



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated Jun 24, 2022)

St. Stephen's - Belvedere, California

3 Bayview Ave, Belvedere, CA 94920, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 07/28/22.

deniseo@diocal.org

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)	Number of Weekend Worship Services	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services
118	2	1	
Current Annual Compensation	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
SECA reimbursement	Compensation Available for New Position	Housing Available for	Pension Plan
		4	We're in compliance with CPF requirements.
Healthcare Options	Dental	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
Full family	Yes		
Vacation Weeks	Vacation Weeks Details	Continuing Education Weeks	Continuing Education Weeks Details
4			
Continuing Education Funding in budget	Sabbatical Provision	Travel/Auto Account	Other Professional Account
	Yes		

"D" Congregation Classification for compensation

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

As with churches across the country, COVID disrupted our tight-knit community, including our Sunday worship together and numerous other social touch points throughout the year. One recent innovation to improve connection coincident with the easing of the COVID lockdown has been institution of a monthly men's breakfast in the parish hall. Parishioners are encouraged to bring a friend, and we are often joined by members of the community from our fire or police force. Attendance is between 20 - 40, and the event has begun to rebuild the sense of community that suffered with our enforced separation. Last December we were also able to host a parish-wide evening party enabled by a donation from a generous parishioner. The event brought back many members who had fallen out of practice attending church and reinvigorated the congregation, reminding us how much we enjoy each other's Christian fellowship.

How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

St. Stephen's maintains a list of objectives that we believe support our goal of being a church community that is committed to God's love expressed through our lives and common worship. These objectives incorporate our intent to be a congregation that strives to continually enhance all aspects of our church --- including our worship services, our pastoral leadership and care, the vitality of our children and youth programs, our outreach activities, the lay leadership in our parish, the active participation of our members, and the growth of our membership. We hope to be a church that is not only willing, but also anxious, to make changes in our church and its activities to meet the changing needs of our community, and especially the younger and newer members of the church. One specific area for future growth that is being considered by our church is the potential use of our classroom facilities for a preschool program, as there is currently a need for such programs in our immediate community.

Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

compelling, welcoming, compassionate leader.

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

St. Stephen's liturgical style treads a *via media* between high and low church, retaining Episcopal traditions, while adapting some aspects to the uniqueness of our congregation. Our regular worship services include: • 8:00 am, Sunday: Holy Eucharist, Rite I, with music (contemplative Eucharist) • 10:00 am, Sunday: Holy Eucharist, Rite II, with choir (festive choral Eucharist) • 8:30 am, Thursday: Quiet Prayer Group (uses upcoming week's Gospel reading as the framework for prayer and discussion). Twice a year, animals are invited into the Sunday service: On the Sunday closest to St. Francis' day, St. Stephen's conducts a Blessing of the Animals between services. Additionally, dogs are invited to church on "Dog Days of Summer" Sunday (date varies).

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Our church welcomes all ministries. We encourage all members to be active in the church, to join ministries, and to try something new. Members are encouraged to explore new ideas for church ministries like Soul Food and Eldercare. While these ministries have been disrupted during COVID, we adapted with events like a Christmas cookie swap in the parking lot with delivery to those needing to shelter in place. We also have an "Artists in Residence" ministry where a different parishioner's art is featured in the parish hall each month. In September, we host Ministry Sunday, an informational gathering during which each ministry sets up a table to educate parishioners about each group and to encourage parishioners to become involved. The members of our congregation are committed and engaged in contributing their time and talent to support church and outreach ministries. In fact, our calling to stewardship — "Growing Ministry, Community and Impact" — expressed year-round over the past few years, specifically addresses the central role of ministry in our parish and our lives.

As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

Through a myriad of programs, St. Stephen's attempts to care for the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of all those touched by our church. Our programs are outlined more fully in our parish profile, but here are some examples: • Anasazi: Educational and inspirational gatherings for seniors. • Eldercare: Outreach to older parishioners who may not be able to attend services. • Soul Food: Volunteers assist parishioners in acute need with meals, transportation, and other help. • Healing Ministry: Prayers for people in need of healing. • Outdoor Club: Hiking, walking, and museum trips that inspire and build a sense of wellness and belonging. • Adult Education: Forums to educate parishioners and guests with a wide range of topics, including the Bible, the meaning of social justice, and climate change and the environment. • Bible Study: Small groups for Bible study on weekday evenings. • Parish Retreat: Annual trip to Bishop's Ranch in Healdsburg for reflection, recreation, and respite. • Social Ministries: Festive and fun activities to promote spiritual fellowship within our parish and foster ties with our local community.

