

St. Mary Magdalene
— EPISCOPAL CHURCH —

2024 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Kindle the Spark Within





*The prayers in this stewardship
packet were written by
St. Mary Magdalene parishioners
at the "New Fire" gathering on
May 7th, 2023.*

Photos Courtesy of Judy Nieuwma



New Fire: Kindle the Spark Within

*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. **Do not quench the Spirit.***
(1 Thessalonians 5:16-19)

Dear St. Mary Magdalene Community,

Our journey to spark a 'New Fire' at St. Mary Magdalene has reached the pivotal moment of our annual Stewardship Pledge Campaign. As with all stops along a journey, it's an important time to reflect on the path we've already traveled and the one that lies ahead.

Few would argue about the collective success of this church and this community. As a whole, the fire certainly burns bright. The Stewardship Pledge Campaign is an opportunity to **dig deep within ourselves** (and our pockets) to keep that spark within kindled, the same spark that led us through those beautiful SMM doors so many Sundays ago.

Spiritual passion needs fuel to keep it burning brightly. What is your fuel?

Opportunities abound to fuel our spiritual passion at St. Mary Magdalene. The Stewardship Committee encourages everyone to consider engaging in one (or more) of the many opportunities this church offers for ministry, prayer, worship, education, outreach, fellowship and support. Participating is the best way to weave ourselves into the fabric of our SMM community and to keep the programs and ministries that we love going and growing. It might even rekindle the fire of the Holy Spirit in your heart.

Please also read through the details of the church's operating expenses. Monetary pledges provide predictable revenue that keep this collective fire burning bright. Almost all of our expenses, including clergy and staff salaries and benefits, administration, utilities, repairs and maintenance, community outreach and tithes to our diocese are funded by our own financial contributions.

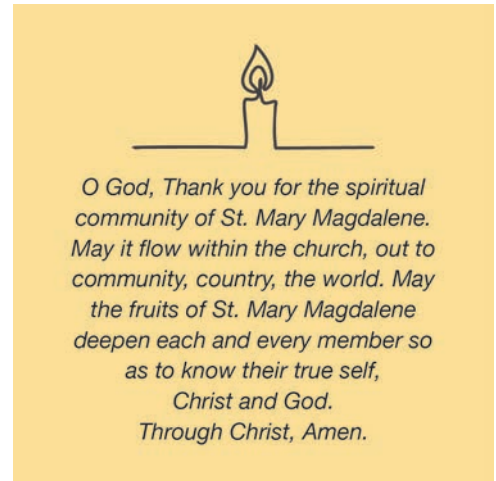
We urge you to **give generously**. In order to maintain our current level of programs and staff next year, pledge income needs to increase by about \$24,000 just to keep up with inflation. And if we want to address immediate needs such as improving our sound/video production, hiring a part-time Communications Coordinator and creating a handicap-accessible bathroom, we will need an additional \$20,000. This represents a total increase of about 10.5% over our 2023 operating budget.

The spiritual journey is lifelong. Use this time to reflect on how you can kindle the spark within, in your own life and in our community. Your contributions of money and service to St. Mary Magdalene will keep this communal, beautiful New Fire burning for years to come.

On behalf of the St. Mary Magdalene Stewardship Committee,

Members: Rick Fredo (Chair), Meg Thornbury, John Earley, Barb Fernie, Katie Temme, Tracy Kendall, Janet Poley (Senior Warden), Jack Wheeler (Treasurer), and Joan Wheeler

Thank You.



‘What is Mine to Do?’ at St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church



Rekindle the spark within and replenish your spiritual energy through engaging with our church community. Find out **‘What is Mine to Do?’** at St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church. A great number of church activities are only made possible through the many hands of volunteering parishioners.



*O God, who watches over us throughout our lives, we pray that you continue to support our congregation in faith so that we continue to build our church and its ministries.
In Christ's Name, Amen.*

Our SMM community can always use your help to support the church in its mission. The fruit of getting involved includes celebrating and sharing God’s love with our SMM community.

Like a smoldering ember separated from the communal fire, your spiritual energy can flicker and fade. Rekindle the spark within, and find out **‘What is Mine to Do?’**

You can start by reviewing our church ministry brochure entitled ‘Ministry, Fellowship, and Faith Formation Groups.’ It can be found in the church administrator’s office, in your stewardship pledge packet, or on the church website at <https://smmboulder.org/servechurch>.

If you already know how you wish to serve, please contact the applicable Ministry or Group Lead; their contact information is available in the Ministry Brochure.

If you wish to have a discussion about your strengths to help discern **‘What is Mine to Do?’**, please contact our church office. You will be invited to have a conversation with our Clergy or Vestry as soon as possible.

Contact:

Phone: 303-530-1421 | Email: office@smmboulder.org

Clergy

Father Bruce Swinehart, Rector | Email: frbruce@smmboulder.org

Vestry

Janet Poley, Senior Warden | Email: swarden@smmboulder.org

Financial Outlook

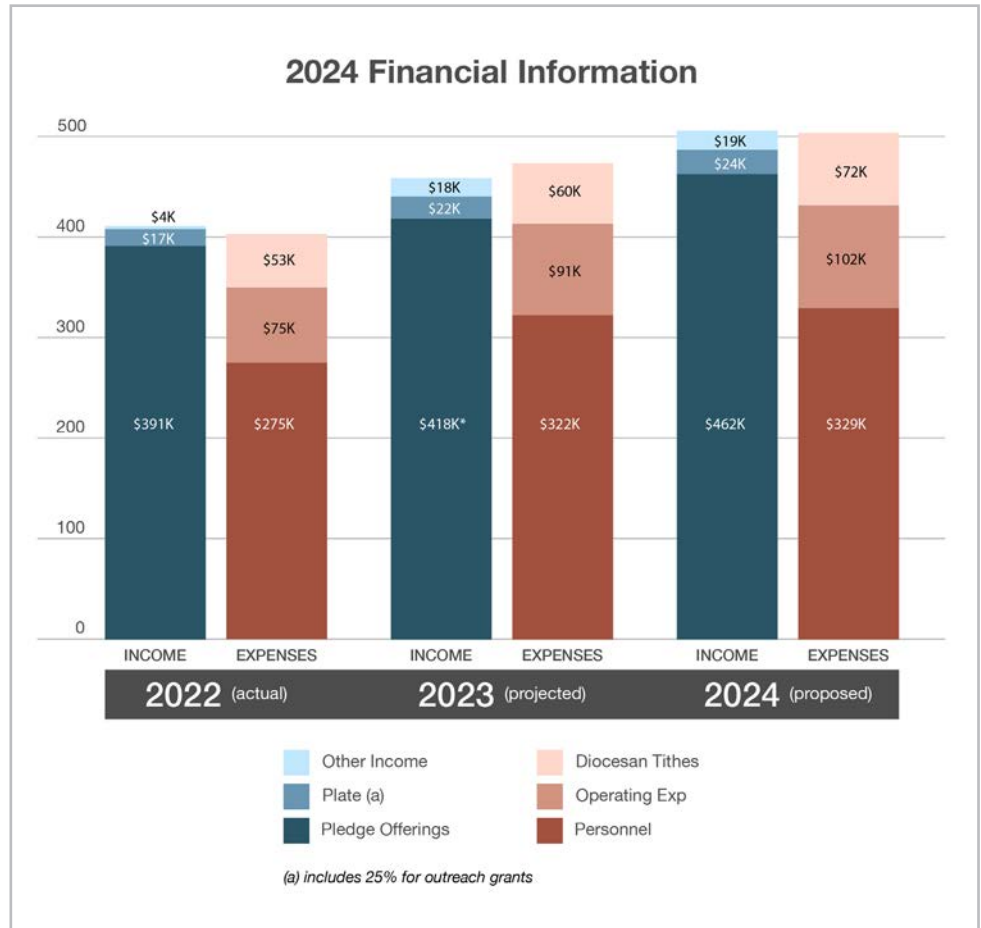
These charts show St. Mary Magdalene’s revenue and expenses for 2022 (actual), 2023 (projected to year-end), and 2024 (estimated). Pledge offerings — approximately 92% of our income — have grown steadily and other income has increased, primarily from our lease with Golden Aspen Bilingual Preschool.

Because of your generosity we have been able to maintain and expand clergy/ staff positions and meet increased operating and administrative costs. This has enabled us to grow and adapt to new realities in our church and world.

The proposed 2024 budget includes a 6% cost of living increase for clergy/staff salaries and benefits, which comprise about 70% of our total budget, as well as expected increases in operating costs (19% of budget). We have also included a 4.5% increase in the overall budget to address anticipated needs, such as (1) a part-time Communications Coordinator, (2) improvements to our audio/video systems and (3) remodeling bathroom(s) for handicap access.

All together, the proposed 2024 budget requires an increase of \$44,000 in pledge income from 2023. This is an ambitious goal! But we know it can be achieved if current SMM pledgers increase their commitments by an average of 7.5%, and just 10 new pledgers come on board with average pledges of \$100/month.

These numbers are averages. Your response to this financial stewardship invitation is private and reflects prayerful discernment between you and God. No gift is too small (or too large). Give in thanksgiving for what you have received from St. Mary Magdalene and the Episcopal Church and share your joyful hope in the Good News!



*The projected \$15,000 shortfall in 2023 is actually less than what was anticipated by our adopted budget. The deficit will be covered by surpluses accrued in 2021 and 2022.

Where is Outreach?



I've looked through all the financial information included in my Stewardship packet and I have found very little mention of "outreach". I thought St. Mary Magdalene had a strong commitment to "outreach". What is the story?

"Outreach" means a lot of things at St. Mary Magdalene. In addition to hands-on service, collecting food and other items for donation, and traveling on mission trips, it also includes grant-making to local, statewide, national, and international organizations that serve the poor and marginalized.

