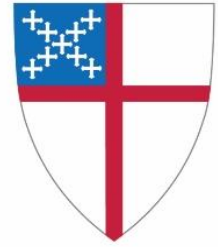




*St. Stephen's  
Episcopal Church  
Newsletter  
January 2024*



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*From our Rector*

Happy New Year!

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas holiday with family and friends either gathered around you or visiting via phone or online. Technology can be a big blessing for those who cannot travel, allowing us to see each other and speak across the miles to share some holiday cheer, love, and good will.

As we enter this next year, I wonder if you follow the tradition of making new year's resolutions? A friend of mine once said she always made new year's resolutions so that she would have something to give up for Lent!!! 😊 I do think that it is a worthwhile exercise to think back over the preceding year and to take stock of what we accomplished and where we felt we could have done better... a bit like a prelude to the Lenten season... Not to get bogged down in guilt or shame or self-flagellation over what we failed to do... as the recovery community advises... don't go "should-ing" all over yourself... in other words, don't beat yourself up for what you feel like you "SHOULD" have done... Nevertheless, to evaluate how things went and how you would like them to go in the coming year and what is within your control and ability to make happen? For instance, I would like to continue to improve my efforts to balance my work dedication with my wellness dedication. For me this means being more attentive to my diet, exercise, and relaxation time. Also, I want to spend a bit more time listening for God than talking (or complaining) to God.

In what areas of your life are you hoping to make some adjustments? May your new year's resolutions be fruitful and wholesome for you in this coming year.

Peace be with you,  
Rev. Allison Cornell

## Short History of New Year's Resolutions

From the Babylonians who resolved to return borrowed farm equipment to medieval knights who would renew their vow to chivalry, New Year's resolutions are nothing new.

In 2000 B.C., the Babylonians celebrated the New Year during a 12-day festival called Akitu (starting with the vernal equinox). This started the farming season to plant crops, crown their king, and make promises to pay their debts. One common resolution was the return of borrowed farm equipment (which makes sense for an agriculturally based society). The Babylonian New Year was adopted by the ancient Romans, as was the tradition of resolutions.

The timing, however, eventually shifted with the Julian calendar in 46 B.C., which declared January 1st as the start of the new year. January was named for the two-faced Roman god, Janus, who looks forward to new beginnings as well as backward for reflection and resolution. The Romans would offer sacrifices to Janus and make promises of good behavior for the year ahead. Janus was also the guardian of gates and doors. He presided over the temple of peace, where the doors were opened only during wartime. It was a place of safety where new beginnings and new resolutions could be forged.

If you think about the land and the seasons, the timing of early January makes sense for most of Europe and for North America, too. The active harvest season has passed. The holiday frenzy is ending. As our founder, Robert B. Thomas, said, this is a time "of leisure to farmers ... settle accounts with your neighbors ... now having been industrious in the summer, you will have the felicity of retiring from the turbulence of the storm to the bosom of your family."

New Year's resolutions were also made in the Middle Ages. Medieval knights would renew their vow to chivalry by placing their hands on a peacock. The annual "Peacock Vow" would take place at the end of the year as a resolution to maintain their knightly values.

By the 17th century, New Year's resolutions were so common that folks found humor in the idea of making and breaking their pledges. A Boston newspaper from 1813 featured the first recorded use of the phrase "New Year resolution." The article states:

"And yet, I believe there are multitudes of people, accustomed to receive injunctions of new year resolutions, who will sin all the month of December, with a serious determination of beginning the new year with new resolutions and new behavior, and with the full belief that they shall thus expiate and wipe away all their former faults."

How Resolutions Have Changed: In the United States, New Year's resolutions are still a tradition, but the types of resolutions have changed. As a legacy of our Protestant history, resolutions in the early 1900s were more religious or spiritual, reflecting a desire to develop stronger moral character, a stronger work ethic, and more restraint in the face of earthly pleasures. Over the years, however, resolutions seem to have migrated from denying physical indulgences to general self-improvement, like losing weight.

Compare the differences from 1947 to today:

<b>Resolutions From 1947 - Gallup Poll</b>	<b>Today's Resolutions</b>
1. Improve my disposition, be more understanding, control my temper	1. Lose weight
2. Improve my character, live a better life	2. Get organized
3. Stop smoking, smoke less	3. Spend less, save more
4. Save more money	4. Enjoy life to the fullest
5. Stop drinking, drink less	5. Stay fit and healthy
6. Be more religious, go to church more often	6. Learn something exciting
7. Be more efficient and do a better job	7. Quit smoking
8. Take better care of my health	8. Help others fulfill their dreams
9. Take a greater part in home life	9. Fall in love
10. Lose (or gain) weight	10. Spend more time with family

Accessed from <https://www.almanac.com/history-of-new-years-resolutions> on 18 December 2023.