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How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

We care for the larger community by serving them throughout the year in many different ways. Our programs are outlined more fully in our parish profile. •Homeward Bound/Mill Street Shelter, San Rafael: We have been contributing for over 25 yrs, making this our oldest food assistance program. • Camp Create: For the past 20+ summers (excluding COVID years), St. Stephen's has offered a week-long, multi-cultural, arts camp for local underserved and at-risk children. St. Stephen's Gives Thanks: Each Thanksgiving, donations are given to Ritter House, the "Marin Homeless Safety Net" in San Rafael. As mentioned below, a new ministry to feed the unhoused was initiated during COVID. Christmas Giving Tree: During Advent, parishioners purchase child-specific gifts for distribution. Siempre Unidos: Founded at St. Stephen's over a decade ago, Siempre Unidos ministers to HIV/AIDS patients in Honduras. St. Stephen's parishioners support this ministry financially — as individuals and through an annual collection.

Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

The members of St. Stephen's have consistently been active in the Diocese and its many programs. We currently have one member who sits on the Diocese Finance Committee, and who previously served as Treasurer of the Diocese for ten years. In recent years we have had several members who have served on the governing board of the Diocese (the Executive Council). Members of St. Stephen's have also been involved in other Episcopal organizations, including membership on the board of Episcopal Relief & Development and the board of the Episcopal Church's endowment fund.

Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

At the beginning of the COVID pandemic in early 2020, most of the dining programs for the homeless and less-advantaged families in Marin County were closed due to local health mandates. In April 2020 we established a meal bag program to use our commercial kitchen facilities to prepare and deliver bagged meals to the St. Vincent de Paul's free meal program in San Rafael, which is the primary free meal program in Marin County. As of May 2022, we have delivered over 10,000 meal bags to help ensure that no one goes hungry in Marin County. Pam Matori at St. Stephen's can be contacted about his program.

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What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

Each fall we launch a stewardship campaign chaired by a member of the parish and the results of this dovetail into the budgeting process. In times of shortfalls or special projects, we appeal to the whole church community with specific needs, and generally we have a positive response. We emphasize ministry as a part of stewardship, in addition to the financial pledge. Our focus is on full participation in stewardship, with all congregants making a 'promise' to the church for whatever amount is right for them. During the fall stewardship drive we feature parishioner testimonials during the service where they can describe what St. Stephen's has meant to them and why they pledge. One opportunity for growth would be to better recognize the gifts of those who came before us and parishioners who may not be able to attend services in person but still support the church.

What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

As is the case with many churches, St. Stephen's suffered a decline in attendance and pledges during the Covid years, and even before. In addition, differences arose between some members of the congregation and the rector as to worship styles and church organization. However, it should also be noted that a number of parishioners liked the rector personally and were pleased with his engaging and welcoming personality as well as his thoughtful sermons. Most importantly, there was a strongly felt need to develop a plan and shared vision regarding how the church would re-energize itself after restrictions on in-person attendance were lifted. In the end, our rector made a decision that pursuing other opportunities would be in his and the Church's best interests. The vestry and lay leadership worked hard to handle the above issues with honesty and integrity, in a constructive manner. Finally, it should be noted that we recently called an interim rector who served us previously and is widely respected as an experienced leader and voice for collaboration. We pray that with our vestry's leadership and our interim rector's guidance, we can be a growing and thriving community of worship.

What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

Changes in the Church, such as gay marriage, have not really affected our parish given that we are in a liberal region of the country. Within our parish, we are thoughtful about implementing change, and yet having the fresh eyes of a second rector in five years, we have found that some "traditions" are no longer particularly valued, and the original stakeholders are long gone. So why not try something new? An example of a change that went well was moving our Christmas pageant to the Sunday before Christmas, rather than Christmas Eve. The change was welcomed by current members with a "Why didn't we do this sooner?" attitude. With the advent of the COVID pandemic we had to move to online services and community groups. Our online streaming was provided by our youth members (the Stream Team), and as in person services restarted the youth members had reached their service limit and streaming was discontinued. There would be value in continuing streaming our service for those unable to attend services otherwise, so finding the right balance between in person and online connection will be important for our future.



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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Phil Ellsworth	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2016-01	2022-01

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Rob Gieselmann	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2010-01	2015-01

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Jim Ward	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	1994-01	2010-01

Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
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Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School
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Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School
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Worshipping Community Web site: <https://www.ststephenschurch.org/>

Media Links:

Online References:

Languages Significantly Represented:

English

Provide Worship or Classes in:

English

References

Bishop:

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Marc Andrus

Diocesan Transition Minister

Canon Denise Obando

deniseo@diocal.org

Current Warden/Board Chair

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Search Chair

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader