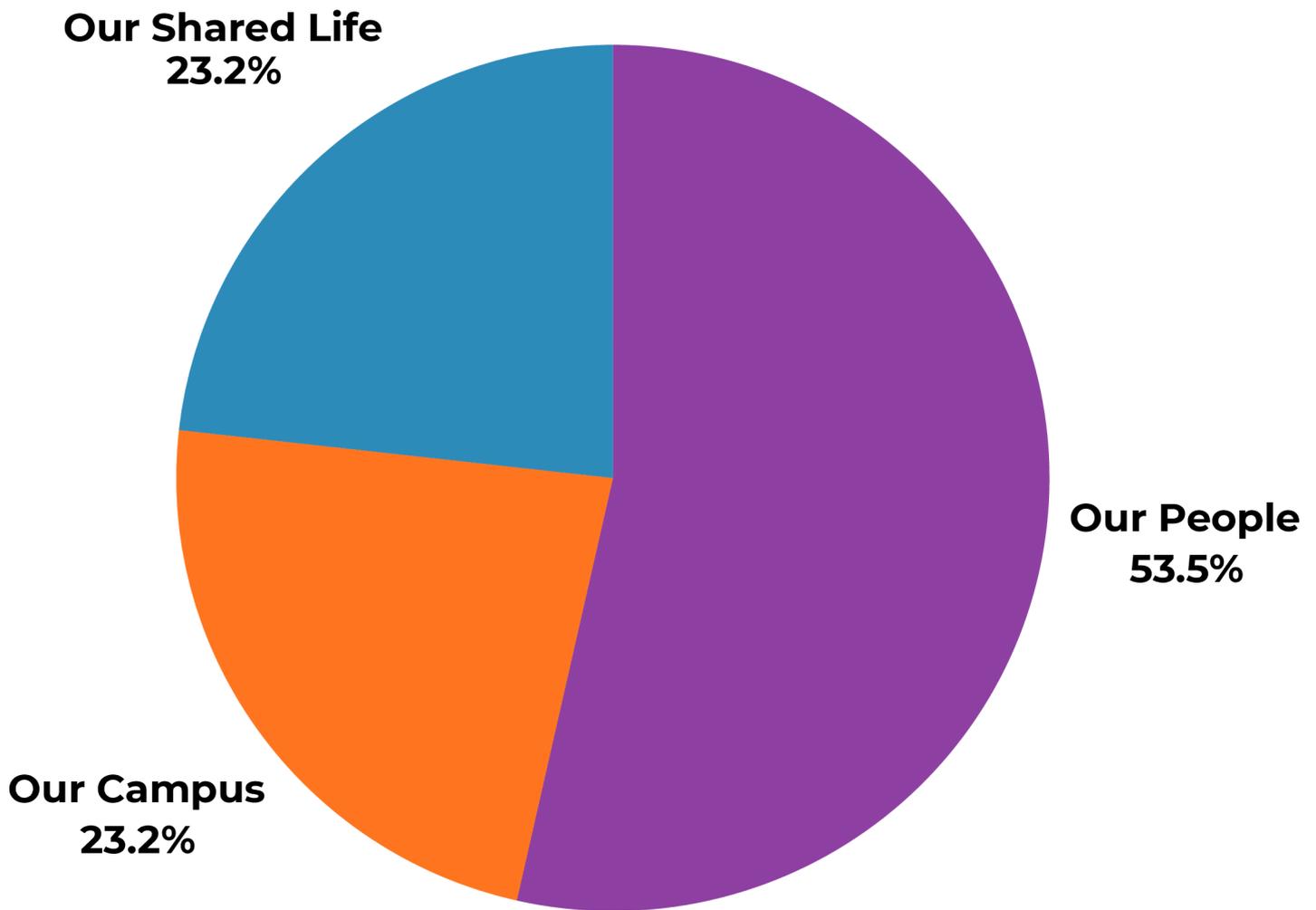
The beautiful sounds that enhance our worship experience every Sunday are brought to life by various groups within the Music Ministry. Under the leadership of Music Director Grace Sung, these dedicated volunteers showcase a diverse range of musical talents for our community. The choir supports worship services every Sunday, made up of committed volunteers and staff singers, and welcomes vocalists of all skill levels to help create a joyful atmosphere during the service. Choir members enjoy rehearsing weekly and joyfully socializing afterwards.

The Music Ministry encompasses more than just the vocal choir. Our handbell choir, which requires no prior experience and involves no singing, performs occasionally at the 10:30 service. They rehearse every other weekend, also enjoying time for warm fellowship after each rehearsal. Additionally, the bell choir program has incorporated a new percussion curriculum called World Music Drumming, which will be included in worship to accompany music of various cultures.

