



*St. Stephen's Episcopal Church*

**Honoring Our Past**

**Building Our Future Together**





# Our Prayer

Most holy, loving and life-giving God,

We give you thanks for the cloud of witnesses, past and present, who by their generosity of Spirit have given us a Sanctuary, a Light on a Hill, that welcomes and embraces all who seek communion with You and with one another. Bless us, yet again, as we look forward and prepare for the future through this Capital Campaign, that we may remain grateful for the past and ever-growing in faithful ministry beyond our walls.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and through the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.



# Letter from Our Rector



Dear St. Stephen's Parishioners,

What an exciting time to be a part of this remarkable church! Our last few years have seen growth both in our congregation and in the ministries that serve the church and communities beyond our walls. It's been so inspiring to watch visitors be taken in by our glorious sanctuary and blessed by our outstanding music program. Even more, the warmth and generosity I see extended by all of you helps to create an environment of welcome and belonging.

As we look to our future, I find that we must ask ourselves how we can care for what's been entrusted to us and prepare for what comes next. A successful campaign will allow us to plan wisely for the long-term care of our campus, address immediate needs, and strengthen the spaces and programs that support our life together. Crucially, our sanctuary needs to be waterproofed to protect our safety and the integrity of the architecture. Other spaces need refreshing and updating to keep our space inviting.

At the recent gatherings in the homes of parishioners, you learned more about the present and future needs of this church, and we remain grateful for the enthusiasm you showed and the feedback you gave by helping shape our priorities. We believe the time to move forward with the identified projects is now.

In the following pages, you will see more information on the priority projects. It is our greatest hope that you will join us now to Build Our Future Together. All gifts to this capital campaign are important, no matter the size. We have built this church into what it is now by relying on the faith and generosity of the generations of members before us, and we believe St. Stephen's future is worthy of everyone's consideration.

I am so glad to be part of this faith community as we begin even now to realize some of the goals we have set for ourselves. With God as our center, with Jesus Christ as our guide, and with the blessing of the Holy Spirit, we move into a faithful journey of growth and change.

With many blessings,

Kyle

# Our Past

For generations, St. Stephen's has been a place where lives are shaped and shared—where faith is deepened, friendships are formed, and all are welcomed.

Within these walls, we have marked life's most meaningful moments: baptisms and weddings, quiet prayers and joyful celebrations. We have gathered in times of sorrow and in times of hope. And through it all, this sacred place has held us.

But St. Stephen's is more than a building. It is a living community—one sustained by the faith, generosity, and vision of those who came before us.



## Honoring Our Past

From its earliest days, this parish has been guided by a clear sense of purpose - to create a space that reflects the presence of God and invites all people into community.

When our sanctuary was built more than 70 years ago, it was designed not simply as a structure, but as a place where architecture itself would speak: conveying strength, permanence, and the sacredness of gathering together.

Over time, that vision has grown. Our campus expanded to include Kimball Hall, our worship space evolved to foster deeper connection, and our ministries have flourished. Each generation has contributed by caring for this place, strengthening it, and preparing it for those who would come next.

Because of that legacy, St. Stephen's continues to thrive today.



# Building Our Future

With this inheritance comes responsibility.

Our buildings and grounds, while beautiful and well-loved, require both immediate care and thoughtful long-term stewardship. Some needs, like waterproofing the sanctuary, are urgent and essential to preserving the integrity of our sacred space. Others call us to plan wisely for the years ahead, ensuring that we can maintain and sustain our campus without burdening future generations.

At the same time, we are called to do more than preserve. We are called:

- To ensure that our spaces remain welcoming and accessible.
- To support vibrant worship, including the music that enriches our shared experience.
- To create places of remembrance that honor the full arc of life within our community.

This campaign is about all of these things—and more.

It is about strengthening the foundation that makes our ministry possible.

## St. Stephen's Rectors

- Edward J. Mohr, 1945 – 1961  
Llewellyn A. White, 1961 – 1968  
John S. Thornton, 1969 – 1982  
William W. Rankin, 1983 – 1992  
James F. Ward, 1994 – 2010  
Robert Giesemann, 2011 – 2015  
Phillip C. Ellsworth, Jr. 2016 - 2022  
Kyle Dice Seage, 2022 - present



# Our Needs

We no longer have a need to build church buildings. On our watch, there is a different call: we need to preserve and protect the legacy that has been given to us.

## 1. Waterproofing the Sanctuary

The exterior walls of the sanctuary were waterproofed 13 years ago, but this protection has deteriorated over the years. Water absorption into the concrete walls not only discolors the interior walls, but also causes the metal rebar within the walls to rust and expand, ultimately destroying the structural integrity of the church.

