



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Longview, Washington

1428 - 22nd Avenue, Longview, Washington 98632 (360) 423-5600

Parish Profile

Final Draft
Submitted for Review,
June 24th, 2011

Profile Committee Note

This document was researched and compiled to assist St. Stephen's in the process of calling a new Rector. It is our hope that the vibrance of our active faith community, which we have come to know intimately through the many hours of planning, listening, and interpreting, comes through in this document. We have experienced in a unique way the love and passion parishioners have for this community.

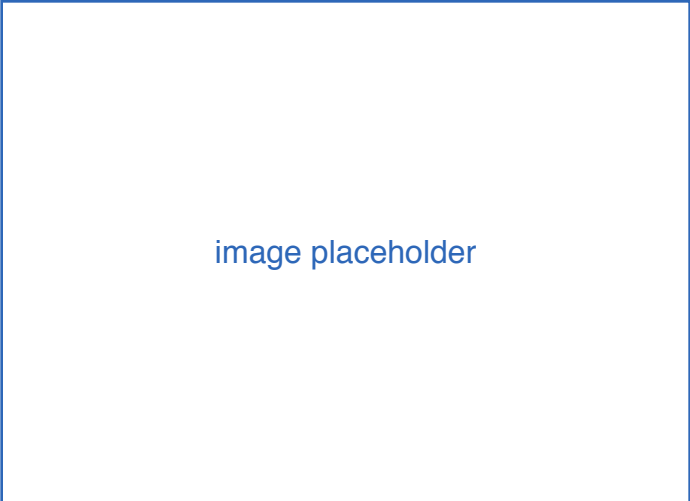
Michael O'Neill (chair),
Diane Glase, Janice Higby, Buddy Patten, Joel Rupley, and Michael Wright

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Overview of History and Facilities

Our church, which was originally named Grace Church, held mission status when it was built at the corner of 22nd and Louisiana in Longview, WA. The first service was held March 2, 1930. The name was changed to St. Stephen's December 26, 1939 and achieved Parish status in January 1940. The present sanctuary was added in 1952 and the Educational Wing, All Saint's Chapel, and Parish House next door were dedicated in 1958.



The church consists of a large sanctuary, All Saint's Chapel, Educational wing, and offices. Baird House is next door and was used as a Curacy in past years. It is currently used for many church and community meetings as well as headquarters for the FISH program and blood drives.

The Parish Hall and Library were renovated in 2006. Significant work was done on the Educational Wing and Nursery in 2008. The space between the sanctuary and the parish hall has been converted into a lovely courtyard with plantings, a new rock wall, and a fountain. The outdoor space is well used for receptions, summer



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small group services, and quiet reflection. The kitchen is a modern, updated space that serves not only St. Stephen's but provides Senior Meals several times weekly for the community of Longview. The bathroom on the main floor

was gutted and modernized in 2011. The church and chapel have ramps for accessibility.

The St. Stephen's community is particularly proud of the facilities. The hard work to maintain and update these spaces is accomplished by a committed group of parishioners.



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The Community We Serve

Cowlitz County has a population of about 100,000. It is not particularly diverse, with a combined minority population of around 13,000. All minority/ethnic population percentages are lower than state averages.

The county has a relatively high rate of homeowners and over 50% of residents live in the same house that they did five years ago.

Educationally, 84% of adult residents are high school graduates, and 15% are college graduates. That's a comparatively low rate. The county is served by Lower Columbia Community College and seven high schools.

Economically, the average household income is about \$45,000, which is relatively low. The unemployment rate has hovered around eleven to twelve percent, as compared to a state rate around nine percent.

[For a list of the areas major employers please see

<http://www.mylongview.com/community/demographics.html#economics>]

Our community has issues that must be confronted.

