



taking the  
**next step**

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Whoever you are and wherever you find  
yourself on the journey of faith, you are  
welcome at St. Stephen's!

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Dear St. Stephen's Family:

We are in week 2 of our Stewardship campaign and have a number of items to share with you including a new letter from our Senior Warden, an inspirational video testimony, and daily prayers. All of these can be accessed from the Stewardship Portal, [ststeve.org/stewardship](http://ststeve.org/stewardship). On behalf of the 2021 Stewardship Committee, which consists of Carla Daws, Ed Galle, and myself, we encourage you to search your heart during these days counting down to **Step Up Sunday, November 1**, and prayfully consider *Stepping Up* this year. Your pledges will support all the great work we have ahead of us. In the meantime, please, enjoy these words from our Senior Warden Nancy Cooke-Jenkins.

Vaya con Dios,

*Robert McLemore*

Robert McLemore, Stewardship Chair  
*Taking the Next Step* campaign

### **"I TITHE BECAUSE" from Nancy Cooke-Jenkins**

***I am selfish.*** For everyone and everything I love, I want the very best. It is important to me that they function to their utmost ability, be it my spouse, my children, my home, or my church. The surest way for this to happen is for me to contribute to the well being of each. This is why I tithe.

***I enjoy pride of ownership.*** Some companies are owned by their employees. It's a given they work there, but they also have voting rights, privilege of opinions, and abilities to make adjustments to the way they conduct business. When we feel the privilege of being able to be a part of our church's decision-making processes, we are joint tenants in its future. This is why I tithe.

***I enjoy a sense of belonging.*** Never one to like being on the outside looking in, being a part of a community gives a sense of security, a place of safety, a feeling of family, and a home. This is why I tithe.

***I am hopeful for the future.*** Most churches and many families are suffering financial difficulties in this time of COVID-19, and the struggles seem never to end. It's the time of decision: taking risks or folding. Most of us know to end despair, we must act in positive manners. We must look ahead. We have come a long way, from complete shut-down, to streaming services, to gathering safely outdoors to worship. We look forward to opening the doors to live services in the near future. In doing so, we may expect new family members to join us. With the blessings of a new Rector, Fr. Kevin, a new staff (Lydia, Elisa, Mike) as well as the always steadiness of Jeannetta and Jackie, our future is slam dunk. This is why I tithe.

***I believe in the sacredness of the church.*** In times of turmoil, the church, meaning the people who make it work, have surrounded me with their love and concern. The power of prayer has sustained me and my family through many a travail. Always done in love, and with compassion, it has simply been a lifeline. This is why I tithe.

I leave you with these thoughts. Please take time to consider what our church has offered you, why you choose to be here, and join me in saying "this is why I tithe."