



Grace and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

PARISH PROFILE 2025





Our Invitation to You

Dear Friend,

Grace and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Colorado Springs is in search of our next rector. We are a large, inclusive, downtown parish with a history of blending spiritual, intellectual, liturgical, and personal experiences of the sacred in a community where all are welcome.

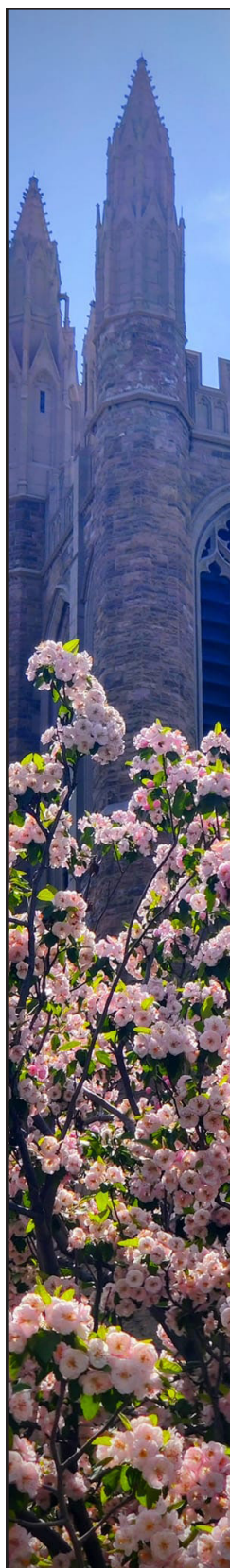
Our Gothic Revival building and our renowned music program are often the first things that inspire seekers to visit our church. Once inside, they experience the richness of our liturgical tradition, the luminous atmosphere of our historic church and stay as they connect with the welcoming community of the parish. Grace is a thriving, vibrant, intergenerational community centered on following the way of Jesus. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we seek to love and serve the Lord through our love and service to others.

Whether you feel called to a new ministry in Colorado Springs or to ministry elsewhere, we hope the time you spend getting to know us will help clarify your next steps. Thank you for your interest in our parish and for taking the time to learn more about our vibrant community.

Peace and Every Blessing,

**The People of Grace and St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church**

What This Profile Includes



The Way Forward: Our Areas of Focus _____ 4

1. Universal Welcome
2. Financial Leadership
3. Community & Pastoral Care
4. Children & Youth

The Four Attributes of Our New Rector _____ 6

1. Excellence in Preaching & Appreciation for our Liturgical Worship
2. A Champion for Diversity & Inclusive Belonging
3. A Servant-Leader & Staff Advocate
4. Spiritual Formation & Christian Education

Our Worship, Our People, Our Path _____ 9

- A Regionally-Renowned Music Program
- Outreach
- Place of Worship

Recent Accomplishments & Challenges _____ 12

- Milestones
- Resolutions
- Campus Improvements
- Recent Challenges

Finances & Staffing _____ 14

- Financial Overview
- Expenses
- Budget Breakdown
- Staff Overview
- Pledge & Plate

The History of Grace and St. Stephen's _____ 17

- Founding
- Architecture

About Colorado Springs _____ 18

The Diocese of Colorado _____ 19

Continuing the Conversation _____ 20

The Way Forward: Our Areas of Focus

In the summer and fall of 2024, Grace and St. Stephen's conducted **eight 90-minute parish listening sessions** with an average attendance of 20 people per session. In addition, we sent an online parish survey to all church members. The survey was hosted by a third-party, Holy Cow! Consulting. From the survey, we received 224 completed responses, approximately 88% of our average Sunday attendance. From the feedback received, we developed four areas of focus that are high priority for our parish as we look to the future. As we enter the next chapter at Grace and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, we look forward to collaborating with our new rector to expand, strengthen, and grow in these key areas.



1. *Universal Welcome*

Grace and St. Stephen's welcomes everyone to participate in God's beloved community, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, race, sexual orientation, gender, age, or disability.



2. *Financial Leadership*

Financial management is a journey. It is also an invitation to conversion. Although Grace and St. Stephen's has a strong history of parishioner giving, and we recently retired the building's mortgage, we must do more to educate, equip, and encourage parishioners to grow their spiritual practice through financial support. Our next rector will reinforce philanthropy's practical and spiritual aspects through thoughtful, but impactful, conversations about the joy of giving.