## 2. Establishing an Asset Replacement Fund

Based on a comprehensive study by the Browning Reserve Group, St. Stephen's now has a data-driven, long-term plan for maintaining and replacing the many components that support daily parish life—from walkways and elevators to kitchen equipment and fire control systems. This fund ensures that needs will be addressed proactively, avoid costly surprises, and preserve the strength and beauty of our campus for years to come.



## 3. Music Program

Music is central to the worship life of St. Stephen's—lifting our voices, enriching our liturgy, and drawing us into the presence of God. This investment will support critical maintenance and repairs for our treasured Frobenius organ and enhance the safety and functionality of the choir loft and ancillary spaces—supporting those who lead us in song each week.



## 4. Columbarium

The creation of a columbarium offers parishioners the opportunity to remain part of this sacred place, even after death. Thoughtfully integrated into our courtyard, it will provide a peaceful and beautiful setting for remembrance, reflection, and prayer.

## 5. Building Enhancements

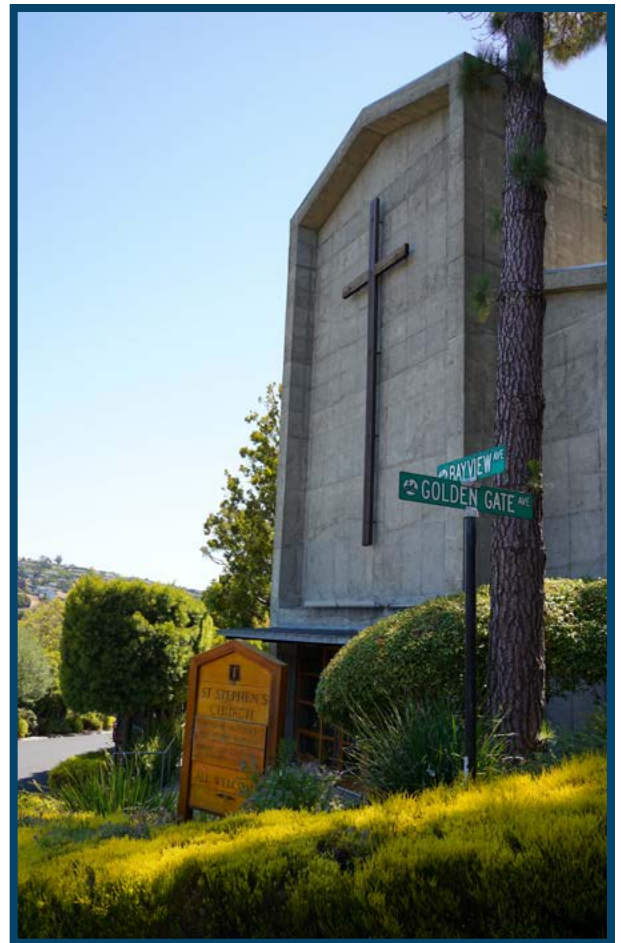
Targeted improvements to our public and office areas will enhance comfort, accessibility, and functionality for parishioners and guests alike. Plans are to update our restrooms, improve external lighting, and upgrade the 2nd floor ventilation to ensure that our facilities are welcoming, efficient, and well-suited to the many ways our community gathers.

## 6. Building & Grounds Preservation

Priorities for the ongoing care of our buildings and grounds includes attention to our parking lots, and staining the wood on the exterior of the church. The rector's home also needs a new roof and there is an opportunity to add air conditioning to its main floor.

These projects will be undertaken based on input received from the gatherings with congregation members held in April. Their total estimated cost is approximately \$950,000. If the campaign is unable to meet its goal, the work will be prioritized based on input from the congregation. Any excess funds raised by the campaign will be applied to the Asset Replacement Fund.

Together, we are caring for the place we love—so it can continue to welcome, inspire, and serve for generations to come.



## Together, We Can Honor Our Past and Build Our Future

- Protecting and Preserving Our Historic Sanctuary
- Protecting What We Have Been Given
- Creating a Place of Remembrance
- Strengthening Worship Through Music
- Enhancing Hospitality and Gathering Places
- Preserving Our Grounds and Sanctuary



# Our Last Capital Campaign

In April 2013, St. Stephen's launched a capital campaign to retire its debt, address critical maintenance and repair needs, and enhance the sanctuary with the addition of a pulpit and pew cushions. The effort was a remarkable success, generating more than \$1.4 million in pledges.

The campaign drew broad and generous support from the parish, with over 165 pledges—most fulfilled within three years—including 20 families who each committed \$20,000 or more.

