

SENIOR WARDEN ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Good Morning, Everyone! Thanks for being here under circumstances we would never have dreamed about this time last January. 2020, the year that was - a train wreck of massive proportions, yet we survived it, and incurred some blessings along the way.

We kicked off the year with our interim priest, Fr. Phil Mason at the helm. The Search Committee, headed by Sharon East and Darelle Jordan, were diligently vetting, visiting and narrowing a list of potential new Rectors for our church. Life was in a certain path of normalcy as we awaited the transition that was to come with a new leader of St. Stephen's.

In that vein, we happily welcomed Allen Hennig as our new permanent pianist/organist. He and our Music Director, Anne Jones, have raised our choral offerings to new heights. Among the new features is a music presentation each Thursday,

“Take Five” spotlighting much beloved hymns and their histories. We thank you for your beautiful contributions.

February brought the annual Vestry Retreat held at the beautiful lake house of Gina and Tom Fulkerson, which they generously offer to us each year. The workday session involved recognizing the last year’s accomplishments, what we do well, what we could do better, and how we go about attaining those goals. Looking back, I’m reminded of the old saw, “when we make plans, God laughs”.

Come March – all activities are shut down!! Covid 19 has stormed into our lives. No church, no Sunday School, no special services, and no Rector Search. As time passed with “Shelter in Place” being the slogan, we figured out how to interact with all our members by the use of Teleconferencing, Zoom, and taped

streaming. We owe a huge thank you to Robert McLemore for his directing and choreographing the televised services.

With the arrival of our pictorial directories, we are now able to put names and faces together – a perfect way to recognize family members. Our thanks to Judy Holmes for her diligence in making this a reality!

In April, we were saddened by the resignation of David Boles from the Vestry, and were elated when Anita McNabb volunteered to replace David for the remainder of his term. In a great turn of events, David is now teaching in our school.

May brings the long awaited news that the Search Committee will resume its efforts in finding the “perfect person for our new Rector”.

Elisa Webster and Darelle Jordan are shoring up the programs for our Youth, including Darelle’s inspiring messages

through “Godly Play”. Our kids are so very fortunate to have these two dedicated ladies on their teams.

AT LAST!! July ends with the Search Committee recommending (unanimously) the selection of Fr. Kevin Shubert of St. George’s Episcopal Church in Austin as our new Rector. At their recommendation, the Vestry approved his hiring in a unanimous vote. Fr. Kevin, his wife Heather, and their two sons, Harper and Holden joined our family in September. As I stated at the beginning of this report, we did incur some blessings this past year!

We said goodbye to Fr. Phil with a drive-by on August 30. Fr. Phil was a perfect interim for us here at St. Stephen’s with his calming manner, positive attitude, and genuine love for us and for the church. We wish him well in his next endeavor.

A special thank you to members of our Community of Hope and other individuals who called our parishioners just to say hi and inquire of any needs during this period of quarantine and isolation. The program, headed by Community of Hope Coordinator, Sharon East, was met with thanksgiving and appreciation from all receiving calls.

Fast forward to December and our Santa Ministry. What a success! Over \$10,200.00 in gifts and food were distributed to families in need. Thanks to Sharon Krebs and her wonderful Santa Ministry members for this incredible Outreach program.

Fr. Kevin has taken the reins with very capable hands and definite plans to continue the work we have all had a hand in furthering. He has proven from the get-go that he can go with the flow, ride with the tide, unflappable in having to change course as we continue to evolve into the future, unaware of what

it holds. We are in good hands and can look forward to unity, growth, and a new understanding of our faith, under his leadership. Once again, Welcome, Father Kevin.

In closing, I want to thank each of you and particularly the other Vestry members and office staff for supporting and encouraging me as I served as your Senior Warden these past two years. They have been rewarding and contributed to my growth and my faith. Let's look forward to what's ahead for our church family.

Happy 2021 and God Bless.

2020 Junior Warden Annual Report

The primary function of the Jr. Warden is to ensure the property of St. Stephens is maintained. However, we would not have been able to accomplish what we did in 2020 without the help of our Facilities Committee members Mary McIntosh and Anita McNabb, Jeannetta Watson our office administrator, and Mike Williamson our Facilities Director. We also very much appreciate what Lonnie Brown our Sexton and Rachel Krotzer our Housekeeper do on a regular basis for St. Stephens.