Working collaboratively with the vestry and stewardship team, our new rector will lead a philanthropic strategy to sustain, cultivate and expand our financial resources. Our future rector should be comfortable supporting annual philanthropic campaigns while navigating personal conversations with parishioners about yearly pledges, stewardship, capital projects, major gifts, and estate gifts.

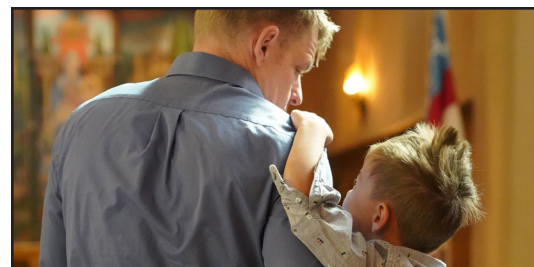
"What do I love about Grace? The simple statement, 'All are welcome here!'"

3. *Community & Pastoral Care*



During this season of transition, community and pastoral care are at the heart of who we are and where we want to continue to grow. A focus on strengthening existing programs and empowering parishioners to foster flourishing relationships outside of Sunday morning is a critical aspirational desire. Grace and St. Stephen's believes pastoral care is a ministry of and for the entire community, as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus by going towards those in need. Our next rector will actively embrace the call of pastoral care while supporting parishioners active in community building and pastoral church ministries.

"I love Grace because our community doesn't shy away from having real, honest conversations about challenging topics!"



Grace and St. Stephen's has a long tradition of transformative Christian education for children and youth, but since the pandemic, our participation has been sluggish. In partnership with our next rector, the parish wants to rebuild vibrant children and youth programs dedicated to spiritual formation, community, and service. In partnership with parents and our parish community, we dream of creating a safe, sacred space for children and families to build Christian formation into their daily lives.

4. *Children & Youth*

PAGE 5



"I love, love how the church encourages people to stand up for marginalized peoples and the safe space provided for lgbt+ youth and I always leave feeling leadership is committed to the purpose to love and be loved."



The Four Attributes of Our New Rector



1. Excellence In Preaching & Appreciation For Our Liturgical Worship

The traditional liturgies of the Episcopal Church are deeply rooted in the fabric of our parish. We seek a rector who will embrace the timeless beauty of our sacred liturgy, the centrality of our choir and music ministry, the Holy Eucharist, and other traditional services like evensong, compline, noon-day prayer, centering prayer, and other contemplative gatherings.

Excellence in preaching is something our congregation places a high emphasis on, and sermons are expositions on the lectionary readings of the week. This emphasis on exegesis, rather than strictly topical preaching, is one of the ways we have maintained a thriving parish of immense theological and political diversity in the best tradition of Common Prayer. While our liturgical practices vary over seasons and rectors, we always strive to give the Lord our best and to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Grace and St. Stephen's is eager to continue our rich theological heritage with a rector who passionately and intellectually inspires, convicts, educates, and calls us to engage our mind, heart, and soul through the preaching of the Gospel—a rector who consistently empowers the parish to go into the world in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

"Grace and St. Stephen's is high church, but not stuffy."

PAGE 6

2. A Champion for Diversity & Inclusive Belonging



Grace and St. Stephen's is a diverse parish with varying theological, denominational, political, sexual, and socio-economic backgrounds. As Episcopalians, if you pray with us, you are one of us. We sit, stand, kneel, and receive the Eucharist as equals, no matter who we are, where we came from, or who we love.

Our next rector will be a champion for diversity, equity, and inclusion for all people, including our LGBTQIA friends, families, and loved ones. We seek a rector who will model inclusive belonging to people of color, the poor, people with special needs, and the vast array of individuals who make up or visit our parish in our downtown home.



PAGE 7



Our parish, in association with other downtown churches, is in conversation about how best to support people experiencing homelessness who need ministerial services. The reality of urban homelessness will continue to be a point of focus moving into the future, and it is important that our future rector is active in those conversations.

Grace and St. Stephen's is proud to be located in downtown Colorado Springs, but like any urban church, there are people in our parish community and our neighborhood experiencing homelessness. Our parishioners encounter unhoused individuals inside and outside our doors each Sunday. As followers of Christ, how we respond to the poor and needy matters; our new rector will provide guidance and support in this direct ministry to individuals looking for shelter and food while also maintaining a safe and welcoming campus for members and visitors.