**The number of donors and related levels of giving were as follows:**

Key Donors	3 members	\$100,000 to \$300,000
Supporting Donors	4 members	\$50,000 to \$99,000
Benefactors	11 members	\$25,000 to \$49,999
Archangels	24 members	\$10,000 to \$24,999

The above gifts made up over 80% of the total dollars raised in the 2013 campaign. **However, the success of the campaign ultimately relied on the willingness of almost every member of the congregation to pledge some level of giving.**



## Why We Need to Act Now

It has been more than 70 years since St. Stephen's sanctuary was built, 25 years since Kimball Hall was completed, and 13 years since our last capital campaign. Today, St. Stephen's is thriving, thanks in part to its unique sanctuary, beautiful grounds, and welcoming facilities.

With these blessings comes a shared responsibility. Together, we have the opportunity to honor our past and build for our future by ensuring the success of this capital campaign.

# Giving is Meaningful...

## Capital Campaigns are Essential

As is the case with the majority of churches, the costs of major improvements and the retirement of debt are too large to be funded through the income in the church's annual operating budget. We must seek capital gifts which are above and beyond the generous support our members provide on an annual basis. When considering a capital gift, important factors to consider include the following:

1. **Three year Pledge.** Pledges to the campaign may be paid over three years.
2. **Timing of Payments.** Donors may choose a payment plan (monthly, quarterly, annually) which works best for their household budgets.
3. **Tax Benefits.** Gifts to St. Stephen's are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. This means that the real after-tax "cost" of the gift to the donor may be 25 to 50% less than the actual cash donation.
4. **Appreciated Capital.** Many donors also find additional tax advantages in using appreciated capital assets (such as stocks and bonds) to pay their pledges.

To have a successful campaign, we must act together. Every household is asked to offer the most generous three-year pledge possible.



## Together, Let's Honor Our Past and Build Our Future!

The members of St. Stephen's are each personally committed to strengthening the future of our church. This campaign is vital to help us better fulfill our mission.

By acting together, we can succeed. Please join us with your generous pledge.

# Levels of Giving

## We Hope You Will Consider a Generous Gift

Examples of pledges within each gift level:

Gift Level	Total 3 Year Pledge	Monthly Payments	Annual Payments	Annual Cost after 40% Tax Savings
<b>Pillar: Supporting the church for generations</b>				
\$100,000 - \$ 300,000	\$100,000	\$2,778	\$ 33,333	\$20,000
<b>Visionary: Shaping St. Stephen's for tomorrow</b>				
\$ 50,000 - \$99,999	\$ 75,000	\$ 2,083	\$ 25,000	\$15,000
	\$50,000	\$ 1,388	\$ 16,667	\$10,000
<b>Beacon: Lighting the way forward</b>				
\$ 25,000 - \$ 49,999	\$ 40,000	\$ 1,111	\$13,333	\$ 8,000
	\$ 25,000	\$ 695	\$ 8,333	\$ 5,000
<b>Shepherd: Leading with faith</b>				
\$ 10,000 - \$ 24,999	\$ 20,000	\$ 556	\$ 6,667	\$4,000
	\$ 10,000	\$ 278	\$ 3,333	\$2,000
<b>Steward: Preserving our heritage</b>				
\$5,000 to \$9,999	\$ 7,500	\$ 208	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,500
	\$ 5,000	\$ 139	\$ 1,667	\$ 1,000
<b>Cornerstone: Strengthening our foundation</b>				
\$3,000 to \$4,999	\$ 4,000	\$ 111	\$ 1,333	\$ 800
	\$ 3,000	\$ 83	\$ 1,000	\$ 600
<b>Disciple: Walking faithfully in support of our shared mission</b>				
Up to \$2,999	\$ 2,000	\$ 56	\$ 672	\$ 403
	\$ 1,000	\$ 28	\$ 336	\$ 202

Data is based on an assumed effective combined federal and California tax rate of 40%. Tax savings can be close to 50% for those in the highest tax brackets.

Dear Members of St. Stephen's Church,

Those who came before us had the vision and foresight to build the facilities we enjoy today. Our striking Brutalist sanctuary, inspiring Frobenius pipe organ, welcoming Kimball Hall and courtyard, the rectory, and our beautiful Belvedere setting together support a vibrant life of worship and community. We are deeply grateful to those who made these gifts a reality.

To honor that legacy, we are asking you to give generously to this campaign to protect and preserve these cherished assets. This effort will address critical maintenance and replacement needs over the next 15+ years, while also enhancing our spaces with thoughtful additions and upgrades ensuring our campus remains welcoming and resilient for generations to come.

We invite you to prayerfully consider a meaningful gift, to the fullest extent you are able, so that we may truly honor the legacy entrusted to us and carry it forward.

With gratitude,

Chris Simpson Brent and Chuck Eaton,  
Campaign Committee Co-chairs



## The Capital Campaign Committee

Kyle Dice Seage  
Chris Simpson Brent  
Chuck Eaton  
Karen Gullett  
Bob McCaskill  
Kathy Hill Perasso  
Jim Purvis  
Zoila Schoenbrun  
Marjorie Sennett  
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