



ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

SIERRA VISTA ARIZONA

PARISH PROFILE

2018





TABLE OF CONTENTS

History -----	1
Sierra Vista, AZ -----	2
Facility -----	3
Ministries-----	4
Worship-----	7
Communications -----	8
Finances -----	9
Hopes and Dreams ----	10

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

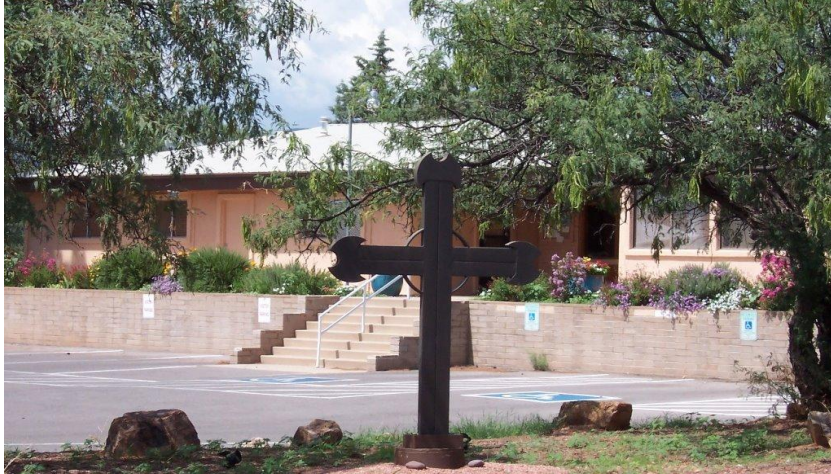
Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.

OUR CORE VALUES

The Parish's core values include the tenets of the Anglican Communion as expressed by liturgy, communion, music; and reinforced by our acceptance of others, pastoral care and evangelistic outreach.

HISTORY

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church was founded in 1958. St. Stephens, Sierra Vista, and our local Ft Huachuca are rich in history and date back to the 19th Century. The first Episcopal Church in Southeast Arizona was St. Paul's in Tombstone, established in 1881 by a young Episcopal seminarian from Massachusetts by the name of Endicott Peabody. This church most influenced the growth of Episcopal



services, baptisms, etc. These events took place at Fort Huachuca, founded by Captain Samuel Marmaduke Whitside. Captain Whitside commanded "B" Troop, Sixth United States Cavalry Regiment. He was ordered to put an end to the raids by Apaches and Mexican bandits.

Fort Huachuca opened and closed a number of times between 1947 and 1954. After the last reopening of Fort Huachuca, a small group of Episcopalians banded together. Services began at Fort Huachuca on November 18, 1956. Only twelve were in attendance for Evening Prayer led by Reverend Lewis and assisted by Lt. Colonel Motz. Plans were made to hold more services at different times to bring a larger number of people together.

The first off-post location attempt for St. Stephen's was initiated with the "Buy a Brick" campaign with a \$1000.00 goal. Against many odds the Buy a Brick campaign was a success. This is due in large part to a kind and generous friend of one of the prominent Episcopalians working toward establishing a building off post in Sierra Vista. The bricks, bought at \$1.00 apiece, and the mortar remain the focal point of the church, but they are

only a symbol. They cannot know joy or sadness, laughter or tears, acceptance or rejection. They cannot show forth or extend the love of God in Christ Jesus. Only the living body, the congregation, is the outward and visible sign of the church's inward and spiritual grace.

Against even greater odds, land (three acres) was obtained by the same determined Episcopalian, Allyne Niemi. She made a phone call to Tower Real Estate within hours (possibly only one hour) of receiving the news from the bishop

that he wanted "no more missions at that time in the Arizona diocese." Tower Real Estate promised the land as long as building would begin within the year. The Bishop accepted this gift and allowed the mission to begin.

On November 13, 1960 ground was broken at the present site of St. Stephens. Sixty nine days later the first service was held in the new church building. A prayer used in the early days of St. Stephen's included the following; "O God, make the door of this house wide enough to receive all who need human love and fellowship; narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride, and strife. Make its threshold smooth enough to be no stumbling block to children, or to straying foot, but rugged and strong enough to turn back the tempter's power. God, make the door to this house the gateway to Thine eternal kingdom. Amen."

