

St. Stephen's Rector Search Parish Survey Results

What are the characteristics we should be seeking in our next rector?

We want a rector who ...

	Rank
Is a great preacher: thought provoking, compelling and inspirational	1
Has a strong, comprehensive vision encompassing all ages (children, youth, adults, and seniors), along with hands-on engagement	2
Is inclusive, welcoming, warm, and accessible	3
Is compassionate in pastoral care and sensitive to parishioners' needs	4
Is a skilled leader and administrator	5
Has a strong appreciation for, and support of, our music program	6
Empowers and supports lay leadership	7

What are your hopes and aspirations for our church?

We want a church that is known for ...

	Rank
A commitment to families, parishioners of <u>all</u> ages (especially children and youth), and to the growth of the church	1
Being a loving community that is welcoming to all	2
An outstanding music program	3
Being a generous church with robust and compassionate outreach programs	4
Strong stewardship of all of our resources	5
Active involvement in the local community	6

Narrative question:

What brought you to St. Stephen's, why have you stayed, and what are your dreams for the future of our parish?

A Representative Sample of Quotes from the Congregation

- ❖ Welcoming, warm community of faith.
- ❖ We wanted to attend a local parish church close to where we live, where we could be a part of a closely-knit congregation that was focused on nurturing our youth, caring for our seniors, and spiritually feeding us all.
- ❖ I heard that it was a compassionate church. I've stayed 30 years.
- ❖ Exceptional congregants, high level of intelligent conversation and program, sensational music, commitment to outreach, caring/loving atmosphere.
- ❖ Strong lay leadership, welcoming process and people, good clergy. Like the community and clergy. Grow the church as a progressive beacon for families and empty nesters.
- ❖ We joined as we moved to the area, stayed for the strong children's program and engaging clergy, and hope that we can continue to grow both as a congregation and a positive influence in the community.
- ❖ We loved the feel of the church, the music, the friendliness and that feeling has continued. As life continues at its torrid pace, we love that sense of consistency, peace, and warm embrace that this church and community provide and hope that a future leader can help grow this community, keep its music programs strong, and grow our youth programs from which everything else will continue to grow.
- ❖ Preaching, and an engaged and interesting congregation.
- ❖ I came to St. Stephen's when my children were very young so that they would grow up in a warm and welcoming faith community. I have stayed for them -- and for myself. St. Stephen's parishioners and clergy have become dear friends, and over the years (17+) this community has truly enriched my life. It is a place of peace, of hope, and of inspiration -- and of good fellowship. My hope is for St. Stephen's to continue to serve more members of the larger community, particularly appealing to young families, and to reach out with compassionate care in even greater ways to those in need, both near and far.
- ❖ What brought me: the rich liturgical service. Why stayed: because various rectors have thought outside of the box and have made me feel that I have something to give.
- ❖ I have attended St. Stephen's for over 40 years. My children were confirmed here. I love the music more than anything else. The music brings me back.

- ❖ Intelligent, deep message from the pulpit that connects us to the distant past as it relates to our present and future. Outstanding, professional music. Traditional. Effective stewardship. Friendly atmosphere. Ministries. Happy children. Continual growth in membership and in our relationships with one another and God. Increased participation as volunteers. Open arms to the community.
- ❖ We were drawn in by the rector at the time (Rev. Ward), stayed by becoming involved in various ministries, hope we remain on the strong track that we are on, thanks to contributions to the effort by so many parishioners.
- ❖ We came to St. Stephen's for the sense of community of all ages. We've stayed because of the commitment to families, music and outreach. We loved Rob's honest, applicable, and down to earth sermons. We loved Jim's commitment to service and outreach.
- ❖ I came to St. Stephen's as a young child for school. I learned to sing there and 50 years later have returned to sing in the Church's marvelous choir. The choir is a wonderful community within a community with incredibly talented people who work hard and support each other while filling the church with beauty. My hope is that it will continue to thrive and be supported by our new rector.
- ❖ I was attracted to St. Stephen's by the increasing number of young families, our youth program and John's music. So, some 8 years ago, these three factors gave me hope and inspiration for a growing, dynamic church. The music program is unique and adds so much to our church services and reputation. Our new minister must appreciate its importance.
- ❖ We came because the local schools did not provide Christian education and St. Stephen's was the nearest Episcopalian church. We have stayed because it is a wonderful church great community/family values and very well run/organized.
- ❖ I enjoy and appreciate St. Stephen's many gifts and programs. It is the best church I have experienced in 83 years so why would I not stay? The congregation (with its wide range in ages) the music program, concern about those less fortunate and the environment. I think any new rector would find this church a blessing. I am certain the committee will find us an excellent new rector who meets our criterion.
- ❖ I love the liturgy, the honoring of tradition and at St Stephen's, the music and the engagement with community. Future ambitions for the church? More engagement with the victims of violent conflict and Middle East, Africa and around the world.
- ❖ We came to St. Stephen's for the children's programs and baptisms. We stayed for the sense of community, friendships formed, family traditions, and spiritual growth. Our hope is that the energy and enthusiasm carries us into the future with continued programs that encourage interesting and kind people to gather together.

- ❖ My children brought me to St. Stephen's. I stayed because I found a much needed and loving community. My dream for St. Stephen's to grow and serve as a loving community all families, young and old.
- ❖ I came to St. Stephen's at a time of deep grief and losses on several levels. St. Stephen's was warm and welcoming and felt like the church-home Episcopal church I grew up with. I have stayed because of the wonderful people I have come to know through the spiritual ministries Eucharistic Minister, Altar Guild, and Healing Ministry, and also because I place a high value on the spiritual and religious growth I have experienced at St. Stephen's, and want that to keep growing and deepen. Dreams for the parish are to stay grounded and keep up the great programs.
- ❖ The music brought me. The community made me stay. I hope we continue in much the same way as we have in the last few years.
- ❖ What brought us to St. Stephen's was: strong desire to raise our children with a Christian focus Sunday School; friendly and supportive congregation; music program; location; Rector spiritual leadership, and assistant (Gail). What kept us: spiritual leadership (Rector - Rob); music program; friendly and supportive congregation our tribe! Future: grow St. Stephen's in community.
- ❖ A friend brought me to St. Stephen's and I immediately knew it was a very special parish. I have stayed because I feel more at home at this church than any other I have attended. It offers an amazing community of people and worship. My hope for the St. Stephen's parish is that it continues to grow and thrive as well as offering leadership in being good stewards of God's green earth.
- ❖ The statement "We're all about families" first brought me to St. Stephen's. Rob's kindness, insight, inclusiveness, and the church's commitment to the community and larger world, all have led me to stay.
- ❖ We had just returned from 3 years in Saudi Arabia and were hungry for Christian connections and a place where we did not have to secretly arrive for a service. But that experience gave me a real sense of what the early Christians went through. Also, when we first were members, the rector, John Thornton, now Bishop, made my family feel that we truly belonged. Stayed because so many parishioners were so active, and I loved them and St. Stephen's.
- ❖ I was drawn to St. Stephen's because of the music and the focus of the worship on supporting our faith and spiritual journeys.
- ❖ We joined St. Stephen's because of the welcoming community and children's program. It is more than a church it is a complete community.