

A Message from the Rector:

Dear parishioners and friends of St Stephen's:

Our congregation was begun in the late 1950s by a group of families and individuals who wanted to leave a legacy for our community: a church in the neighborhood, welcoming and approachable; a place where the best traditions of Episcopal worship and formation would be accessible to all.

Throughout the decades, those founding intentions have remained strong. The doors are open daily for worship, education, counsel, fellowship and community events. The memorial garden and our church grounds bloom colorfully each season. The heat comes on in winter and the air is cooled in summer. We've been able to pay our bills, even in the recent economic downturn.

This is because we have a devoted and generous congregation. Praise God! Annual giving meets most of our budgeted needs. But our mission is not just to "get by". It is to spread the good news of God in Christ Jesus. We've seen other churches not make it through trying times, leaving heart-break and a void that secular organizations can't fill. Still we don't want to budget fearfully when need or mission calls us to stretch forward in faith!

Hence the founding of St. Stephen's Endowment Fund in 2001, led by the late Fred Bryson, Jr. His legacy joins that of our first members, in strengthening our church for the future. Read the story within, and hear a challenge: *What will be your legacy?* Help us to celebrate the present and prepare for the future, through the promise of a gift to the Endowment Fund of St. Stephen's. In Christ's love,

The Rev. Susan Anslow Williams, Rector

Fréderrick W. Bryson, Jr. Legacy Society of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church



Benefiting the Endowment
Fund for our Future

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

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Frederick W. Bryson, Jr.

Fred Bryson (1932 - 2002) developed his Christian faith relatively late in life. Born into an “unchurched” family, Fred was brought to church by a friend and was baptized as a teenager. His future wife Mary Lou Gibson was an Episcopalian; and so they were married at All Saints’ in Pontiac, while Fred was serving in the United States Air Force. Then church faded from his priorities, until the late 1980s when he and Mary Lou felt the need to find a congregation again.

The Brysons decided to join St. John’s Church, Royal Oak. Soon, Fred became an usher and later served on the Vestry, to which he gave rigorous and thoughtful service. About a decade later, circumstances led them to St Stephen’s. Here Fred found a close and caring faith community, offering a variety of ways to live a life of Christian service. He became an usher, and soon was elected to the Vestry. Fred and Mary Lou both took the “Stephen Ministry” course in order to support parish members through difficult life experiences. Fred also joined the Board of St. Anne’s Mead nursing home, and he felt great reward in serving this Episcopal organization.

As Fred worked on the Vestry and with various activities at St. Stephen’s, he became acutely aware of the need for funding to carry out the projects and outreach activities of the parish. His response was to research and begin an Endowment Fund for St. Stephen’s, which was established by the Vestry in 2001.

Why this “Legacy Society”?

Fred Bryson’s life at St. Stephen’s reflected the ideals of giving and service to others that Jesus modeled for us. These ideals are a part of the heritage left by the founding members of our parish. We, who are the current body of the church, have the opportunity to continue their work while starting a new tradition, **The Frederick W. Bryson Legacy Society**, which will help to support St. Stephen’s ministries for generations to come.

Its Purpose: The Frederick W. Bryson Legacy Society recognizes those persons who have planned a bequest to St. Stephen’s Church, to be received at the time of their death; OR who have made a gift to the St. Stephen’s Endowment Fund during their lifetime.

Its Benefits: Members of the Legacy Society know that they have looked beyond this life, and made provision for continuing the mission of St. Stephen’s Church into the future.

How to Become a Member: You become a member of the Frederick W. Bryson Legacy Society when you:

A) Make provision for St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church through some form of planned gift, and inform St. Stephen’s Church in writing of this gift; or

B) Make a gift in some form to the Endowment Fund of St. Stephen’s Church, within the guidelines of such giving.

Forms of Planned Giving

- **Gift during life-** Specify a gift of cash, securities, or other asset to be given at that time or later.
- **Bequest-** Provide for loved ones, the Parish and others through a provision in your will.
- **Life Insurance-** You may designate the Parish as the beneficiary of a new or existing policy.
- **Revocable Living Trust-** Distribute assets, including those to Parish, without a probate hearing.
- **Endow Your Pledge-** Endow your annual pledge so that it continues into perpetuity.
- **Various Trusts-** Examples are Pooled Income Fund, Charitable Remainder Trust, and Charitable Lead Trust.

Find out More

Events will be held annually to encourage and celebrate the ways we provide a legacy for the future of St. Stephen’s. In addition, materials are available at the church office, by mail or email, to those who would like the information at any time. Thank you and God bless you, as you prayerfully consider a gift to our church!