"Each week my heart is lifted and filled by the love of my church family!"

"There are times when the Holy Spirit is absolutely in the building, and we all feel it. The willingness of people to recognize, accept, and talk about it is 'what church is all about.'"

The staff of Grace and St. Stephen's ignites and inspires the soul of our parish. They need support, encouragement, and a shared vision of the future. Our next rector will be able to embrace our complex community's day-to-day management. The rector should have excellent personal and corporate communication skills, be comfortable with healthy conflict, and be willing to work with staff and lay leaders to create a sustainable structure for ministry, outreach, hospitality, formation, and service.

3. A Servant-Leader & Staff Advocate



PAGE 8

"Grace has been my home for over 60 years ... we are family."

4. Spiritual Formation & Christian Education



Grace and St. Stephen's is a living and learning community. Our parish is passionate about spiritual formation for children, youth, and adults beyond Sunday morning activities.

We seek a rector who will expand and strengthen our formation and educational offerings for all ages and stages by elevating existing programming, empowering staff to fulfill their educational vision, and mobilizing lay leadership to create new opportunities according to their calling. As mentioned earlier, a primary goal for our next rector will be the continued building of a vibrant children's and youth ministry by championing and prioritizing staff leadership, families, and programming.



Our Worship, Our People, Our Path

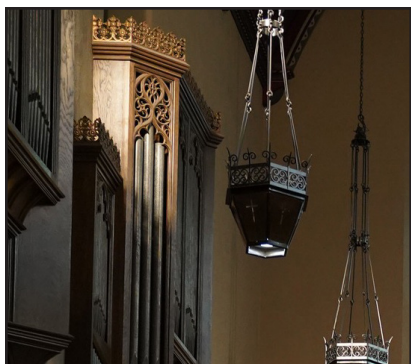
Under the direction of Joel Trekell, Grace and St. Stephen's music program is a renowned institution in the Pikes Peak region featuring some of the finest Anglican choral works. Our music program consists of:

*A Regionally-
Renowned
Music Program*



The Taylor Choir, whose repertoire is vast and encompasses music from medieval times to the present day. The choir sings weekly at the Sunday 10:30 a.m. Eucharist, offers a seasonal choral evensong, and hosts the Taylor Memorial concert series throughout the year.

The St. Nicolas Choir is for children between 2nd and 7th grade. Choristers participate in music theory training derived from the Royal School of Church Music and perform in church services throughout the year.



The Taylor Memorial Organ at Grace and St. Stephen's is recognized as one of the finest organs in the country. Built by the Welte Organ Company of New York, New York in 1928, the instrument was a gift of Mrs. Alice Bemis Taylor in memorial to her husband, Frederick Morgan Taylor.

The Taylor Trust, another gift from Mrs. Alice Bemis Taylor, was created to fund free public concerts for the Colorado Springs community. Grace and St. Stephen's is known as the center of the Colorado Springs music scene and continues to support vibrant musical programs including the Colorado Springs Choral Society, the Colorado Vocal Arts Ensemble, and most recently, [Jazz in the Garden](#).



"Grace has been my home for over 60 years ... our music is what keeps me coming every week. I find my spirituality through singing. We are so lucky to have a history of excellent music and it continues to this day."

The music program at Grace and St. Stephen's is beloved to our members. It is often the first thing parishioners mention when asked what they love about Grace and St. Stephen's. Likewise, the concerts and music program serve as a low-pressure invitation for the greater Colorado Springs population to get to know our church whether they choose to join us for worship or not.

We seek a rector who values and nurtures our current music program while also serving as a collaborator with our music director to continue to grow the program.



PAGE 10

Outreach

Today, the Grace and St. Stephen's ministry of outreach—heeding God's call to serve our community and the world—is central to our vitality and health as the Body of Christ. More about our active outreach ministries can be found [here](#) (or via our website). We are proud to be a community that believes God loves and values each and every person and we believe that God calls us to love with that same inclusive, radical love.