The music program also features instrumental soloists who are encouraged to share their talents with the congregation, with rehearsals scheduled as needed before performances. If you play an instrument and would like to perform for the community, please reach out to Grace.

To learn more or to get involved, please contact Grace Sung at hsung@ststephenshouston.org. Everyone is welcome to share their musical gifts and learn new instruments while connecting with a supportive community. As Grace says, "Music brings joy to the congregation and helps us build community and connect with God and each other." We invite you to join our Music Ministry and help us continue to spread the joy of music.

2025 PARISH BUDGET BREAKDOWN



Dear St. Stephen's Community Member,

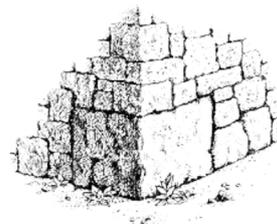


Having taken many steps together through a season of questions and uncertainty, our St. Stephen's community now emerges on the cusp of new learning and growth. It is worth remembering how we conducted that journey. In the words of the collect we jointly prayed for over a year: "walking together in love with patience and care for one another." For me, that phrase calls to mind our young ones heading off to children's chapel.

While it was not an easy journey, I feel it was a rewarding one, and not just in reaching our destination of welcoming a new rector into our community. We were reminded of the many strengths of our people as we held onto our welcoming nature and maintained a focus on the joy and care that we bring to one another and to the greater community of which we are part.

Advent will bring Carissa Baldwin McGinnis's new leadership to us, so we now transition to a new season of building – building to last. Thus, **the Cornerstone**. I hope you will join me in empowering a 2026 in which all aspects of St. Stephen's can strive upwards.

If you have been pledging, thank you so much for getting us here! We could not have done it without you. We hope you will see pledging generously again this year as enabling us to build upward.



If you are new to the community or haven't pledged before, welcome! We hope to provide insight into how pledging enables St. Stephen's to accomplish its mission. There are connections between our pledging, our people, our plans and what you have found in this community. What we each contribute ultimately determines how St. Stephen's progresses in its core values of Service, Questioning, Relationships, Future, Individuality and Belief.

Our goal is to give our new Rector the financial stability that allows her to focus on engagement and development within and through this community's many connections.

We will be praying a collect for this season of Stewardship:

O God, our Creator and abundant provider, thank you for guiding us to a rector with whom we can set a new cornerstone, and grant our community generosity in spirit, time, and resources, so that we can grow our relationships and expand our service, reflecting Your love well into the future; in the name of Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

With this in mind and spirit, we hope you will prayerfully consider pledging to St. Stephen's.

In gratitude,

Michael Hawes, Chair, 2026 St. Stephen's Stewardship Committee

Dear St. Stephen's Family,



This season of stewardship follows St Stephen's' season of discernment. As we marvel at the Holy Spirit leading us to Rev. Carissa Baldwin-McGinnis, we consider how our pledges are outward and visible signs of shared hope in the future of our congregation and in the leadership of our new rector.

Rev. Carissa came to us drawn by the spirit of this community: our commitment to justice, our openness to innovation, and our deep desire to grow in faith together. Her ministry is rooted in relationships, emotional availability, and a pastoral presence that affirms and uplifts. She preaches inclusion even when it's uncomfortable, and she leads with vulnerability and courage. Her vision for St. Stephen's is bold and compassionate. She brings experience in church planting, creative liturgy, and community engagement, having founded a bilingual, bicultural congregation and developed programs like Community Café to welcome young families. She is a leader who sees constraints as opportunities and believes in choreographed, empowered growth. Her approaches are holistic, grounded in consensus and spiritual nourishment.

This year, your pledge will help ensure that Rev. Carissa can begin her ministry among us with the resources needed to lead us forward. It will allow us to invest in the programs, leaders, staff, and infrastructure that support her vision and our shared mission. It will also signal, to her and to one another, that we believe in the future we are building together, with God's help.

We know that stewardship is more than dollars and cents. It's about recognizing the holy currencies of time, talent, and treasure. It's about aligning our values with our actions. And it's about saying, with faith and conviction, that we are ready to grow.

We believe that the St Stephen's community can step forward to collaborate with Rev. Carissa and achieve the values we share.

In gratitude and faith,
Laura M. Thewalt,
Chair, St. Stephen's Rector Search Committee

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STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

**Sue Marsh
Christina Lovely
Johnny Rovell
Wil McCorquodale
Michael Hawes, Chair**