

St Stephen the Martyr Anglican Church

9887 Cameron St,
Burnaby BC V3J 1M3
April 7, 2020

A Financial Message from St Stephen's Wardens

Dear Friends,

We'd like to begin with a few words from Ruth.

St Stephen's building has been the hub of our parish community – and a hub for our wider community. We are missing being in that space where hundreds of people gather weekly to sing, to pray, to dance, to tell stories, to play, to learn, and to feel a sense of "home." It is a real loss for us and for many in this season. Yet we, the worshipping community of St Stephen the Martyr, know that while the building might be closed, the church is open wide and its work goes on.

We are the church when we pause on our daily, socially distanced walk to notice the clouds in the sky and thank God for their beauty. We are the church when we phone three people we are concerned about to make sure they have everything they need. We are the church when we bang our pots and pans to let our health care workers (including the janitorial staff) know that we're grateful for their sacrifices. We are the church when we go to work, putting ourselves and our families at risk, because our work is essential. We are the church when we hold our families, our friends, our neighbours, the world in prayer. We are the church when we celebrate Easter in a Zoom meeting on our computers or read Morning Prayer with our household.

At the very heart of what we believe, what we celebrate every Sunday and more so on Easter, is the belief that even the finality of death cannot stop the love of God for us, that we are beloved beyond all measures – each and every one of us.

This Easter will feel unlike any other Easter we can remember. There will not be new clothes, no fancy hats (although if you wear your Easter hat at home, send us a picture; bonus points for fancy hat and pjs!), no trumpets and organ flourishes, no big family brunches or dinners, no community egg hunts. But the Risen Christ – the one that even death could not stop – will still meet us as we strive to embrace this new reality we live in.

In this new reality, we are working hard to keep our parishioners connected – learning new technology and embracing the value of "old fashioned" phone calls. We are providing resources so that we can pray at home, online and off. We are looking at how we can meet the needs of our neighbourhood for community and connection, even while we are unable to be physically present. And we are preparing for a joyful, full return when it is safe for us to regather.

Now, a few words from us, your wardens ...

Even before the pandemic brought us into this new reality, we talked about increasing our total giving by \$10,000 this year. On top of that, we are now experiencing a loss of approximately

\$5,000 per month in rental income. Meanwhile, the Consolidated Trust Fund (CTF) has gone down by about \$25,000.

We have received some financial assistance from the Diocese which will assist us over the next few months, but we must ensure we continue our individual financial support during this difficult time.

Thank you to those who use PAD (Pre-Authorized Donation) as your financial support is consistent. If you would like to increase your pledge or start PAD, please use the enclosed form which can be sent directly to the Synod Office.

Changes using your existing payment information can also be emailed to Rachel Taylor at the Synod Office (rtaylor@vancouver.anglican.ca). If you are on PAD and are struggling in this new reality, adjustments can be made using the same email.

Thank you, as well, to those who use offertory envelopes and get your donation to the church via Canada Post or by dropping it off through the mail slot in the red sacristy door at the front of the church.

We have also added a "Donate" button to our website (www.ststephenburnaby.ca) which you are welcome to use.

We have heard comments from fellow parishioners such as "The church can have my gas money, since I'm not going anywhere" and "I'm not eating out anymore; that money will go to the church." Whatever is feasible for you in your circumstances is greatly appreciated.

If you have any thoughts, concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We, your wardens, are grateful that we have such solid leadership in Ruth and Lois during these unprecedented times. We are also deeply grateful for you and what an integral role you play in our community to love and serve Christ in our midst.

May we be blessed in unexpected ways as we journey together through Holy Week and into the Easter season.

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