Grace and St. Stephen's is an architectural treasure not only to our parish community, but to the greater Colorado Springs region. Below is a series of snapshots of some of the special features that our church offers the community:

Memorial Garden

with columbarium on the north side of the property near Monument Street



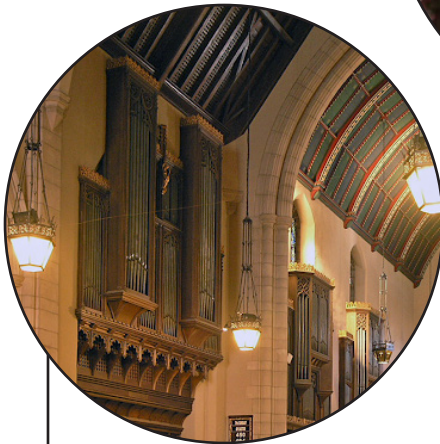
St. Francis statue

in the Memorial Garden



St. Stephen's Chapel

featuring a Siena marble altar



The Welte Organ

was given to the people of Colorado Springs by Mrs. Alice Bemis Taylor in 1927 in memory of her husband

48 stained glass windows

were designed by nine artists from 1899–2005



PAGE 11

High altar

featuring Spanish marble and accented by hand-carved reredos



In December 2011, Grace and St. Stephen's was added to the

[National Register of Historic Places](#)



Recent Accomplishments & Challenges

Grace and St. Stephen's has much to celebrate in its recent history. Below is a short overview of the successes that we have achieved in the last 10 years. These accomplishments will help pave the path for what's next at Grace and St. Stephen's.



Campus Improvements

Receipt of donations and grants to **repair and protect stained-glass windows** on the building's south side and in the Nave

Completed the **refurbishment of the Taylor Memorial Organ** and added a long-anticipated antiphonal division with a gift from a beloved parishioner

Upgrade / replacement of the **building wireless internet system**

Installed a **three-camera livestream system** to support our robust online presence during Sunday services, morning prayer, Bible studies, and special events

Upgraded campus security with the **installation of video cameras**

A **ventilation system** in the Nave was installed to comply with COVID-era air circulation requirements

Replaced extensive **underground drainage catchment systems** in the north and south lawns to keep runoff from building foundations

Establishment of a **safety and security committee** to address metropolitan issues such as homelessness and vandalism while maintaining a safe and welcoming campus

Milestones

Retired the \$1.2 million dollar mortgage on the Grace and St. Stephen's building

The Rev. Jeremiah Williamson elected to and consecrated as the **10th Bishop of Albany**

Centennial Celebration to honor Grace and St. Stephen's 100-year anniversary in 2023

PAGE 12

Resolutions

Expect rector support and recognition of resolution A054: approval of gender-neutral and same-sex marriage

Expect rector support, recognition, and administration of A036: officiating of same-sex marriage using either a marriage rite from the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer or a trial liturgy

The recent COVID-19 pandemic forced Grace and St. Stephen's to step outside its comfort zone and explore worship outside and online. The congregation met on the south lawn for over a year to share community and communion.

During this time, the church came together to explore new paths of outreach and connection, including online streaming of worship services, QR code giving opportunities, morning prayer hosted on Facebook, Zoom meetings for leadership and lay persons, and outdoor services that welcomed new members to the church.

Like most churches during COVID, average Sunday attendance declined. However, the experience provided opportunities for our parish to develop resiliency while exploring new ways to meet the needs of the modern worshiper.

Recent Challenges



PAGE 13

"A Church is never built of stones, but of human souls, knit together by the Spirit of God."



Grace and St. Stephen's' challenges cannot exclude the **tumult of the early 2000s**. Malfeasance by a former rector led to a congregational split in 2007 and legal fight over the Grace and St. Stephen's building and grounds. For two years, the Episcopal congregation sought sanctuary with the congregation of nearby First Christian Church until the courts returned the property to the Episcopal Diocese in 2009.

While most current congregants have joined the parish since that time, some longtime members still struggle with the pain and hurt from that period. However, many gifts also resulted from that time, most notably an understanding of church as the community and love within a parish—something far greater than just a building where people meet.



Finances & Staffing

Strong financial controls and careful budgeting have long been identified as core values at Grace and St. Stephen's, particularly since the split fifteen years ago. Over the past 10 years, we have successfully balanced the focus of our finances between:

- needed upkeep and repair of our campus resources
- expanding staff to better support our parish activities and our work in the community

Today, we are mortgage-free, have completed projects to keep our congregation healthy, preserve our historic buildings (including our stained-glass windows), and establish stable funding for our music program and outreach activities. We recognize that the twenty-year gap from our most recent capital campaign is too long, but are creating plans to create a campus that supports the ministries of the next 100 years.