A special thanks to the church staff in organizing and continuing to maintain the safety measures we have in place that keep our visitors safe.

Tasks Completed:

- Removal of dead tree on nature trail
- Installation of Nature trail signage
- Cleaning of courtyard steps, walkway, and courtyard bench
- Cleaning of Sanctuary/Nursery courtyard
- Completion of TCEQ 2020 compliance investigation
- Well meter calibration
- Update of chlorine checker
- Re-point of meeting room exterior wall
- Reconditioned fountain and cross
- Installation of defibrillator near nursery
- Nursery toilet repair
- Mold remediation of choir and meeting rooms
- New wall flashing above Parish hall walkway
- Faucet repair in men's room
- Cleaning of ice maker in Parish hall
- Repair of A/C in Sanctuary
- Cleaning of Church vesting room ceiling
- Church doors refurbished
- Installation of outdoor Chapel sign
- Repair of lights of nature trail parking lot and rear lot lighting
- Repair of sign on 3237

Tasks to be Completed:

- Repair of leaks in Parrish hall. (Work has begun on source of exterior wall leaks)
- Repair leaks in Chapel
- Repair cracked stucco on Interior Chapel
- Repair rot on lower Church windows.
- Replace cracked window in Church
- Repair cracked stucco on Church
- Correct lighting issue in Church
- Repair loose gutter on Church
- Pressure wash and repaint Church
- Clean upper windows in Church
- Repair pothole near entrance
- Repair fountain pump

Todd Schmidt, Junior Warden

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Cemetery
Statement of Financial Position
December 31, 2020

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking Account	9,459.75	
Municipal Bond	0.00	
		\$9,459.75

Endowment

Perpetual Care Fund		\$227,860.33
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Land (4.33 Acres with 560 platted burial lots)		0.00
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TOTAL ASSETS **\$237,320.08**

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities		0.00
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Equity

Permanently Restricted Net Assets		227,860.33
Unrestricted Net Assets		9,459.75

Total Liability & Equity **\$237,320.08**

Report for 2020 Family and Youth Ministry

It is hard to believe that 2020 has ended and we are almost into February 2021. Also hard to believe I have been in Wimberley with you for a year now, and what an interesting year it has been. January and February started with a flurry of activities with the Youth collecting and delivering food for the “Souper Bowl”, and Fire wood for the Bread Basket. We also did two fund raising breakfasts, Shrove Tuesday and the Extravaganza Child care as our fund raisers for our mission trip to Memphis, TN in July. We had just started up when we had to close down, which was a great sadness.

But we adapted. By March all the lessons from Sunday school to our Senior High group were done through the mail which worked well but lacked the interaction needed to really get children involved. Tom Dawson was kind enough to join me in introducing the recorded episodes of Godly Play done by Darelle Jordan. That was appreciated by our pre-school parents with children stuck at home.

I continued to send material to the children through the summer. Unfortunately our Mission Trip had to be postponed to 2021 due to Covid.

At the beginning of the new school year, with the assistance of Donna Hoyland and Jamie Wallendorff we started Sunday school on Zoom in the Log Cabin. The youth and Tweens (Mountain Movers) also started with Zoom meetings, with the help of Melissa Odell.

It was with great joy that we welcomed Fr Kevin into our midst to take the lead and take us forward. The Sunday classes were open briefly for in person meetings, but this changed when the Covid rate started to increase again.

The Advent season saw us making Advent wreaths, decorations and following the story of the Nativity. It culminated in our “Not so Normal Pageant” on Christmas Eve which was well attended with over 65 people. The Children and youth did a wonderful job with the support of parents and other members of the congregation.

Going forward into 2021 I have planned for a normal year, if there is such a thing, with everything back up to continue as we are until the COVID crisis is over.

Thank you all for all your prayers and support. Thank you to my wonderful volunteers, Jeannetta, Lydia, Father Phil who was my mentor and guide when I arrived and Father Kevin for his vision and leadership.

Yours in Christ,

Elisa Webster

2021 Annual Meeting

Music Ministry Report

2020 presented several challenges for our community, congregation, and worship. The main question we faced as a worship leadership team was: What is a Music Ministry?

There are no easy answers to that question, but in every challenge, there is opportunity.