To borrow an idea, your arms are the only ones God has to hug someone else. Over the years, the congregation has needed on more than one occasion to reach out and hug each other in hard times. St. Stephens has had good times as well as hard times over the years. It has had eleven

reverends, two deacons, and five interim clergy. After more than 30 years as a mission, in October 1992, at the Diocesan Convention at Prescott, St. Stephen's was granted parish status. Reverend Carroll was to be the last vicar and the first rector of St. Stephen's. Since becoming a parish, St. Stephen's has enjoyed the leadership of three permanent rectors. The most recent rector served us for 11 years. The names of members and friends over the years are recorded in the Parish Register. Believers have come and gone over the years and still do. There are baptisms on one end of life's spectrum and funerals on the other. There is order; there is continuity in a ceaseless series of endings and beginnings. This continually changing sameness means but one thing—the Body of Christ is alive at St. Stephen's.



SIERRA VISTA, ARIZONA

EXTRODINARY SKIES, UNCOMMON GROUND

Sierra Vista, Arizona is located in Cochise County about 70 miles southeast of Tucson, AZ and serves as the main commercial, cultural and recreational hub of Cochise County. Historical towns of Bisbee and Tombstone are within a half-hour drive each from Sierra Vista. The Huachuca Mountains and San Pedro River are two important geological features in the area.

The population of Sierra Vista as of July 2016 was 43,754 and that includes Ft. Huachuca whose population was 5,679. The demographics of the population reflect the importance of the fort. As of a 2011-2015 American Community Survey 27% of ages 18 and older are civilian veterans of the military (more than three times the national level). That includes a large number of Department of the Army civilian positions as well as defense contracting personnel. Many military retirees settled in the region due to the proximity of the fort.

Economically, Ft. Huachuca is the major driver; however, other top employers include General Dynamics Information Technology, Canyon Vista Medical Center, City of Sierra Vista, ManTech International Corporation, Sierra Vista Unified School District, Cochise College, Cochise County, Engility Corporation and Lawley Automotive Group. The Border Patrol is also a visible employer in the area. The average wage in 2015 in Cochise County was \$46,010.00 that was slightly higher than the Arizona average of \$45,310.00 and lower than the U.S. average of \$48,320.00.

Sierra Vista is very supportive of Ft. Huachuca and the military. The annual Veteran's Parade concludes at the main City Park known at Veteran's Park. The relationship between citizens and soldiers is very strong. Many non-profit organizations benefit by the strong commitment the military has to community. Their commitment extends far beyond the gates of Ft. Huachuca. Churches often are the spiritual home to soldiers and their families during their temporary stay in our part of the United States.



Recreationally, Sierra Vista and the surrounding area have miles and miles of hiking and biking trails. The bikers love the friendly city bike lanes and the challenging canyon trails. Also, in addition

to a variety of local hiking trails Sierra Vista is the gateway community for Passage I of the 800-mile Arizona Trail from Mexico to Utah. Bird watching is a large tourist draw due to the designation of being the “Hummingbird Capital of the World”. Fishing and boating are available on Parker Canyon Lake and Patagonia Lake and are within an hour’s drive. Three golf courses are nearby, one in Sierra Vista, one on Fort Huachuca and another in Bisbee. There is also a Frisbee golf course. Sierra Vista’s Aquatic Center, The Cove, and the Kiwanis Skate and Bike Park offer fun for young and old alike. Sports programs for youths of all ages are offered through City of Sierra Vista Leisure Services.