Financial Overview



Expenses



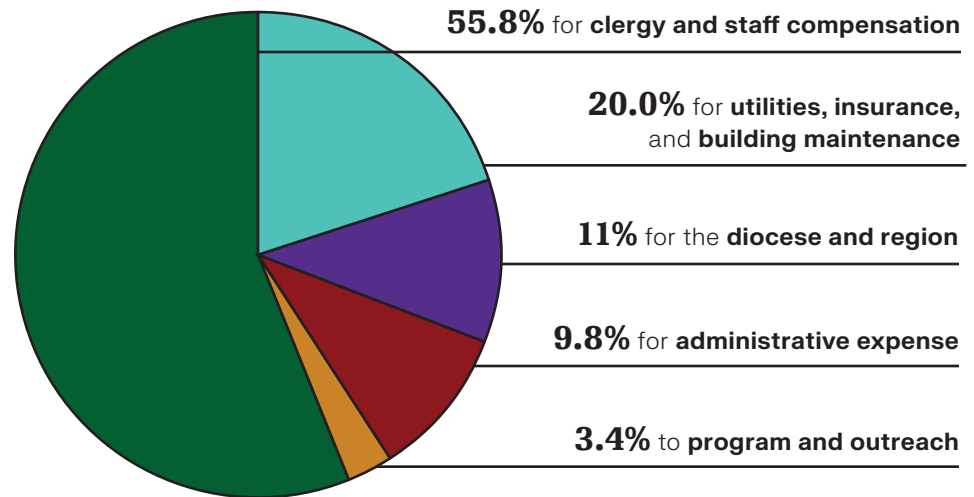
Our expenses each year remain largely fixed, including the tithe to the diocese, insurance, utilities, clergy and staff salaries and benefits, building maintenance, administrative expense, and program costs. The budget approved by the vestry and presented at the 2024 annual meeting was balanced. As of this writing, due to careful expense management and higher than pledged income, we finished the year with a \$140,000 surplus.

The primary goal of the vestry for 2025 is to balance the budget and maintain current program offerings; we anticipate a shortfall between budgeted pledges and actual pledges. The vestry is confident this can be made up, but it will have to be through additional prayer, pledging, and special gifts.

Budget Breakdown



Total Grace and St. Stephen's Budget



It should be noted that **lay ministries** have attracted parishioners skilled in various aspects of maintenance. These lay ministries save the church **tens of thousands of dollars** in building and grounds maintenance every year.

Grace and St. Stephen's Parish is run by three full-time staff, seven part-time staff, and countless volunteer hours. Currently, our paid staff includes the following:

Full-Time Staff

Interim Rector
Director of Music & Organist
Church Administrator

Part-Time Staff

Interim Associate Rector
Assistant Music Director
Communications Director /
Rector's Assistant
Children's Formation
Minister
Youth Directors
Sexton
Financial Administrator

Staff Overview

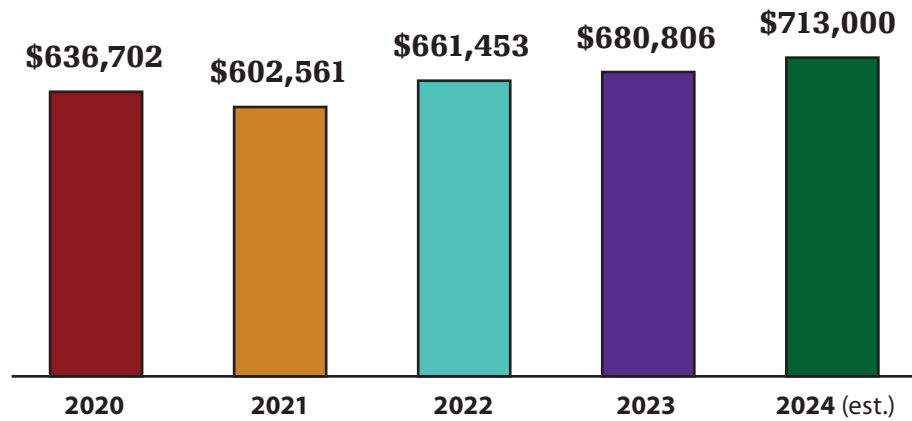


Once a new rector is in place we anticipate returning to a full-time curate or associate rector. We realize that we are significantly understaffed for a parish of our size. Retiring the building mortgage in 2023 was a great accomplishment. Continued focus on financial growth is with the intention of eventually increasing the Grace and St. Stephen's staff to a more robust number.

