

The First Order

St. Stephen's Parish

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JUNE 2022

CATA Annual Gala Returns To An-Person Celebration

By Lisa Green | May 10, 2022

Submitted by Chris Watford

Community Access to the Arts (CATA) held its Gala & Annual Performance at Shakespeare & Company on May 7 and 8—a joyous event celebrating the talents of artists with disabilities. It is CATA's biggest event of the year, raising funds to support year-round arts programs for 800 people with disabilities. "AND," CATA's Gala theme, "captures the endless possibility at the root of our mission," says Margaret Keller, CATA executive director. Co-chaired by Mitch and Caitlin Nash and Eva and Kip Sheridan, the evening featured an electrifying new film directed by Ben Hillman, with stunning performances by CATA artists in dance, singing, drumming, juggling, and acting, filmed at iconic locations throughout the Berkshires—along with behind-the-scenes footage and interviews with the artists. The audience was also treated to surprise on-stage performances, co-directed by CATA faculty Kelly Galvin, Olivia Martin, and Stefanie Weber. For those who were unable to attend in person, CATA will hold a free Virtual Gala on Saturday, May 21 at 6 p.m. Attendees tuning in will see CATA's new film and have the chance to support their programs.



Jessica Hansen Performs in CATA ANNUAL GALA Photos by Christina Lane



CATA artists Kellie Ward and Jessica Hansen with dancer Teagan Maxymillian take a bow. Thanks to Rural Intelligence and Wendy Coakley for bringing this to our attention.

St. Stephen's 2022 Vestry Review

For those who are new to St. Stephen's and those who wish to see old friends, we bring you biographies submitted by our current vestry members. Here are two, with more to follow in the coming months.

Feel free to make new friends, but keep the old.

Wendy Webster Coakley



Personal: I grew up in the Chicago suburbs and still consider myself to be a Midwesterner at heart. I came to the Berkshires for the first time to attend Williams College, after which I worked in

Washington, D.C., for 11 exciting years. I returned when I married a Lenox native, Michael Coakley, who was looking for an excuse to leave New York City. We arrived in 1996, raised two wonderful sons (Kevin, 24, and Sean, 22) here, and thoroughly love this beautiful corner of the world.

Professional: As the Director of Alumni Career Networking at Williams, I derive deep satisfaction in helping my fellow alumni at every age and career stage to navigate their professional journeys.

Church Life: I was raised in the Episcopal Church (shout out to Church of the Holy Spirit, Lake Forest, Illinois) and belonged to a great parish during my time in Washington (St. George's, Arlington, Virginia). I credit my former Berkshire Life/Guardian colleague, Susan LeBourdais, for guiding me to St. Stephen's when I first moved here and was looking for a spiritual home. Over the years I've volunteered in a number of capacities and am currently honored to serve as a member of the Vestry, chair of the Stewardship Committee and a lector.

Spiritual Life: At a time of great unrest among God's children, I take comfort in the poetry of faith – while remaining grateful to be part of a denomination that encourages me to actively understand God's will.

John Garinther



I was raised on the Chesapeake Bay in a small town north of Baltimore named Havre De Grace where most of my siblings still live. I left the area to attend college and start my career, but continue to visit MD several times a year to see family and partake in the culinary tradition of blue crab feasts. I married my wife, Sara, relatively late in life. Sara was a

librarian at the time and decided to end her career as we started a small family. We are currently raising our 16-year-old daughter, Grace, who thinks she knows everything.

I came to General Electric in Pittsfield straight out of college not expecting to stay in this small New England town for very long. That was in 1983. My Engineering position took me around the country for several years until I ultimately decided that Pittsfield is where I'd like to settle down. General Electric became General Dynamics in 1997. I continued to move up the engineering chain at General Dynamics through several leadership roles and finally decided to retire in 2021.

Sara brought me to a service at St. Stephen's church shortly after we met. I wasn't looking for a new church home; I was a life-long Catholic, but not very active in the church. St. Stephen's is such a welcoming community. Before long, I was making great friends and volunteering to get involved in church activities that I'd never considered before. I'm currently the chairperson of the Property Committee and a member of the Vestry.