Culturally, Sierra Vista and the surrounding area have a lot to offer. Fort Huachuca, Tombstone, Bisbee, and Douglas are among many interesting locations for the history buffs. The Sierra Vista Symphony Orchestra, Community Orchestra, the Community Chorus, and musical entertainment from Cochise College and Buena High School please the lovers of music. Annually, Cochise Cowboy Poetry and Music Gathering bring many talented poets and musicians from the West and Midwest whose songs and prose aim to preserve the cultural heritage of the west. The Huachuca Art Association is very active and sponsors Art in the Park every October. Many examples of their art are on display in multiple venues around Sierra Vista. The Hummingbird Quilters are also a large presence and they sponsor an Annual Quilt Show. The star filled dark skies are perfect for both the amateur and professional astronomer.

Educationally, there are many choices. The Sierra Vista School District includes six elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. Charter Schools include Center for Academic Success, Leman Academy of Excellence, Berean Academy and PPEP Tec. First Baptist Christian Academy, Veritas Christian Community School, All Saints Catholic School are private schools. Pre-schools and day care centers are also available in the area. Additionally, there are two campuses for higher education located in Sierra Vista. One is Cochise Community College that was named by

Wallethub as the second best community college in the nation. It excels in courses and certifications in cyber security. The other is an extension of the University of Arizona.

Health care is provided by the newly constructed (3 years ago) Canyon Vista Medical Center. It is a hundred-bed hospital with 15 of those beds reserved for the Adult Psychiatric Unit. Some of the other services include: Emergency Services, Women and Children Center, Center of Excellence for Total Joint Replacement, Cardiac Catherization Lab, Intensive/Progressive/Acute Care and other services.

FACILITY



St. Stephens Episcopal Church, located on Cardinal Drive in a lovely residential part of Sierra Vista, is situated on over three acres of the Sonoran desert. Upon entering the sanctuary, one's eyes are drawn to the statue of the risen Christ against a backdrop of the Huachuca Mountains. Almost as stunning as the view is the 6-rank pipe organ built by David McDowell and installed in 1970. The pews for the choir are just a few feet beyond the organ.



In addition to the sanctuary, the main building houses a nursery, acolyte room, sacristy, columbarium, kitchen and parish hall, a choir room, storage area, two restrooms and a large porch with folding doors for private rooms for meetings of community interest, or whatever club needs there might be.

Just outside and down a few steps through a few towering pine trees is what is referred to as the education building, a three-thousand square foot building with room enough for the entire parish to celebrate the Easter, Christmas or general



meeting potlucks. This building was completed in 2011 and has a library, office, a large main room, kitchen, and restrooms. Either building provides attractive venues for private meetings.

Also on the grounds are a shed for maintenance equipment and a fenced yard leading from the nursery. There has been talk of a neighborhood garden in some of the remaining acreage under and around the native trees.



MINISTRIES

St. Stephen's serves various outreach and in-reach activities to show our love for ourselves and the community beyond our church. We separate the different main areas of ministries into four categories: Worship, Pastoral Care, Outreach and Christian Formation.

Our Worship Ministries include three varied services, music provided by a wonderful choir and amazing organ, altar guild, and usher welcome, among other activities.

Pastoral Care is very important to our parish. Many congregants aid others within our church community by participating in such activities as contacting someone who missed a number of worship services or driving a member who can still attend church but should not be operating a motor vehicle. Lay Eucharistic Visitors take communion to the homebound. Pastoral care also includes Discretionary Fund Support, Intercessory Prayer, Grounds Beautification, Prayer and Homebound list maintenance, and Birthday Cards.



The people at St. Stephen's are active in many different outreach programs. The Outreach Ministry participates in the local Salvation Army Meals Program, Peaches Pantry – a program to feed school children in need, Operation Christmas Child boxes, Angel Tree for a local family, St. Andrew's Clinic in Nogales, AZ, and the blanket drive for the San Carlos Native American Reservation, among other activities. Congregants work in the local Salvation Army kitchen feeding the homeless.