Dec2019

We began the year fresh off a very successful 2019 Christmas season with wonderful worship in the Chapel and a newly refurbished pipe organ. We entered the new year hopeful to make expanded use of it and the Chapel. We do have ongoing maintenance costs associated with the pipe organ, and donations are always gratefully accepted into the Organ Fund. Organ enhancement and expansion discussions have also been initiated with Mark Fischer Organs in San Antonio. This work is still in the planning stages and is a long-term goal at this time.

Feb2020

The Choir hosted what we called “The First and Maybe Last Annual Coffee, Quiche, and Choir Breakfast”. This event followed the 8a service in the Chapel with the Choir participating in worship, and then everyone was invited to McArthur Hall for breakfast. It was a time of food, fun, and fellowship. The congregation was able to meet and get to know the choir, but more importantly, the choir got to meet and know the congregation it leads in worship. Prior to COVID-19, attendance at the 8a service was increasing. This event helped to shine light on this worship service. As the pandemic recedes later in 2021, we anticipate announcing our “Second and Maybe Last Annual Coffee, Quiche, and Choir Breakfast”.

Mar2020

COVID-19 sounded a quick end to community worship at St. Stephen’s, and all of us found ourselves in a situation not anticipated just weeks before. The choir had been working hard to prepare a Holy Week Cantata, “The Colors of Grace”, to be presented on Maundy Thursday. The children were ready to sing and wave their palms. And then we came to a screeching halt.

The challenge of worship without an in-person congregation or Choir was not familiar to many of us. While we certainly miss the beautiful music the Choir, Melody Makers children’s choir, and the Half-Time Band offered, the opportunity of worshipping virtually was met and conquered successfully. The Chapel and pipe organ played central roles in providing a safe, worshipful, and virtual experience. With newly installed Audio-Visual equipment in the Sanctuary, and the ability to continue to provide virtual services in the Chapel, there is no turning back. With the leadership of Robert McLemore and others, we embrace the opportunities we have going forward in this new worship environment, especially the ability to reconnect virtually with church members who have been unable to attend St. Stephen’s due to distance or living circumstances. The COVID-19 opportunity is that distance no longer separates us as a church family in the virtual world.

Jun2020

Continuing to be confronted with the challenges COVID-19 presented to the Music Ministry, we began envisioning other avenues to engage with the congregation electronically. We began in June a series of weekly musical meditation offerings called Take 5. Hosted by Anne and Allen, they appear on Facebook and YouTube on Thursdays at 10a. Take 5 gives viewers the opportunity to hear some fun stories about beloved hymns and take a brief respite from the hectic workday. Each episode includes artwork by church member Carroll Dolezal. We increased Take 5 to twice a week during Advent and Christmas with special editions on Christmas Day and Feast of St. Stephen Day. In the new year we look forward to expanding on the Take 5 opportunities by showcasing members of the congregation with diverse talents. We also look forward to presenting more artwork from church members, including spotlighting ceramic tiles Carroll Dolezal created for the St. Stephen's Nature Trail, during our Lent 2021 editions.

Sep2020

We welcomed our new rector, Rev. Kevin Schubert, to our community and began working with him on new formats for worship in the Courtyard, and planning for the upcoming Advent and Christmas seasons. Father Kevin, himself a musician, is a music lover of all kinds of music and open to creative ideas old and new for music and worship.

Dec2020

COVID-19 continued its constraints on our congregation. In-person worship attendance on Christmas Eve was restricted to reservation-only. All three worship services were meaningful, and well attended both in person and electronically. We also hosted what could become our next Music Ministry tradition: Christmas Caroling in the Courtyard. It was an opportunity for members of our church community to gather in the Courtyard, hear scripture, and sing a couple verses of all their favorite Christmas carols. Once COVID-19 restrictions are eased later in 2021, we envision this could include the Choir, some hot chocolate, and fresh tamales to warm both the body and the spirit.

Jan2021

We are left at the beginning of this new year with the same question we had at the beginning of last year: What is a Music Ministry?

There are still no easy answers to that question. COVID-19 continues to present considerable challenges a year later, but in each challenge, there is opportunity. We have reimagined what it means to be a Music Ministry. We continue to listen to God's Word, and to our congregation. We embrace each challenge with vision, ingenuity, and vigor. We look forward to 2021 with renewed hope and excitement. The choir room is getting a long awaited mold remediation and water damage repairs. When the time comes, our singers will make music and praise in a "new" and allergy-free rehearsal space. *As always, any and all persons who love to worship in song are invited to join the choir—no experience necessary!*

Allen and I continue to be honored and blessed to be able to continue providing music for St. Stephen's. It keeps us going as much as it **hopefully** keeps you going.