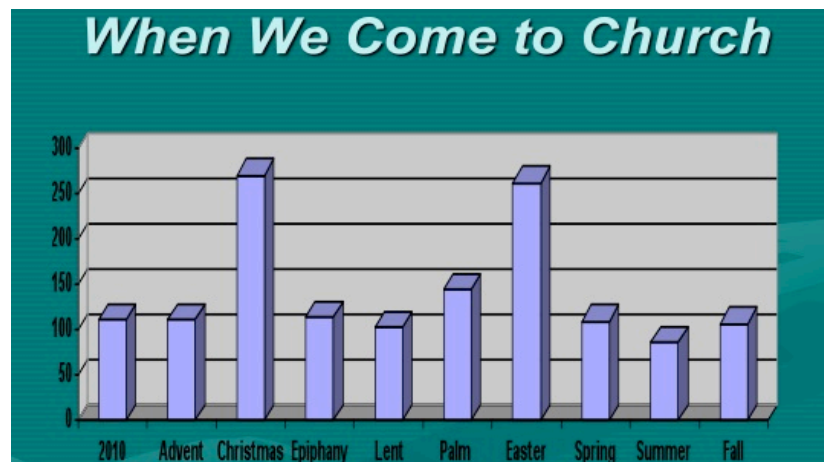
- Poverty:
 - We feed the needy through FISH.
 - We provide gasoline and utility subsidies when requested.
 - We feed our elders through Senior Nutrition.
- Drug and alcohol abuse:
 - We provide space to AA and NA recovery groups.
- People need housing:
 - We support Habitat for Humanity.
- Our kids are our future:
 - We provide space for a city parks sponsored pre-school program
 - We support our city's Summer Reading Program
 - We provide scholarships to Camp Houston.
- Other Outreach:
 - We raise money for charities while providing great music through our Celebration Concert Series.
 - Many in our community are overweight and out of shape. Our morning yoga class helps a little bit.
 - Our community faces the problem of domestic violence, so we support the Emergency Support Shelter.

Life at St. Stephen's

Worship

The Holy Eucharist is normally celebrated at 7:30 a.m. (Rite I) in the All Saints Chapel, and at 10:00 a.m. (Rite II) in the main church sanctuary every Sunday. Most members and visitors come to the ten o'clock service, which is supported and beautified by many laity roles. Music is an important part of this service (choir, bells, organ, piano, hymns).

Many other opportunities to gather for worship are offered throughout the



liturgical year. Often special programs are developed for Advent, and during Holy Week services are offered daily. Our Priest-in-Charge, Mo. Kathleen, has been saying morning prayer each day the church offices are open. Sung Compline has been offered monthly on Sunday evenings, although our Music Director, Howard Maherg, who has been the leader of this service retired in May, 2011.

Faith Formation

We have a well developed program to introduce newcomers to our congregation which connects with our Christian Initiation program.

For all parishioners there is a broad selection of programs including:

- Bible Study
- Centering Prayer
- Small Groups/Book Studies
- JYC and HYC
- Daughters of the King

Ministries

St. Stephen's has many active ministries that enrich the lives of our members as well as extending out into the broader community.

[\[a complete list of ministries and contact information is available at the parish office\]](#)

Lay Worship Support:	Music:
Altar Guild	Choir
Greeters	Bell Choir
Ushers	Children's Choir
Readers	Celebration Concerts
Chalice Bearers	Artists in Residence
Acolytes	
Lay Preachers	
Eucharistic Visitors	
Vergers	

Support, Fellowship & Community:	
Properties Team	
Community of Hope	
Men's Breakfast	
30 Hour Famine	
Funeral Receptions	
Coffee Hour Hospitality	
Convention Delegates	

Our congregation also supports and encourages personal calls to ministry that are not currently offered. Over the years many members of St. Stephen's have developed ministries that fill the needs of others.

Fellowship

Beyond the work of ministry and worship, we also gather to share each other's company. After service on Sunday the parish hall fills with conversation and laughter. Our Annual Meetings are exemplary of our community's pot-lucking skills and our desire to incorporate fellowship into our shared work. Many onetime fundraising events have centered around gathering to share a meal or at least a glass or two of wine.