Children and youth are becoming a main focus for our community service. As a congregation, we donate tangible items to the St. Andrew's Children's Clinic, a 501(c) (3) clinic for children living in Mexico who cannot afford or cannot get the specialized medical care they need in their own country. Twelve-step recovery groups use our facilities. Many congregants have their own personal community activities such as the Cochise Area Network of Therapeutic Equestrian Resource, the Canyon Vista Medical Center, and Copper Queen Hospital, Volunteer Interfaith Caregiver Program, Good Neighbor Alliance and many other local charities.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Adult Forum

In 2000, the Rector initiated the Adult Forum, designed to be a study and discussion group. We started small with just 3 or 4 people but grew and shrunk over the years as people left and new people joined. We have even had members from other denominations join us. We select faith-based literature to study, a book of the Bible or one written by an academic. The members suggest a book or subject and we vote to decide what will be tackled next. We read aloud at each gathering so there is no "homework" and those without a book can follow along and join in without having been with us from the beginning. Even though our discussions can stick to the subject, we find that the readings stimulate discussions or questions in other similar or, sometimes, divergent areas. It is a lively group! We encourage openness. There is no judgment. We all feel challenged, heard and enlightened by our study. All are welcome, whether a member of our congregation or from within our community. We want all seekers to join us! We meet at 9:00 am each Sunday morning unless there is a special worship service at that hour.

Bible Study

Wednesday mornings from September to mid-June at 10:00 until 11:30, the Bible Study group meets in the Education Building. In these meetings, we become a "one another" community as we learn, pray, ponder, seek, and share our knowledge of God's revelation and its relevance in our life today. We use many translations of the Bible, supplemental texts and teaching DVDs to engage with scripture and our experiences to carry out St. Stephen's mission: seeking guidance of the Holy Spirit, engaging with community in how to live the love of Christ, responding to one another's needs and growing spiritually. We open each group with sharing why we are thankful and for what or whom we need to pray. We also love and share with each other and have fun questioning scripture, history, culture and our stories, often discovering "Wow," "Woe," "Whoops," and "Whatever" moments. We frequently share a meal and have a picnic at the end of each season.

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) is the organization for all women in the Episcopal Church. They are automatically members of the parish group. The main purpose is to pray together and serve the parish and community however they are called. Here at St. Stephen's, we have had monthly meetings with prayer and Bible Study. Also, fundraising events, such as bake sales, bazaars and rummage sales, were held. The proceeds helped other organizations in their time of need. The ECW has graciously helped after funerals by providing a reception for friends and family of the deceased. The ECW has also financed scholarships for our youth to attend the Diocesan Chapel Rock Camp in Prescott each summer. The projects around the church are noticeable, such as the kneelers which grace our nave. The ECW reached over to England for the materials, worked designs and sewed them all. While in hiatus for over the past year, through

the grace of God, the St. Stephens ECW is being rejuvenated and we look forward to a vibrant ECW again.



Daughters of the King

The St. Barbara Chapter of the Order of the Daughters of the King is a spiritual sisterhood of women dedicated to a life of prayer, service and evangelism. The Order of the Daughters of the King is an Episcopal Women's group whose mission is to Study, Pray and Serve God. We are a worldwide order and have been in existence for 100 years. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the vision of the daughters of the king is to know Jesus Christ, to make Him known to others and to become reflections of God's love throughout the world. The chapter at St. Stephen's meets monthly for a study or program. We continue supplying blue prayer cards in the pews for prayer requests from the congregation. St. Barbara's members each pray for these concerns every day for one month. We have led Monday evening of Holy Week, evening prayer service with Taize music. The order is currently on hiatus however, the birthday cards are still being sent to those on our Parish mailing list. We hope that 2018 will bring revival and be a year of growth in our chapter's membership.

Brotherhood of St. Andrew

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew is a Worldwide Ministry to men and youth in the

Episcopal/Anglican communion and beyond since 1883. The mission is to bring men and youth to Christ. The local chapter of the Brotherhood has been active for a number of years, meeting on the 4th Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall for prayer and study with some of the men meeting Wednesday at 6:00 p.m at a local restaurant for fellowship. We hope to expand our membership in the fall and find a more convenient time to meet.