Respectfully,

Anne Jones
Music Director

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH CEMETERY

The Cemetery sold no plots or columbarium niches in 2020.

Financial Report prepared by the Treasurer is attached.

The Board of Trustees last met in February 2020.

Officers

President: Michael T. Edmond, M.D.

Secretary: Position vacant

Treasurer: Carol Kaufman

Members: Bob Denton, Cindy Taylor, Mack Gray, David Boyd, Corlea Burnett and Frank Walker.

The representative of the Board of Trustees overseeing plot and niche sales and general maintenance of the cemetery grounds is Todd Schmidt.

The Board is recruiting new members to replace the following members whose terms have expired: Michael Edmond, Cindy Taylor and Carol Kaufman.

ROADSIDE CLEANUP MINISTRY ANNUAL REPORT

In 2019 we learned that doing cleanups 4x a year rather than 6x a year worked out very well!

We debated decreasing our section of roadside to cleanup, because there were times in 2019 when up to 5 people each did a one-mile section alone. State safety recommendations require partners working in pairs on all roadsides. Many of our volunteers are in their 70s and 80s. It's not fun and it's not safe to work alone, and of course it takes longer. If we can't consistently recruit enough volunteers, we will have to either let go of part of the roadside that we clean up, or stop doing cleanups at all.

We learned that we have, by contract with the Texas Department of Transportation, a 2 mile section (from Lone Man Creek to just past St Stephen's), plus a 3 mile section (from the intersection of 3237 and 150 -Hays City Store-back towards the church to connect with our other section. We can at any time notify TXDoT that we would like to give up either or both sections. TXDoT has placed signs at either end of the sections identifying St Stephen's Church as the *roadside cleaner uppers*, which will be removed if we decline either or both sections.

A bit of history: Under the name St. Stephen's Church-EYC Bryarwood Ranch, our roadside cleanup began on June 15, 1990. In October 2000, the name was changed on the contract to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. In 2001, we added the 3-mile section to the 2-mile section. In September 2008, the name was changed to Friends of St. Stephen's Church.

In 2019, we adopted the slogan, "WEAR THE VEST", and decided to try making a signup poster. March 21 was our first scheduled cleanup for 2020. We began recruiting volunteers in mid-February. We had 15 volunteers signed up to help, on our first poster, in addition to the 4 team members, when the Covid-19 global pandemic shut down began in the U.S. on March 12. We cancelled the March 21 cleanup as the virus spread across the globe.

The next scheduled cleanup would have been in June and it was also cancelled due to concerns over the number of corona virus cases in the country, state, and Hays county.

Team members went out in July to walk the entire 10-mile stretch, picking up the largest pieces of trash and determining IF and HOW we could do a more thorough cleanup safely. We picked up a lot of trash. We did decide that cleanup could be done safely, and came up with some guidelines for all of us to participate safely:

- We would meet outside (not inside MacArthur Hall) in the courtyard for vests, bags and grabbers. One team member would bring all of the supplies out and put them on tables.
- We made the church's no-touch hand sanitizer available near the sign in sheets.
- We eliminated snacks and the option of water or coffee (and asked each volunteer to bring their own).
- We asked participants to wear a mask while picking up supplies and also to be no closer than 10 feet to their partner while working on the roadside, and if they rode in a car together to also roll down the windows, besides wearing a mask.

We also decided to try just using one TXDoT trash bags for all trash, rather than trying to separate the recycling in a black bag from trash in a white bag. [Carrying 2 bags is hard to do with gloves and grabbers and the bags get heavy. Typically, at past cleanups we collected 30-40 bags of trash and 10-20 bags of recycling. Upon dumping the recycling to sort it into actual recycling in 2019, it was discovered that many trash items were mixed in, most items were incrustated with mud/grass, it was

taking extra time after cleanup to separate and then recycle. It worked GREAT to just put all of the roadside debris into the white TXDoT provided bags and let them haul it all off rather than hauling the recycling to the recycling center or hauling it home and spending another hour or so sorting again into overfull personal recycling containers!]