Finances

St Stephen's has about 100 pledging units (singles, couples, families). Pledge and offering contributions are over \$260,000.

Income is also derived from:

- Endowments- \$20,000+;
- Designated Contributions- \$70,000+ and
- Other sources; approximately \$15,000

Expenses include

- Diocesan Support- \$55,000;
- Clergy (including all benefits) - \$115,000;
- Worship and Faith- \$50,000;
- Outreach and Support- \$45,000; and
- Administration and Facilities- \$100,000

While St Stephen's often struggles to make ends meet, we are purposeful in directing our resources toward God's work.

What is the Spirit calling us to become?

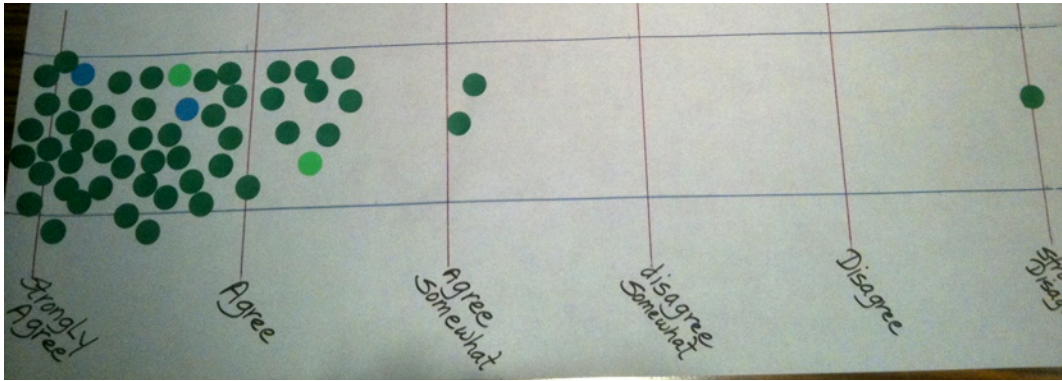
As we have gathered together in conversation to develop this Parish Profile through a series of Listening Events, one of the things that has emerged is a mindfulness of what God has planned for our St. Stephen's community.

We have identified the following areas to keep in mind as we listen to what the Spirit is calling us to become:

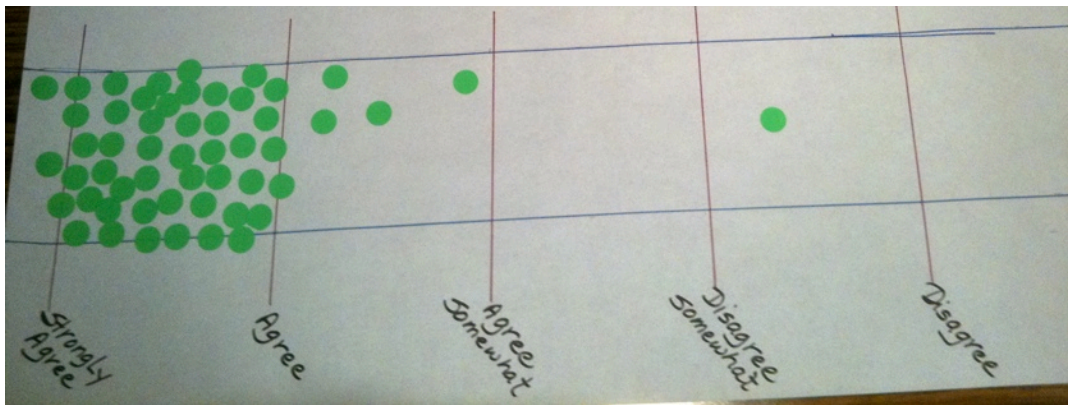
• Growth	• Worship
• Integrating new parishioners	• Role of leadership
• Being able to support all parishioners	• Opportunities for spiritual development
• Broader financial support	• Action in our broader community

This list of shared issues was strongly identified with at the listening event on April 3rd, 2011. Parishioners at the event were asked to respond personally to a series of statements related to these issues. The following pages document the congregation's responses and attempts to present that information as affirmations of our shared values.