Men of St. Stephen's gather for social time

Children and Youth Ministries

Over the years, St. Stephen's has enjoyed vibrant Children and Youth Ministries supported by a cadre of dedicated teachers and volunteers providing Christian formation, presenting lessons, and providing leadership for our Children and Youth Ministries. Our Sunday School and Youth Group have been blessed with brilliant spiritual leaders, an exceptional and support church leadership, proud volunteers and eager children and youth to participate in our ministry programs and willing servants to our St. Stephen's and our broader community. However, at current our Children's and Youth Ministries are both on a hiatus pending identification of new volunteers for these ministries. We are in prayer for God's guidance and resources for the revival of our Children and Youth Ministries in the coming school year.

Education for Ministry (EFM)

Education for Ministry, known as EFM, is a four year program of in-depth theological education for the laity. It is an extension course offered 1 year at a time by The University of the South, Sewanee, TN. The course provides knowledge in the foundations and messages of the Christian faith including study in Bible, church history and contemporary theology. Groups meet in local seminars led by trained mentors. EFM has, for over 30 years served nearly 100,000 participants worldwide. It is not a course meant to prepare one for ordination. It is meant to prepare laity to live out their Baptismal Covenant which claimed us all as ministers. As the words of the Post Communion prayer asks: "Send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witness of Christ our Lord." EFM is the preparation to identify, strengthen and follow what the participants are being led to do as their personal ministry. During the 2000 through 2015 timeframe, our EFM was facilitated by Ms. Dottie Gutwein, Class of '93, School of Theology, University of the South, Sewanee, TN. The graduates from EFM are primarily St. Stephens's parishioners, with two Presbyterians, and two from St. John's Episcopal, Bisbee. Our EFM has witnessed over 15 graduates with diploma from the University and earned continuing education credits for each year completed.

Shared Teaching – Lent special teachings

On Wednesday evenings starting after Ash Wednesday and ending before Holy Week, we host a soup and topic study that deals with the Lenten season. Topics changed from year to year.



WORSHIP

Eucharist

We have three services each weekend. All three celebrate the Rite-II Eucharist with Rite I on the first weekend.



- 5:00 P.M. Saturday evening service
- 7:30 A.M. Sunday morning service
- 10:30 A.M. Sunday morning service with musical accompaniment. It includes a choir with an accomplished Musical Director who plays our church pipe organ.
- Morning and Evening prayer is celebrated when a Priest is not available.

Services during Lent include a Taize/musical offering, Stations of the Cross and other services led by different ministries.

On High Holy days and often on the 5th Sunday of the month we combine our two services to encourage community.

Contemplative Prayer Worship

Contemplative Eucharist is offered third Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. incorporating intercessory prayer, a reflection on a saint, a short gospel reading, interspersed with silences and communion.

Intercessory Prayer

Intercessory Prayer Circle meets Wednesdays 9:30-10:00 a.m. throughout the year. It begins with an opening prayer and a 10-minute silent meditation. Prayers are offered using the lists of requests that are posted on the bulletin board on the Church porch. The litanies are prayed for those who need healing, enduring grace, strength and protection, for the dead and their families, for ministries, guidance, travelers and thanksgivings. It ends with the Lord's Prayer and a

blessing. It is a "Conspiracy of Compassion" breathing and praying with the Spirit and our "neighbors".

Music

The Music Program at St. Stephen's is lead by Wes Moulton, Organist and Choir Director. The Church choir program has three components: 1) service music, 2) hymns and 3) any other special music.

At the 10:30 service we sing or chant all major musical parts of the mass. The service music and the hymns come primarily from two sources: 1982 Hymnal and Lift Every Voice and Sing II. We sing a variety of hymns predominately from the 1982 Hymnal, but also include selections from, Wonder, Love and Praise, and other sources.

The choir is small, but dedicated volunteers from the parish. We sing choral anthems once a month and feast days.

We have a pipe organ built by David McDowell of Tucson and installed in 1970. McDowell's family had a tradition of organ building. He studied it in Germany, served in W.W. II, then returned to the family business in Tucson. He built 82 organs in his lifetime. The organ was rebuilt and expanded in the early 2000's by the O'Malley firm of Tucson.