We practiced the guidelines ourselves and realized again that **we need at the very least 20 volunteers to get the job done** thoroughly, that the fellowship is a REALLY important part of this ministry (many of us had been isolating/working at home for 3 months already at that time, not even going to the grocery store, which seemed like a LONG TIME at that time)-seeing other people outside while picking up trash was actually pretty AWESOME!

We had a cleanup on September 19 with 13 volunteers + 4 team members. 3 team members did one mile sections alone, but we decided again to keep attempting both sections.

We had a pre-Christmas Cleanup on December 12 with 17 volunteers (including one person who lives on our roadside and does not attend St Stephens but saw us in September and offered to join us!) plus the 4 team members. The weather was perfect, and we collected around 80 bags of trash and several large objects.

After the cleanup is completed, there really is a feeling of having done something important for the greater community, for the earth, and actually fun. There is opportunity for meeting new people, good conversation, the roadside in our beautiful hill country visibly looks MUCH better, a huge pile of bagged trash awaits pickup by the DoT. Normally the weather is lovely, wildflowers bloom all the time, even random weird finds happen!

Outreach attempts: We have reached out to people who live in neighborhoods in our Roadside Cleanup area: specifically, River Mountain Ranch, Rolling Oaks, and Los Lomas, through both home owner associations and individuals, and to the owners of Hays City Store. We have sent notices in backpacks of SSES (though it was pre-Christmas and then pre-spring break/covid). We have donated and hidden silver ingots . . . maybe one or two extra people came as a result of all of these efforts.

The dates we have chosen for 2021 are: March 13, June 12, September 11, and December 11.

It takes all 4 of us to do this ministry, which involves opening and closing TXDoT signs before and after each pickup, a series of emails to former volunteers asking for help, pleas in and out of church asking for help, being at church before and after the actual pickups asking for help, notices in the church bulletin, driving the route while people are on the roadside to hand out extra empty bags and pick up full bags and large items, notifying TXDoT of pick up dates, notifying them again of how much was collected and committing by contract to do the work, putting out and putting up supplies on each pick up day before and after the volunteers arrive, picking up bags and vests at the TX DoT office in San Marcos as needed, showing up each time and doing the work ... our hats are off and our hearts go out to Richard Page, who led this ministry alone for many years.

Becki Smith, Jon Smith, Todd Schmidt, Mike Marcionetti

PS: If someone with outreach skills wanted to volunteer recruiting volunteers instead of cleaning up trash, it would be greatly appreciated!

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2020 SANTA MINISTRY FOR ST STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St. Stephen's Santa's is a ministry hosted by the Saint Stephen's Mom's Group, which provides needy families in the community financial assistance, gifts and food at Christmas time. Several families are "adopted" by our ministry and gifts are delivered days before Christmas. The church family of Saint Stephen's is served by giving our members the opportunity to find the true meaning of Christmas and the spiritual uplift that comes with helping people in the name of Christ on his birthday.

Mission Statement: The St. Stephen's Santa Program is a community outreach program designed to capture the spirit of giving to provide for the families in need in our community during the Christmas season.

Purpose: The purpose of this program is to identify families who do not have the resources to provide their children with gifts and a meal for the celebration of the birth of Christ.

Description: This is an anonymous community outreach where only a limited number of key individuals know who the recipients of the program will be in order to protect the identity of those families who do not wish to publicize their misfortune or their need to accept a donation from the community. It is also an opportunity for EVERYONE to take part in the spirit of giving during the Christmas season.

Vision Statement: Our vision is that through our efforts, we help families of the Wimberley/Kyle area feel the blessed helping hand of God in their time of need.

While 2020 presented everyone with unusual challenges, I believe the Santa Ministry was able to reach outside of our comfort zone and rise to the challenge. We tried to keep things as "normal" as possible by keeping with the general theme of the ministry. Which was to try to include all of St Stephen's congregation in a variety of levels. From volunteer options at the pick-up point, sorting of food and gifts, sewing gift bags, gift purchases and monetary donations.

Since Good Sam did not meet this summer due to Covid, we reached out to the Barnabas Connection to get a list of families who could benefit from our Santa program. We also received recommendations from the Wimberley school counselors, teachers and nurses. That gave us a list of 25 families and 77 children who accepted our invitation to receive assistance from the Santa Ministry.