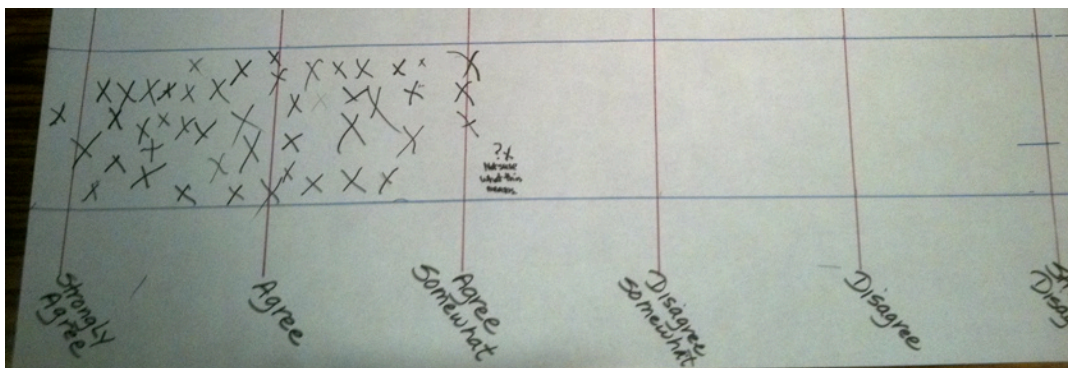
- It is important to me that we support all ages and groups.



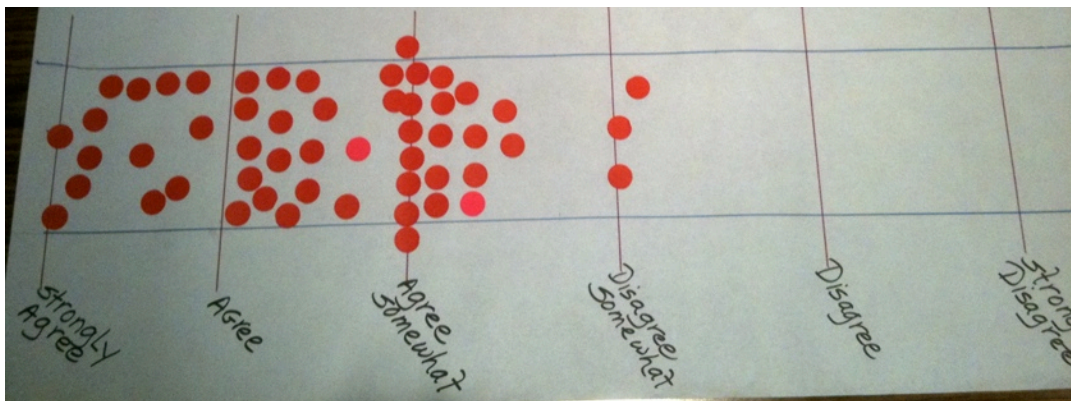
- It is important to me that new parishioners are welcomed and invited to participate in our community.



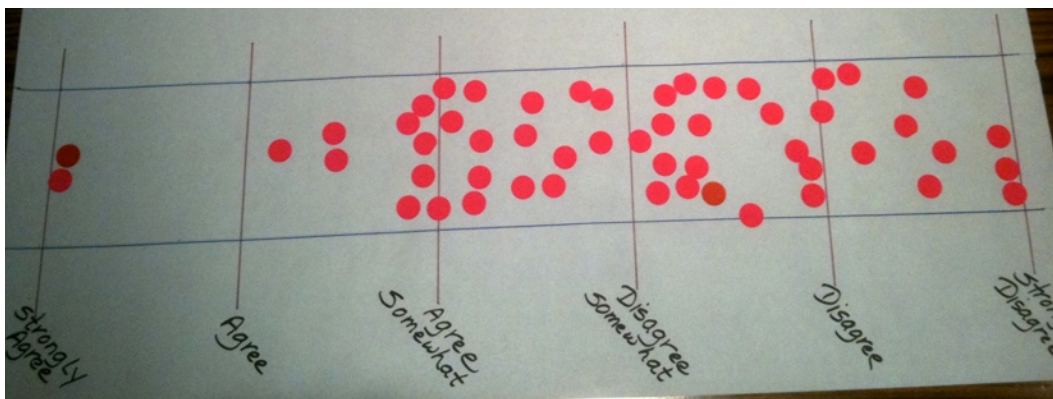
- It is important to me that we understand & support the strengths of St. Stephen's ministries and communicate those in our daily lives.