The choir looks forward to working with and under the guidance of a new priest.

Altar Guild

Altar Guild's mission is to make sure that all linens, vessels, wine, bread or wafers are ready for each service. Although their numbers have decreased these dedicated women and, yes, some men work unseen and unheard to insure the Priest has all the necessary accouterments for each service.

Lay Eucharistic Ministry

Lay Leaders assist the Rector with the service. The lay leaders ensure two congregants serve as ushers if none are scheduled. Also, lay leaders ensure the sanctuary is ready for service, e.g., oblations and

offering plates are ready; candles are placed and lit before the service is ready. Lay leaders serve the wine during communion. Lay leaders initiate the Nicene Creed and start the prayers of the people.

Acolytes

Acolytes assist the Rector by carrying up the cross during the processional. They assist with setting up the altar for communion by receiving the oblation from the ushers. Acolytes may hold the gospel book for reading by the rector just prior to the sermon. Finally, the acolytes carry the cross during the recessional.

Greeters

Greeters greet congregants as they enter the porch area of St. Stephen's. They may hand out bulletins. They welcome any visitors, ask them to fill out the visitor's card and could introduce them to the rector as well.

Ushers

Ushers are either asked by the lay leaders or scheduled. Typically, they pass the plate among the congregants during the offering. Also, the ushers could help with the flow of people to the communion rail during the Eucharist.

COMMUNICATIONS

Our St. Stephen's communication trail begins with our interactive website which lists our ministries, outreach, church staff, calendar, contacts, map and directions. Our media links include Facebook, Twitter, Google plus, Pinterist and a few more. Also, we have a You Tube channel used mainly for sermons and special events.

A full bulletin is published for each of the three weekend services. The hymns are included in the bulletin for the family service. These are printed and distributed so that juggling books and flipping

pages won't interfere with the worshiper's communication with our Lord.

During each service the priest takes time to emphasize some of the items that are printed in the bulletin. Congregants are invited to add to these announcements.

The Parish Administrator publishes a parish roster that contains, by permission; the names, phone numbers, mailing addresses and e-mail addresses of the congregation.

We recently began publishing a newsletter featuring events and volunteer activities in our parish. Accomplishments of any parishioner or student; and, future events are covered. The newsletter is posted on our website and mailed to those who do not use a computer.

FINANCES

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY PLAN

The 2018 Christian finance plan "budget" for St. Stephen's is \$190,377.00. This includes 34 families who pledge, regular givers who don't pledge, cash plate, holiday giving and restricted income. We have a mortgage that is less than \$30,000.00 and plan to have it paid in 2020. We are doing well financially at this time.

STEWARDSHIP

Our riches belong to God. Stewardship is about how we love our neighbors and ourselves based upon our contributions of time, talent, and treasure. St. Stephen's approached different ways for our Stewardship campaign (called our all member canvas).

We've tried different means to conduct our all member canvas. For several years, teams were formed with a few members of the congregation. They met to do planning; preached homilies for several Sundays; interviewed visitors and those who did not pledge (sometimes found out what was bothering them – for further counseling,

maybe). A goal was set up to make up to 10% of our budget for outreach. We made it to 5% plus for a while.

A stewardship coordinator would work with the senior warden to plan the annual campaign. At one time, the Vestry hosted dinners at a supper club, Knights of Columbus hall, hotel banquet rooms, and another church's fellowship hall. The dinner was a way to say "Thank you!" to the congregation for its past contributions to the church. Also, we used it to kick off the next all member canvas. Guest speakers preached on stewardship campaigns. The speakers included Father Victor Sarrazin, Arizona Diocesan Canon for Stewardship and Planned Giving, a retired Bishop, a Fort Huachuca chaplain, etc. Next, pledge statements would be mailed out with a time period to allow each pledger to meditate on their contribution to the annual stewardship campaign. The stewardship coordinator would keep a log of who had contributed at the end of the campaign. The stewardship coordinator would email out an updated listed of those who had not contributed. The updated lists were sent out to various members of the vestry who kept contacting these outstanding members to ask for a return of the pledge card. This campaign was very successful due to the due diligence of the participants and the congregants.