We then created a list of needs and wants through Amazon Smile program online. This allowed the Santa Ministry team to create the exact wish/needs list per child per family and allowed our contributors to go online and purchase the exact gifts the children requested, within budget. Those items were delivered directly to the church where the team could then sort the items by family and child.

We also reached out to the congregation to sew large gift bags to "wrap" each child's gifts in. This took the place of the annual congregational gift-wrapping day. The large sewn gift bags were amazing and a big hit with the Santa Ministry team and the children receiving the gifts.

On distribution day, we had volunteers come help sort the food by family needs. Darelle Jordan made a few changes to provide the exact same list of ingredients per family which ended up helping us save a little bit of money. Instead of delivering the gifts this year we decided to ask the receiving families to do curbside pickup at the church. This worked out extremely well. We provided each family with a \$10 gas gift card to help cover gas expenses to the church. We also had volunteers help with the gift pick up station, food pick up station, and traffic control. All of this help make the distribution day the easiest and trouble free it has ever been. We will definitely be using many of the things we learned from this year's changes to incorporate into upcoming Santa Ministry events.

Financial calculations for 2020 Santa Ministry:

Donations received by St Stephen's Church for the Santa Ministry totaled \$11,695

Annual Report 2020: St. Stephen's Episcopal School, Wimberley Inc.
Amanda Ebner, Head of School



School Mission: To empower each student to live authentically, think expansively and serve selflessly.

School Creed: I believe in God above. I believe in Jesus' love. I believe His Spirit too, comes to teach me what to do. I believe that I should be kind and loving, Lord, like thee.

St. Stephen's is a separately incorporated 501(c)(3) Texas Nonprofit Corporation governed by a Board of Trustees. The School was founded in 1989 and continues to provide a rigorous education for children from age 3 through 6th Grade. The School ended the 2019-2020 school year with 76 students. There were 9 full-time and 7 part-time faculty and staff at the end of the 2019-2020 SY. Our school went fully virtual in March of 2020 due to COVID. Teachers did virtual instruction for all grades through May. Instruction included special classes as well. For the 2020-2021 SY we have 13 full time and 7 part time staff and innumerable dedicated volunteers. We were able to start the school year face to face. We did offer virtual for the first two weeks. We have set strict guidelines for our campus such as no visitors on campus, no outside shoes allowed in the classrooms, hourly sanitizing of classroom surfaces as well as hand washing. We do temperature checks every morning on all students. We were able to have Trunk or Treating as well as our Thanksgiving Feasts; they were just modified per social distancing guidelines. SSES hosted an outdoor Christmas program as well as a Trail of Lights on our Nature Trail this year. We plan to do it again next year and open it up to the Church and community.

Small class sizes and certified teachers provide excellent instruction in a safe and loving environment. From the academic preschool through Grade 6, the St Stephen's program is fully accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools. The 2019-2020 school year was our 10 year reaccreditation year however due to COVID it was moved to Spring of 2022.

All students receive instruction in studio art, music, Spanish/French and physical education, as well as the core academic subjects of Reading/Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, and Science. For the 2020-2021 SY we adapted a new curriculum to the campus. Our PreK program uses the Learning without Tears curriculum. Our Kinder through 2nd uses Horizons as well as Rooted in Reading. Our 3rd and up uses the LifePac curriculum. Additionally, chapel and religious education curriculum add to a commitment to educate the whole child: Mind, Body, and Spirit, and to highlight our Episcopal identity. We also supplement religious education curriculum with Fruits of the Spirit. St. Stephen's offers an Extended Care Program from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each school day. Extracurricular classes are on hold this year due to COVID restrictions. The School's website (www.ststephenswimberley.org) has complete information regarding calendar, curriculum, special events, and activities. SSES opened a state licensed 2 year old program this year. We hit max capacity within a month of opening.

St. Stephen's is proud of its Episcopal identity, exemplified by a tradition of strong academics and a belief that faith and reason are a way to true understanding. The School's accreditation is maintained by meeting the rigorous standards of the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools (SAES; www.swaes.org). The Episcopal Schools Commission of the Diocese of West Texas (www.episcopal-dwtx.org) provides structure and standards ensuring an excellent school experience. These Episcopal organizations support schools with training, standards, and policies. They also provide St. Stephen's with a sense of purpose greater than its regional influence and allow the School to assist in the creation, maintenance, and expansion of a dynamic network of Episcopal schools with a deep sense of shared mission and identity.