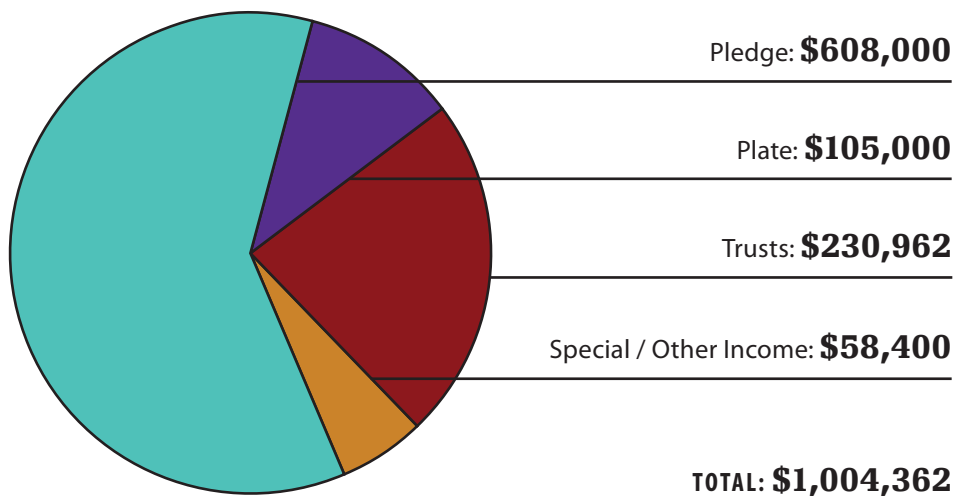


Pledge & Plate

The Last 5 Years



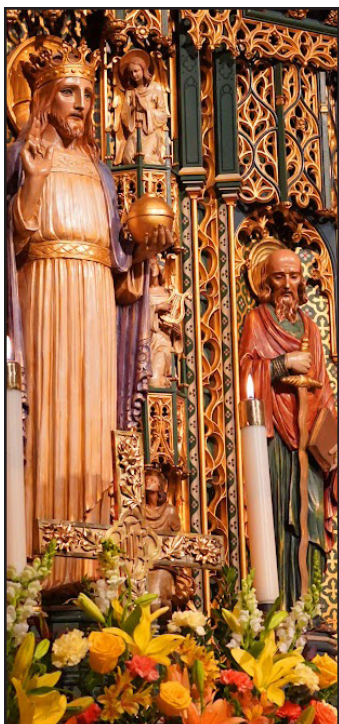
Est. Sources of Income/Budget in 2024





The History of Grace and St. Stephen's

Founding



PAGE 17

The eastern prairie of Colorado rises to over a mile high at the foot of Pikes Peak. It is here that military general and railroad pioneer William Jackson Palmer and his colleagues incorporated the city of Colorado Springs in 1872.

In 1873, General Palmer donated a lot to the Episcopalians, and a small Gothic-style church named Grace Church was built. The original location of Grace Church was at the corner of Weber St. and Pikes Peak Ave. Between 1872 and 1894, the city's population grew from 800 to 12,000 as it became a hub for tuberculosis recovery, railroads, and mining. The city growth led to the establishment of a second Episcopal church in 1893, St. Stephen's, on land donated by James J. Hagerman, a mining and railroad entrepreneur. St. Stephen's was located on Monument Street between Tejon Street and Nevada Avenue.

In 1923, just over 100 years ago, the Grace Church and St. Stephen's Episcopal church united to form a single, centrally located church that we know today as Grace and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. We are fortunate that Grace and St. Stephen's members have kept detailed archives of the church and its parishioners, so that a deep dive into the history of our church is available at any time.

Grace and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church is architecturally significant as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the [Gothic Revival](#) style in the 1894 and 1925 building portions, while the 1955 building area displays typical architectural characteristics of the [Tudor Revival](#) style as interpreted by local architects and craftsmen. The worship space reflects the Gothic Revival cruciform structure. The building represents one of the few surviving Gothic / Tudor Revival buildings in Colorado Springs.