Psalm 31: For Ukraine

by James Ford | March 13, 2022

My friend the Reverend Mary Gates writes “Rabbi Yaakov Bleich, the Chief Rabbi for Ukraine, has asked Jews and Christians around the world to pray Psalm 31 in solidarity with those in Ukraine who are under attack. Apparently, millions of people are saying this psalm daily, and in Ukraine people are praying it aloud in subway stations, bomb shelters and wherever else they are sheltering. Many people are reporting that the psalm has taken on new meaning for them since the onset of the war. This psalm was written by King David when he was suffering with a number of ailments. I offer it as our poem for today. The rabbi is asking that if you cannot say the whole psalm daily perhaps you can say verse 21 “Blessed be the Lord! for he has shown me the wonders of his love in a besieged city.”



I suspect all of good will are actually invited to share the prayer.

31/1 In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness. 2 Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for a house of defense to save me. 3 For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore, for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me. 4 Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength. 5 Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. 6 I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the Lord. 7 I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities; 8 And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.

9 Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly. 10 For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed. 11 I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbors, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me. 12 I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken [1] vessel. 13 For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to

take away my life. 14 But I trusted in thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God. 15 My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me. 16 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake. 17 Let me not be ashamed, O Lord; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent [2] in the grave. 18 Let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak grievous [3] things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

19 Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! 20 Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. 21 Blessed be the Lord: for he hath shewed me his marvelous kindness in a strong [4] city. 22 For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless, thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee. 23 O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. 24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.



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

Stay safe and take care,
Connie Bullard, Editor of *The First Order*

June

Happy Birthday:

- 1 Stephanie Mansfield
- 2 Joseph Carchedi
- 3 James Brennan
- 5 Bill Loutrel
- 10 John Garinther
- 11 Audrina Maloney,
David Winchester
- 12 Daniel Moon
- 13 Meilani Hamilton
- 14 Taylor Eddy, Linda Engle
- 16 Susan Bedard
- 17 David Turner
- 18 Avery Hartman-Caesar
- 19 Peter Champagn, Courtney Hamilton,
Alyson Warman
- 20 Emilia Cobb
- 22 Daniel Lavery
- 23 Pam Aldrich
- 26 Summer Bush
- 29 Marietta Cawse
- 30 Jaylen Hamilton

Anniversaries:

- 6 Thomas & Susan Smith
Scott & Katie Haviland
- 8 David & Mary Turner
- 11 Beth-Anne Hamling & Stephanie Mansfield
- 14 Jeffrey & Wavelyn Hine
Roy & Debbie Stillman
- 17 Christopher & Veronica Fenton
- 20 Donald & Ann Phipps
- 21 William & Paula Morey
Nathan & Maria Zuckerman
- 24 David & Martie Ekstrom
- 25 Scott & Josie Ellis
William & Nancy Travis
- 30 Steven & Mary Wheelock



Astonished by God

Adult Education at St. Stephen's Spring 2022

We hope to encounter God when we worship, pray, and study wisdom texts; that's essentially the purpose of these endeavors. But surely God is present in our lives at other times as well. How can we meet God outside of traditional "religious" or "spiritual" activities?

Perhaps it all starts by paying attention.

As the poet Mary Oliver writes:

"Instructions for living a life:

Pay attention.

Be astonished.

Tell about it."

Our spring/summer adult education offerings at St. Stephen's are going to give us opportunities to do just this – to pay attention; to be astonished; and to tell one another about it.

Community Connection Groups

Groups are launching soon which will guide participants in exploring the holiness of our everyday lives. We're convening gatherings covering three popular, accessible, and potentially profound activities:

- Photography
- Walking/Contemplative Movement
- Gardening

Each group will meet online monthly (though group members could make other meeting arrangements as well) to receive a simple assignment/project/challenge to be completed at participants' leisure. The group will then gather again the next month to share their experiences: results, lessons, surprises, new plans, etc. Group members will also receive their next assignment/project.

Groups will set their own schedules. We hope groups will meet throughout the spring and summer.

NO experience in these pursuits is required to participate. In fact, a "beginner's mind" can be a real asset in encountering the sacred amidst the everyday.

Please contact the Parish Office (mail@ststephen-spittsfield.org or (413) 448.8276) or one of the following facilitators to sign up or for more information:

Photography

Craig Reynolds: cmreyn@gmail.com
or (413) 822-0248

Ken Pooley: pooley@wickednifty.com
or (207) 239-7361

Walking

Josie Ellis: joze72@yahoo.com
or (413) 281-2416

Lois Symonds: lois.symonds@aol.com
or (413) 448-8614

Nancy Lamoureux: nlamoure51030@gmail.com
or (413) 499-3171

Gardening

John Culver: culvie229@gmail.com
or (413) 232-4271

Angie Moon: amoon@pittsfield.net
or (413) 464-1590

And don't be surprised if one of our group conveners taps you on the shoulder and invites you to join in the fun!