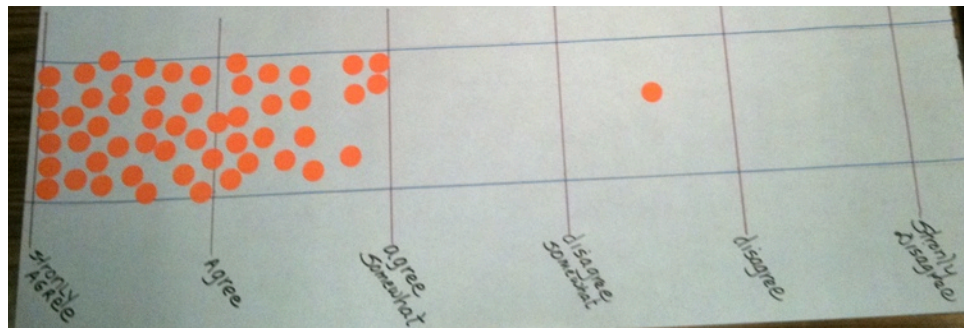
- I believe that because we only have one clergy, that person must accept and support leadership from within the congregation.



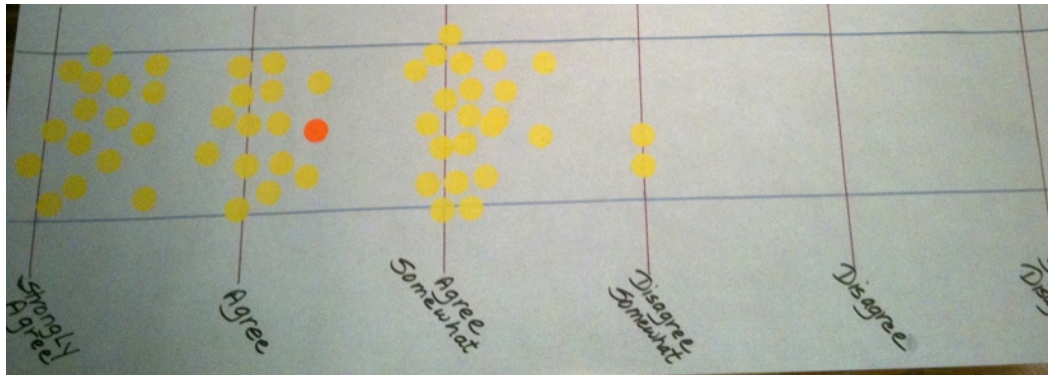
- I do not want any changes in the way we currently worship.