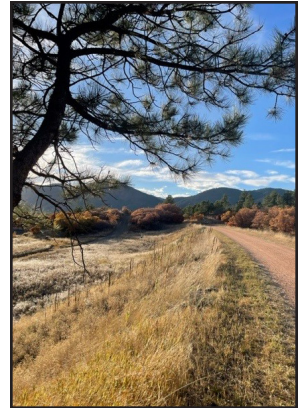
Architecture





About Colorado Springs

Colorado Springs is a dream destination, and we love calling this corner of the world our home. With over 300 days of sunshine, a dry climate, snow-capped mountains, miles of hiking trails, a burgeoning arts community, and great schools, US News recently ranked Colorado Springs **third in Best Places to Live in the United States**. Watched over by “America’s Mountain,” Pikes Peak, Colorado Springs is the second largest city in the nation (after Albuquerque) that directly abuts a United States National Forest. When it comes to living a healthy lifestyle, Colorado Springs has endless options. As the second-largest city in Colorado, the Springs shares a major statistic: Colorado has the [lowest levels of obesity](#) in the country. This could be due to the countless opportunities for active living, 120 miles of urban bike trails, and 60 miles of unpaved mountain biking.



Welcome home!



PAGE 18

The population of Colorado Springs hovers around 500,000, with an additional 250,000 residents living in surrounding El Paso County. As one of the nation’s fastest-growing regions, **we offer an ideal blend of cost, comfort, culture, and climate**, plus thousands of diverse jobs in unique sectors like aerospace, defense, cybersecurity, manufacturing, higher education, entrepreneurship, sports, and health innovation. Colorado Springs is the headquarters of the Olympic Committee, the Olympic Training Center, five military installations, including the United States Air Force Academy, and home to Colorado College and the University of Colorado Colorado Springs.

Colorado Springs is filled with distinct neighborhoods and a strong sense of community. **It’s a vibrant, safe place to raise a family.** From the modern ambiance of new developments to downtown city life and the historic streets of Old Colorado City and nearby Manitou Springs, our region has a home for everyone. Median home prices range from \$460,000 to \$490,000, an increase of 119% since 2005.





The Diocese of Colorado



PAGE 19

Grace and St. Stephen's is a part of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado. The **95 congregations and institutions** in the diocese are located throughout the 105,000 square miles of Colorado's mountains, valleys, and plains. The diocese is led by the Right Rev. Kym Lucas, who was installed in 2019 as the eleventh Bishop of Colorado.

Congregations in our diocese range from small, rural, and regional parishes to mid-sized and large urban and suburban churches, and everything in between. Our communities run the gamut from rural to urban, mountain resorts to the farms and ranches of the valleys. We are rich and we are poor. Some of us are conservative. Others are progressive.

Many of our large congregations have vital ministries, both in their communities and in the wider world. Small congregations have equally significant ministries that sustain their communities in a variety of ways, some in the midst of poverty and declining populations. Ministries of young adults, teens, and children are of utmost importance, and the diocese aspires to expand and deepen these efforts.

Grace and St. Stephen's has historically enjoyed a collegial relationship with diocesan staff. Over the past few years, our parishioners and clergy have been involved in the following **diocesan-level ministries**:

- Sangre de Cristo Regional Executive Committee
- Colorado Episcopal Foundation Trustee
- Diocesan Finance Committee
- Diocesan Standing Committee
- General Convention Lay Deputy

More information about The Episcopal Diocese of Colorado can be found on [their website](#).



Continuing the Conversation

On behalf of Grace and St. Stephen's, we hope this profile has piqued your interest in our church and strengthened your desire to learn more about our rector search.

The job description and application for the Grace and St. Stephen's rector position can be found via [this link](#).

To apply, please email a cover letter with links to two sermons, a resume, and an OTM portfolio to:

The Rev. Canon Vanessa Stickler Glass

Canon for Transition and Wellness

vanessa@episcopalcolorado.org

With gratitude and blessings —

The Members of Grace and St. Stephen's

Colorado Springs, CO • gssepiscopal.org



GRACE *and* ST. STEPHEN'S
✦ EPISCOPAL CHURCH ✦