Berkshire Pride Festival: June 4, 11 AM – 4 PM

To support our LGBTQ+ friends and neighbors, St. Stephen's will have a table at the Berkshire Pride Festival. The gathering will be held on the Frist Street Common on Saturday, June 4 from 11 AM – 4 PM. We'll be giving away our bright, rainbow-themed "God Loves You, No Exceptions" St. Stephen's buttons and other fun (and maybe tasty?) items. We also plan to march in the Pride Parade that will start at 11 AM and run from North Street to the Common.

We need volunteers to staff our table and carry our banner in the parade! Come for the day or come for an hour. Contact Craig Reynolds (cmreyn@gmail.com or 413-822-0248) to sign up.

Downtown Churches Joint Worship Service: June 12, 11 AM

For our Sunday service on June 12, we'll join with South Congregational, First Congregational, Zion Lutheran, and Cathedral of the Beloved for outdoor worship on the First Street Common at 11 AM. Bring your own chairs and stay for a shared meal after the service as we celebrate the various gifts our churches bring to our community.

Summer Worship Time to Remain at 10 AM

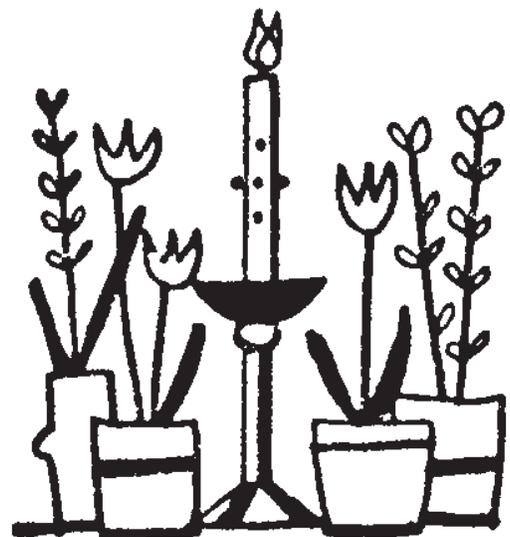
Your Vestry has decided that given all the changes and tumult of the past two+ years, it makes sense to leave our worship time as it is through the summer months. We look forward to seeing you at 10 AM on Sundays in July and August!

Update on Our Historic Stained Glass Windows

The vital and complex effort to repair and protect our treasured stained glass windows continues to move forward. In late April, Pittsfield's Community Preservation Committee (CPC) recommended a \$125,000 grant award for the project. That recommendation will now be sent to the City Council who makes the final decision. It's possible the Council will vote on the awards at their June 14th meeting.

In the meantime, our Property Committee has selected a vendor – Guarducci Stained Glass Studios of Great Barrington, MA. The Property Committee met with Guarducci last month to finalize project specifications and begin to map out a plan for the work, which will require several seasons to complete.

Many thanks to Erin Sullivan, and to the Property Committee, especially Committee Chair John Garinther. Erin prepared our original community preservation grant application and shepherded the application through the complex submittal process. John prepared a proposal to accompany our original application and then presented that proposal to the CPC at their April 4th meeting. Fingers crossed for the final City Council vote!



