



# The First Order

## St. Stephen's Parish

Ph 413.448.8276 // Fx 413.442.5374 // [mail@ststephenspittsfield.org](mailto:mail@ststephenspittsfield.org) // [www.ststephenspittsfield.org](http://www.ststephenspittsfield.org)

JANUARY 2021

Dear Friends,

I bring you good news of great joy!

No, not that good news, but the good news of our calling of a new rector - The Rev. Nina Pooley, her husband, Ken and their daughters, Mackenzie and Channing, Finn-dog, and a few cats. Let's start learning those names.

I know you will give the Pooley family your warmest and most joyful welcome. You're so good at that. It comes so naturally. That's what you gave to me back in September and it makes all the difference in the world. I know I'm familiar to many of you, but not all of you. It's important to make sure no one feels like a stranger especially in these troubling and chaotic times.

For many years as a parish priest, I had a sign hanging outside the hallway of my office that my daughter made out of buttons. It read, "There are no strangers here only friends we haven't met."

In a word, "relationship." To me, that's the most important word to mark, inwardly digest and act upon in the Church. We could not have gotten this far without our relationship with God in Christ, each other and the Pittsfield community.

Mark Miller, Clerk of the Vestry, sent each Vestry member a copy of a newspaper article about the decline of the Episcopal Church. Perhaps you saw it printed in one of the Springfield newspapers. This is not new news, but it's news that can point us in the direction of God and what God is doing for the Church in the future.

Of course, we do not know what that future

will look like, but we can prepare for it. In a word, "relationship." I believe we can best prepare ourselves for God's dream for us by building upon our present relationships we encounter in worship, pastoral care, outreach, spiritual formation, education, and social justice.

With these strong relationships we will be ready for what God has in store for us. And you know, God always has something in store for us.

That is good news. Good news of great joy.

Peace,

David

## Share Your Voice

Please feel free to send us any news, photos, thoughts, poems, or jokes to help us all keep in touch. This forum is yours and we'd love to hear from you. Please send them to [mail@ststephenspittsfield.org](mailto:mail@ststephenspittsfield.org).

Got any tips on how you're getting through this time? Got some good news or an upcoming event to share? Consider this your First Order Blog.

I wish all of you peace and the hope that we will be together again safely and in good time.

Connie Bullard, Editor of *The First Order*.

# We have called a new rector

Hello dear friends of St. Stephens;

We hope you and those you love are doing well – staying healthy and safe. We miss worshipping with you, singing with you, being with you. The past couple of years have been full of changes for all of us at St. Stephen's – Cricket's retirement, a pandemic, increased racial tensions, and John's passing. Through all of our tribulations, we still feel the love of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We are grateful for all of our blessings.

Today we would like to share with you that we have called a new rector. Dr. Rev. Nina Pooley will be joining us in February. Nina comes to us from St. Bartholomew's in Yarmouth Maine She will be joined by her husband Ken, adult daughters, Mackenzie and Channing dog Finn, and a few cats.

In her letter to the Search Committee Nina said, "I'm drawn to many of the images and descriptions of your ministry in your profile. Perhaps the most immediately compelling is your parish's consistent, compassionate response to emerging needs in the Pittsfield community. (From St. Stephen's Table feeding ministry, Laundry Love and Cathedral of the Beloved, to your involvement with BIO to confront issues of social justice, and so much more.) So many parishes speak of fighting injustice, but few respond by addressing immediate need and creating long-term change."

You are welcome to view some of her preachings on the St. Bartholomew's facebook page: StBartsYarmouth

The calling of this Rector was the coordinated efforts of the Profile and Search Committees and the Vestry. The Profile Committee, Craig Reynolds, Maribeth Barney, Liz Trapani, Susan Wojtasik, and Chris Plankey, truly captured the heart of St. Stephen's and attracted qualified candidates. The Search Committee, David Nevins, Alec Gilman, Susan LeBourdais, Craig Smith, Josie Ellis, Cathy Carchedi, John Garinther, Chris Perry and Wendy Coakley did their due diligence to find the best match for us. A few weeks ago, the Vestry invited Nina for a conversation which we did in person here at St. Stephen's using all safety protocols. Both the Search Committee and Vestry voted unanimously to call Rev. Dr. Nina Pooley as our new Rector.

We are excited to have Nina guide us on the next

part of our journey as a congregation. She has energy, vision, compassion, and an empathic way of relating to others. Because of John Tarrant's work, our staff, and the Vestry, we have a firm foundation from which to grow.

Thank you all for your patience, support, and prayers. A special thank you to David DeSmith, our Bridge Rector, and our office staff, Sarah Morrison, Bert Boos, and Debbie Stillman.

Peace and blessing to you during this holiday season,

Tom Dillon and Erin Sullivan  
Co-Wardens

## Revenues and Expenses through November 30, 2020

### Revenues

**Actual Income** (budgeted and unbudgeted) through November 30, 2020 - \$395,629\*

**Budgeted Income** through November 30, 2020 - \$393,163

(Overbudget by \$2,466 or approx. 0.6%)

### Pledge Income

Actual Pledges (Plate Offerings and Pledge Payments) Received through November 30, 2020 - \$232,899

Budgeted Pledges (Plate Offerings and Pledge Payments) through November 30, 2020 - \$261,178

(Underbudget by \$23,186 or approx. 9%)

*\*The Diocese gave us assistance due to COVID-19 for a total of \$30,981.76. This is accounted for in the above income total.*

### Expenses

**Actual Expenses** (budgeted and unbudgeted) through November 30, 2020 - \$328,585

**Budgeted Expenses** through November 30, 2020 - \$393,163

(Underbudget by \$64,578 or approx. 16.5%)

As of November 30, 2020 – net positive \$67,044

# Beloved Community of St. Stephen's,

December 13, 2020

On this Advent Sunday when we celebrate Joy, it seems fitting that we're finally able to share our joint good news. I've been discerning my next call for almost as long as you've been engaged in the search process. We'll have to wait a bit longer before we begin our joint chapter of mission and ministry together; but please know I am honored and elated to be called as the next rector of St. Stephen's.



There are so many reasons I feel St. Stephen's is a good fit for me. But at the top of the list are your commitment to social justice, your active investment in local mission and ministry, and your genuinely inclusive welcome of all of God's people. I've felt called to the responsive, multi-faceted ministries of an urban parish, but struggled to find a good fit because my soul needs daily opportunities to be immersed in the beauty of God's Creation. St. Stephen's provides that combination of urban in a greater rural setting, with the perfect mix of challenges and opportunities - everything I've been praying for!

As we are at the beginning of getting to know one another - I thought I'd share a bio of sorts with you. I'm an Army brat and grew up in a multi-cultural, interfaith family. My father is from Mumbai, India and my mother is from Methuen, Massachusetts. I was born in Providence RI, but we moved to Boston so my father could attend Harvard School of Public Health. (Note - I've been a New England sports fan since birth!) My dad was in the US on a student visa, and was drafted into the US Army (he retired 24 years later). Among the places where we were stationed: Edgewood Arsenal MD; Fort Leavenworth KS; Bad Kreuznach, and Augsburg, Germany; Ft. Belvoir, and Alexandria VA.

I went to William and Mary, where I was a Religion and Psych double major. During high school and college, I worked as a student athletic trainer. Which helps explain my switching mid-stream in grad school at UVA from studying Religion (Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity) to a Masters of Education, specifically in Sports Medicine. After a year as the Associate Athletic Trainer at Catholic University (DC),

I took a job as the first athletic trainer at Woodbury Forest School in Orange, VA. There, I met my husband, Ken, who was head of the art department. Ken grew up in Bethel Maine; and majored in Art at Davidson, then got his MFA in painting from UT, Knoxville. We've done our share of moving around! St. Mark's School, Southborough MA; St. George's School in Newport RI; The University of the South, Sewanee TN (where I went to seminary); Lookout Mountain TN; St. Paul's School Lutherville MD, and Yarmouth ME.

Ken is a web developer working in higher education. Currently he works for Southern Maine Community College. He's a photographer, cyclist, skier and thanks be to God - a videographer. Which has been incredibly helpful for COVID's pre-recorded worship. We have two daughters Mackenzie (25) and Channing (22). Mackenzie is working on a degree in primary education, she lives with us. Channing graduated with a degree in Neuroscience from Dickinson College. She's working at MGH's neuroscience research lab as a research technician - working on brain tumors. Our other family members are furry rescues: Finn, a Bassett-Beagle mix, and the feline contingent: Ted, Bennett, and Joon.

It is truly my honor and joy to join you; to build on the foundation of all you have already accomplished, and to move forward together - as we continue to meet God in the neighborhood, and live into the next joyful chapter of mission and ministry at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

Faithfully yours,

Nina+

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley



**Ken, Nina, Channing, Mackenzie and Finn**

# We Still Need You: Stewardship Update

Everything is new this year, but some things, like our faith in God and sustaining our loving community, remain the same and endure and strengthen. Though we could not eat together, in October, we were treated to a wonderful Harvest Dinner (to go) by Dan Moon and his staff, vestry and volunteers. We watched a wonderful video presentation put together by Chris Plankey. The video showed that we have much to be thankful for. The video showed that even in a worldwide pandemic we still thrive. St. Stephens is still rising to help our community through St. Stephen's Table, on-line and in person (for a time) worship, and welcoming those in need of respite to our sanctuary this summer. We saw John Tarrant leading us and nourishing us – even mowing the lawn and taking care of us so well. We heard our wonderful Bridge Pastor, David DeSmith, with his calm reassuring voice call us to do God's work. And we heard from your Stewardship Committee asking for your time, talent and treasure to sustain our loving community. Our faith and community are well.

After the superb work of the Profile and Search Committee, led with spiritual guidance by our loving Francie Hills, we can delight in the call of our new Rector Nina Pooley. Welcome Nina!

Stewardship means taking care of something. Our community has shown we are in loving hands ready to serve our community. So far, we have seen an increase in average pledge amount. However, we still are not up to the number of pledges we received last year. We hope that people are still reflecting on how they can sustain our mission. It is not too late to send in your pledge card. We know many people do send pledge cards in at the end/beginning of a new year. Please do not delay. We hope that Nina's first year as Rector can be one where we do not have to dip into endowment principal to balance the budget. With your help we can meet this goal. Thank you everyone for your time, talent and treasure and your commitment to our community. We need you so we can sing the Lord's song in a time of change and challenge.

Valerie Andersen  
Al Symonds  
Leah Luczynski  
Your Stewardship Committee.

## January

### Happy Birthday:

- 2 David Aldrich, David DeSmith,  
Cassidy Devitt
- 4 Andrea Appleton, Nancy  
Lamoureux
- 9 Heather DiGrigoli, Gwen Sears
- 10 Cathy Carchedi
- 11 John Culver
- 17 Judith Washburn
- 18 Marcie Nevin
- 19 Zachary Turner
- 20 Judith Lamont
- 21 Jasmine Hyatt, Raylene Shaw
- 22 Charlene Cassavant
- 23 Bryson Rose
- 24 Cassidy Goodwin
- 25 Alyvia Dowling, Soleil Laurin, Di-  
ana MacFarlane, Elliot Thompson
- 26 David Nevin, Christiana Perry
- 27 Teddy Carter
- 28 Simira Hanger, Nancy Zuber
- 29 Bert Boos, Cameron Langsdale,  
Kaydence Shaw

### Happy Anniversary:

- 7 Patricia & John Moynahan