## 10 Tips for Making Resolutions

A “resolution” is often worded as NOT doing something. But that’s not a great way to make small improvements in your life. Here are some tips.

### Frame Your Resolution Positively

1. Avoid wording your resolution negatively, such as “quitting” or “stopping” a behavior. For example, say, “I want my nails to grow” instead of “I want to stop biting my nails.” Take a photo of your nails every day and log your progress.
2. Set aside time on your calendar to pause and reflect. Love coffee? Sit down during coffee mornings with a journal or notebook and write out your status. If it helps, piggyback this task with another one you already do. For example, if you check your calendar and day’s events at a certain time, this is a good time to check your progress against your goal.
3. Keep it simple. Settle on one or two goals. Not a big list. For example, our founder, Robert B. Thomas, resolved to “begin the New Year’s square with every man.” This meant that he settled his debts.
4. Pick a goal you think will make you feel better. Not just something that you think you should do or what society is telling you to change. For example, if you do wish to lose weight for health, how about saying, “I want to eat more interesting salads” for lunch and then go find all the yummy toppings you can find—artichoke hearts, avocados, tomatoes, pickles, capers, olives, and protein.
5. Define a goal that is specific and measurable. Saying, “I want to be more helpful to others” is vague. But saying, “I am going to help the needy by signing up for the church’s food pantry each month” is specific. Keep track of your progress in a notebook or journal.
6. When you think about what you wish to achieve, consider what obstacles could get in your way and see how to remove those barriers. If your goal is to take your pills or vitamins each day and you are forgetful, get a 7-day pill box. When you refill once a week on Saturday night, check to see whether you need to renew your prescriptions.
7. Define a goal that is time-bound and realistic. Plan for a month at a time, not a lifetime. For example, resolving to retire in 5 years may not be realistic, but creating a monthly budget and setting aside all your surplus towards retirement may be an achievable goal. Each month, track your spending and then see where you’re overspending without realizing it.
8. Create an incentive. For example, if you want to stop using your phone at dinner, put it in a basket nearby. If you take it out of the basket, you must give a family member at the table a dollar.
9. Change up your routine. For example, if you aren’t brushing your teeth long enough, perhaps come up with another task to do while you brush your teeth—such as wiping down the bathroom mirror! Perhaps you need a tool to help reach your goals! For example: “I resolve to be on time to meetings this week.” To achieve your goal, set an alarm with a 5-minute reminder before any meetings.
10. If you slip up, don’t worry about it. But if you slip again, reconsider your plan. Are you too ambitious? If you plan to walk five days a week, scale it back to 3 days and plan which days you’ll walk to get into a schedule; how about walking before you eat lunch so that you can enjoy it after your walk?

Whether we resolve to return borrowed farm equipment (as the Babylonians did) or drop a few pounds, we’re tapping into an ancient and powerful longing for a fresh start by setting resolutions.

Accessed from <https://www.almanac.com/history-of-new-years-resolutions> on 18 December 2023.

## Save the Dates:

- **30-31 Dec – New Year’s worship and celebration** – Sunday following worship, champagne and sparkling soda to toast in the new year during fellowship time in the Parish Hall.
  - **5 January – First Friday Film Night:** We will watch “The Lion in Winter” starring Katherine Hepburn and Peter O’Toole in this historical drama about a Christmas in the family of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine. Some great one-liners in this movie. Soup supper. Bring your own beverage. Starts at 5:15pm goes to about 7:30pm. Bring a friend.
  - **13 January – Second Saturday Supper:** 6:30pm Join us for supper out at Native Grill and Wings for a time of fellowship and feasting. Address 3950 Martin Luther King Jr Pkwy, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635. Menu can be found at this link: <https://nativegrillandwings.com/menu/general-menu/>. Invite a friend to join us.
  - **21 January – ANNUAL MEETING:** Be sure to come to church Sunday at 10am for the combined annual meeting and worship. This will be followed by a Mexican Food potluck in the Parish Hall with a build your own Taco Bar. Rev. Allison will use the sermon time to deliver the “State of the Church” address and present the 2024 church budget. New vestry elections and gratitude recognition.
  - **26-27 January – New Vestry Retreat** for all vestry members in Parish Hall. Friday 26<sup>th</sup> 5:30 pm to 8pm. Saturday 8am to 2pm.
  - **Looking ahead:**
  - **13 February – Pancakes and Sausage Shrove Tuesday Supper. 5pm to 6pm in Parish Hall.**
  - **14 February – Ash Wednesday. Services at 9:30am and 6pm.** Lent starts early this year.
  - **23 February – 6pm Professional Pianist John Nilsen in concert at St. Stephen’s in the Church.** Free will offering and wine/sparkling soda/hors d’oeuvres reception to follow.
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## From our Reverend Deacon



Now again Epiphany comes blazing into sight, filling all the darkened corners, illuminating soulful mourners. Give us, Lord, this view of you who fills the world with light. Once again, we celebrate. Epiphany comes near, as in all emerging ages, bursting through our history pages, deeper than the seas of time, beyond our created sphere.

Epiphany: the time we celebrate the visitation of the Wise Men from the East with gifts for the Christ child. The last of the 12 days of Christmas and the manifestation of the WORD MADE FLESH: the wise men led by a star to Bethlehem, the baptism of Jesus in the river Jordan, and, the first miracle at the wedding at Cana. This is the LIGHT which God sends to us with LOVE---He is the Gift from God to the world.

Rev. Deacon Dottie g.

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## From our Treasurer



Wrapping up a year's worth of income and expenses sets the tone for the budget for 2024. We did very well "guestimating" 2023, and hope to do as well next year. If you want the "real" numbers, come to the Annual Meeting on January 21. In between, have a blessed Christmastide, thank yourselves for your generosity to St. Stephen's, and be with us to walk into a New Year.

Onward!

Anne Roth

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### January 2024 Lay Ministry Teams Schedule

**NOTE: If you are unable to serve at the appointed time and day, you are responsible for finding a replacement. Please notify Robin of substitutions**

<b>Saturday 6th</b>			
LEM – Jeff Speer	Lector – Sandra Calhoun	Alter guild – Jeff Speer	
<b>Saturday 13<sup>th</sup></b>			
LEM – Tim Holsenback	Lector – Robin StClair	Alter Guild – Tim Holsenback	
<b>Saturday 20<sup>th</sup></b>			
LEM – Robin StClair	Lector – Tim Holsenback	Altar Guild – Robin StClair	
<b>Saturday 27<sup>th</sup></b>			
LEM - Tim Holsonback	Lector – Jeff Speer	Alter Guild - Tim Holsonback	
<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup></b>			
LEM – Robin StClair	Lector – Peggy Brown	Alter Guild – Nancy Rae	Deacon - Dottie Gutwein
<b>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup></b>			
LEM – MJ Mahland	Lector – Wilma Swartz	Altar Guild – Deb Ash	Deacon - Dottie Gutwein
<b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting (State of the Church) during Sermon time</b>			
LEM – Nancy Rae	Lector – Ann Crandall	Altar Guild – Nancy Rae	Deacon - Dottie Gutwein
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup></b>			
LEM – Robin StClair	Lector - Doris Millard	Alter Guild – Robin StClair	Deacon - Dottie Gutwein

# January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> 2023</b> 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	1 <b>New Year's            Day</b>	2	3 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	4	5 <b>Film Night</b> <b>"The Lion in            Winter"</b> <b>5.30pm</b>	6 5.00 pm Spoken Service with Holy Communion
7 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	8	9 Bible Study (Proverbs) 5 pm Via Zoom	10 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	11	12	13 5.00 pm Service followed by <b>Supper at            Native Wings            6.30pm</b>
14 10.00 am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	15	16 Bible Study (Proverbs) 5 pm Via Zoom	17 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	18	19	20 5.00 pm Spoken Service with Holy Communion
21 10am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	22	23 Bible Study (Proverbs) 5 pm Via Zoom	24 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion	25 <b>Newsletter            Articles            Due For            February Issue</b>	26	27 5.00 pm Spoken Service with Holy Communion
28 10am Choral Service with Holy Communion (Live Stream)	29	30 Bible Study (Proverbs) 5 pm Via Zoom	31 9.30 am Spoken Service With Holy Communion			

**HAPPY ★ NEW ★ YEAR**

*And  
 Wishing  
 A Very Happy Birthday  
 To*

**Donna Saville  
 William Saunders  
 Bill Carswell**

**January 12<sup>th</sup>  
 January 12<sup>th</sup>  
 January 21<sup>st</sup>**