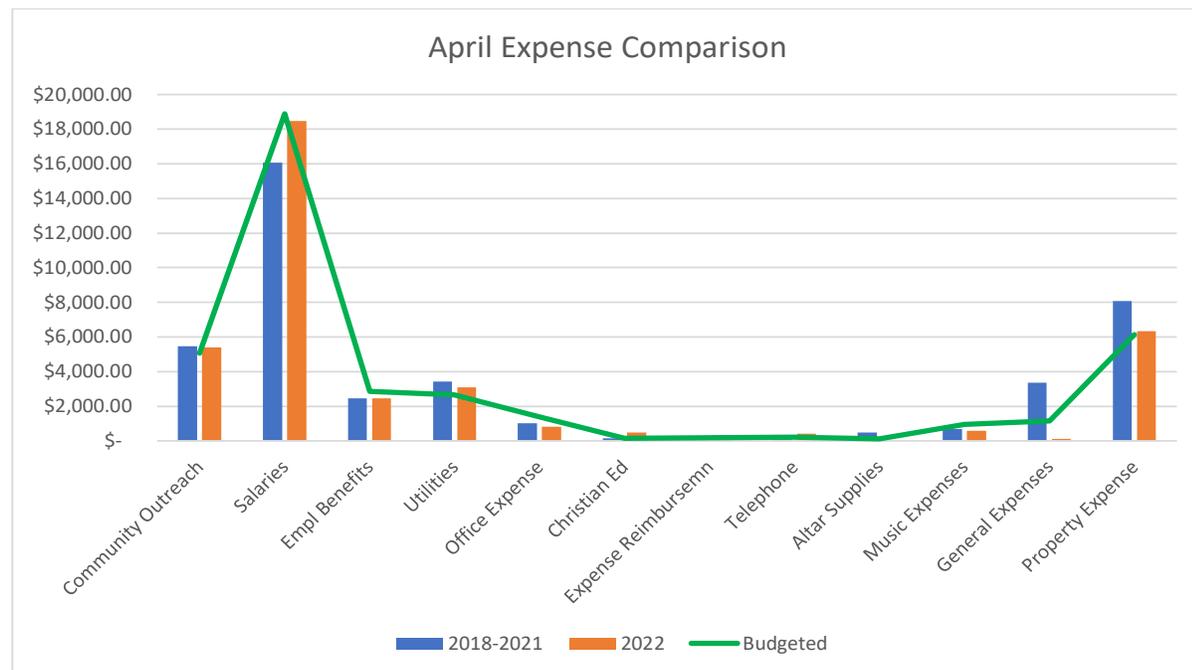
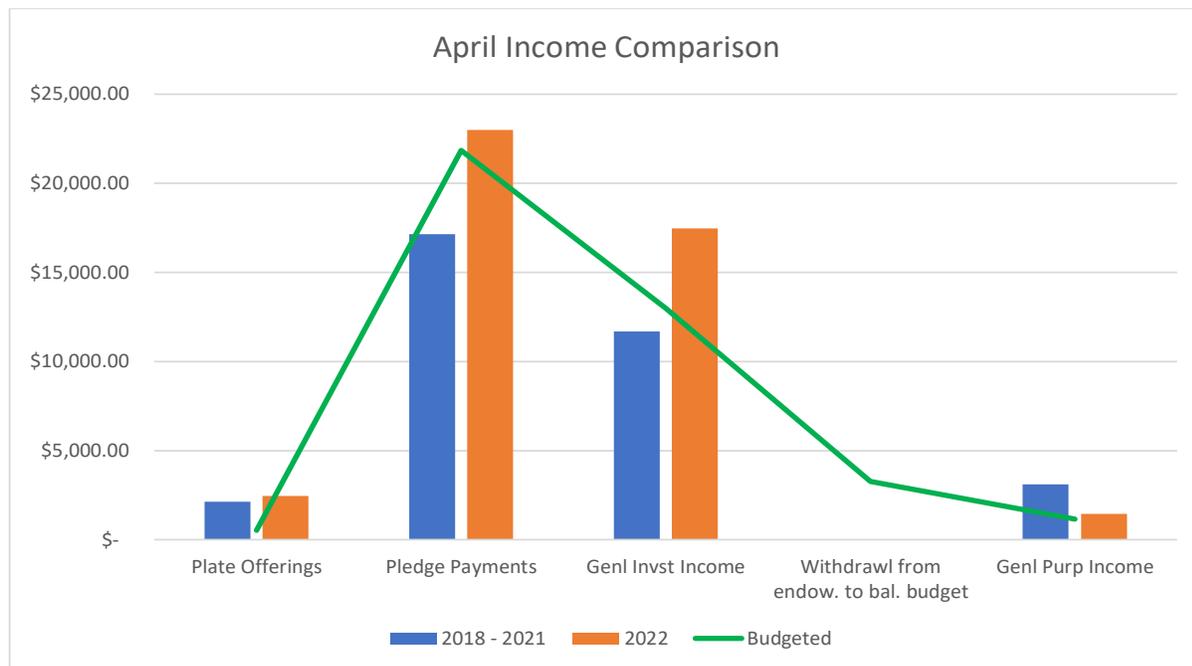
Christ our Light

Financial Update

submitted by Leah Luczynski, Treasurer

In the month of April, our operating revenues were \$44,376 and our operating expenses totaled \$38,507 putting us underbudget for the month by \$5,869 and \$10,069 YTD! Pledging continues to stay up—above average for what was budgeted.

Below are graphs of April's average income and expenses from 2018-2021 as compared to April 2022 actual, while showing what we budgeted per month (green line) in 2022.



If you would like to see a full itemized report of the income, expenses, savings accounts, and the balance sheet, please feel free to contact Leah Luczynski directly e: leah@leahinteriors.com or ph: 413.464.9333