In other years, our church finance committee hosted a minister coordinators' fair at our church. Beforehand, they demonstrated how the ministries fit into the financial picture for our church. We described how money was required to keep the doors open, e.g., pay the rector, power bill, etc., and what was needed for ministries, e.g., Sunday School, music, pastoral care. The ministry coordinators researched how time, talent, and treasure could be dispersed among the specific one in question. This would give members of the congregation a chance to interview any ministry coordinator as to what that ministry included.



Recently, we've just mailed out pledge cards asking for what each person could contribute as to time, talent, and monetary. From this, ministry coordinators candidates could be

contacted. Also, our church budget could be established to include salary and care of our minister.

Over the years, the congregation at St. Stephen's pays our bills to include our Diocesan assessment, ensuring our associate pastor received benefits. Also, our teller system follows diocesan practices and we always pass our required audits.

HOPES AND DREAMS

We look forward to a rector who will help us realize our hopes and dreams. It is our hope to have someone who will support, encourage and actively seek ways to better ourselves and our presence in our City, County and nearby Fort Huachuca. We hope to find someone to help us grow in body and in spirit.

Over the past few years St. Stephen's has experienced a decrease in worshipping members. We are aware that we are not the only church experiencing these losses. The population at large in Sierra Vista decreased due to a reduction of missions on Ft. Huachuca, the local Army post. This reduction coupled with an aging population in our congregation brought us to the present low number of parishioners, which has caused many of our ministries to suffer. Several of them have only two or three members trying to continue their service. Unfortunately, this includes those ministries supporting our worship including Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Altar Guild, Ushers, and Greeters. The question is how do we encourage and support those who are called to serve in these vital ministries. Now, there is hope for our future

with a return of a more robust economy and population in the surrounding area is beginning to grow. Hopefully this will mean growth for St. Stephen's too.

Many parishioners at St. Stephen's remember a time when the church was well known in the community. We hope to restore that recognition by identifying areas where we can help the most and serve our local community better. This can include feeding the homeless through the Salvation Army or other avenues. We plan to research opportunities to partner and/or support local programs that provide food and school supplies to children in need. We desire to be open to opportunities to help our military families. Also, we seek to discover other ways to involve our church in Sierra Vista.

We recognize that social media is an important avenue of communication within our congregation and throughout the local community. The web page, an active e-mail list and Facebook are all tools at our disposal and we look forward to using them more. We now have a monthly church newsletter that is posted online and mailed to parishioners without access to the internet. We realize a need to advertise and submit articles about church events to be published in our local newspaper. We want to become better connected to each other in the church and the community through more timely announcements of services and activities.

We seek better ways to serve our own worship family. We are a caring and generous community with a desire to be more open and present to each other. We want to support and help others through whatever life crises may have befallen them. We hope that we can learn to be more sensitive to their needs.

It is hoped we can have more opportunities for multi-generational activities that are attractive to young families. We need the comfort and connection of knowing the members of our worshipping community and appreciate opportunities to do so through social events and informal get-togethers. A labyrinth, community garden, memorial garden and covered patio are

ideas of venues (from the Day of Discovery in March) that could enhance fellowship at St. Stephen's.

We want to learn how to identify the gifts within us, which each of us has to share. We hope to learn to appreciate and encourage such gifts and not take them for granted. All of our gifts need to be nurtured, and through them, we can experience fully functioning ministries rebuilt on our already existing foundations. It is our hope that these ministries will bring back a thriving Sunday

church school, new members, a strong stewardship and completion of our commitment to pay off a small mortgage.

As you can see we are revitalizing several ministries. We strive for a shepherd who will guide us into our future in these areas and more as the Holy Spirit leads.



Teach us, Good Lord, to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to work and not to seek to rest; to labor and not to ask for any reward, except that by knowing we do your will through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Holy God, make us holy. Revealing God, make us see. Sending God, make us move.
Loving God, make us love.**