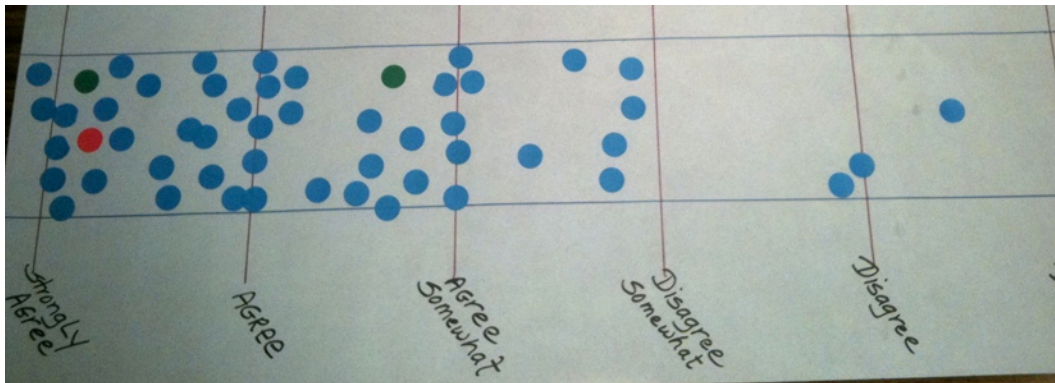
- One of my priorities is to support St. Stephen's with my time and treasure.



- The opportunities for my personal spiritual development at St. Stephen's keeps me coming.



- It is important to me that St. Stephen's ministries extend further into the community and beyond.



Affirmations

- We seek to provide a nurturing environment that encourages active participation by each member consistent with his or her abilities, talents, calling and desire.

- All are welcome here and it is our desire to integrate newcomers and support each individual with programs that support every age and gender.
- We are committed to supporting our leadership, both clergy and laity through prayer, service, fellowship, and financial stewardship.
- We desire to reach out to our community through the development and participation with ministries that address social and economic challenges. Thus we are committed to social justice as a response to our call to “Love God and Love Neighbor.”
- We recognize and support the ministries of St. Stephen’s members who have been called to service in our region, our country, and in world.
- We value the liturgy and tradition of the Episcopal/Anglican denomination and we invite creativity in our worship within that context.
- We recognize and affirm the uniqueness of each individual’s spiritual formation and journey.
- We have faith that the Holy Spirit works through members of our congregation to address the financial needs, obligations, and vision of St. Stephens.

Vision For The Future

All of these affirmations speak to our dreams of what St. Stephen's can more fully become as we grow together in God's work.

- We invite and welcome people of all backgrounds and integrate them into our ministries and worship
- We grow spiritually both as individuals and as part of our church family
- We value the Episcopal tradition and invite creativity within that context
- We work within our greater community to accomplish more of God's work than we could on our own

This vision was strongly affirmed at the final listening event on June 19th, 2011. Also at that listening event the congregation focused on the gifts and skills we desire in a new Rector to lead us in the work of realizing what the Spirit is calling us towards. The following pages outline the results of our hopes for a new Rector.

Hopes And Dreams For A New Rector

We realize that no priest can match all of our hopes and dreams. This information is intended to relate to the four focuses of our vision for the future, as well as personal qualities in a priest, and identify our congregation's priorities within those areas. The lists under each category are in order of importance as identified by the congregation at the final listening event.

Integrating Newcomers & Congregational Development

- Value youth and children and have a desire to provide more opportunities for them within our congregation
- Able to foster the gifts and skills of individuals within the congregation and support them as they engage in ministry
- Excellent communication skills
- Welcoming to people of all backgrounds and able to incorporate them into the community

Spiritual Development of Individuals and Congregation

- Strong Christ centered ministry, able to model the love of God with an open heart
- Empower the congregation to live their baptismal vows through teaching and directing members towards meaningful engagements

with their spirituality (such as Cursillo, Christian meditation, and many others)

- Able to engage youth and children in their spirituality
- Gifted in pastoral care and responsive to the needs of individuals

Worship and Tradition

- Strong worship leader
- Value and respect the Episcopal tradition and liturgy
- Able to deliver sermons that engage the congregation in their faith

Work In The Greater Community

- Able to communicate the work of St. Stephen's outside its walls and engage others in its ministries
- Able to stretch the congregation within the context of the present day
- Bilingual Spanish/English

Personal Qualities

- Highly organized, gifted administrator, able to keep everyone informed of important information
- Strong teaching and preaching skills centered in the bible

- Deep spirituality
- Passionate about new ideas for realizing the dreams of St. Stephen's
- Approachable, with a sense of humor
- Strong leadership skills