Your packet materials show our pledges to the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado, the Front Range Region, and Cathedral Ridge. A significant portion of these amounts help support programs, services, and grants to organizations serving those in need (i.e., Jubilee Ministries).

St. Mary Magdalene's longstanding partnership with St. Paul's School in Petit Trou de Nippes, Haiti is not reflected in your packet materials, either. Funds raised for St. Paul's student scholarships, for example, are raised and accounted for separately.

The funds that the St. Mary Magdalene Outreach Committee uses to make grants to local, national, and international organizations come from a variety of sources. In addition to the 25% of our plate offering, these have historically included distributions of roughly \$5,000 almost every year from our Legacy Endowment Fund, funds raised from parties and events at the "Celebrate and Share" auction, cookbook sales, and direct donations.

Finally, our commitment to outreach is reflected in volunteer commitments done by parishioners to benefit local nonprofits. This past year, we have helped feed the hungry through our on-site Community Garden, our monthly collection of food for the OUR Center, and our quarterly commitment to serve lunch at the OUR Center.



We pray that St. Mary Magdalene continues to grow and include people from all different walks of life. Let it be a place of laughter, joy, hard work and love. May we give back and support the community around us.

If you would like more information about Outreach at St. Mary Magdalene, please contact Bill Andrews, 303-882-7651, wmandrews@yahoo.com or Amy Thornbury, 303-817-4184 amythorn100@gmail.com.

Legacy Endowment Fund

Perhaps you have seen the plaque on the wall beside our front door that lists the names of contributors to St. Mary Magdalene's Legacy Endowment Fund. And perhaps you have wondered how you might get your name or your family's name on that plaque. Here is the answer.

St. Mary Magdalene's Endowment Fund, now called the Legacy Endowment Fund, was created about 20 years ago to provide for the long term safety and security of the church. The Fund currently has a market value in excess of \$250,000 and is invested in stocks and bonds managed by the Colorado Episcopal Foundation. Since 2012, the Fund has distributed more than \$50,000 to Outreach.

Over the years, many parishioners have made contributions to the Fund. While most of those contributions have been in the form of cash, the Fund will accept gifts of publicly traded securities and may accept gifts of other assets like closely held securities or real estate.

While the Legacy Endowment Fund is interested in present gifts, it is also interested in being named as a beneficiary of future gifts, either through a Will or Trust or through a non-testamentary transfer (eg. beneficiary of life insurance policy or IRA).

And yes, if you or your family makes a present or future gift to the Legacy Endowment Fund, your name or your family's name will be engraved on the plaque.

If you would like more information about the Legacy Endowment Fund, please contact Bart Johnson at bartonjohnson13@gmail.com or Jack Wheeler, Treasurer, at jackwheeler4749@gmail.com.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is pledging?

A stewardship pledge is a statement of intention to contribute a certain amount of money over a period of time to support the church. Our annual stewardship campaign asks parishioners to let us know what they will be able to contribute to St. Mary Magdalene in the coming year so that we can plan and budget for our mission and ministry.

Why have an annual Stewardship Campaign?

While we are called to be good stewards of God's blessings year round, we invite the parish to support God's ministry through discerning 'what is mine to do' as a means of deepening their commitment to God in Christ, not solely through money but also in service. Our ministries are made possible and our facilities are maintained only through the volunteer and financial support of our members and friends.



As we gather together to search for deeper meaning in our joint lives together, give us clarity of purpose and a sense of importance with our mission.

How much should I pledge?

Pledging is a personal, intentional, spiritual decision that we hope you make after much thought and prayer. Our life circumstances are varied, so your pledge is unique to your situation and we encourage you to pledge as your situation and means allow. Pledges can be any amount, usually given periodically (weekly, monthly, quarterly) throughout the year. All pledges are valued as a commitment in faith to our community.

What if I can't meet my pledge?

Things can happen over a year. We understand. If you find you can't meet your pledge please inform the Office to adjust your pledge amount in confidence.

How are financial decisions made at St. Mary Magdalene?

Financial decisions are made by the Vestry, which is the church's "board of directors," in consultation with the Finance Committee. Vestry members are elected by the congregation at our Annual Meeting and they meet monthly.

Does St. Mary Magdalene receive support from the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado?

We support the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado through an annual assessment based on our operating budget. This enables the Diocese to provide the pastoral and organizational leadership of the Bishop, a camp and conference center, programs for young people, and different types of educational programs. We receive no direct financial support from the Diocese, although we can apply for grants through the Front Range Region.

Who needs to pledge?

Although it is never required, we ask all members to consider making a pledge. If you have never pledged before, you can start out with a modest sum. Given on a regular basis over a year, this provides much needed support and stability. Pledges of any amount make a big difference and are greatly appreciated.

Frequently Asked Questions

I already contribute when the offertory plate is passed – how is this different?

We are certainly grateful for any and all financial support we receive, regardless of what form it takes. Pledges, however, are a more predictable source of income, which is why we use them to build our budget each year. For some people, pledging is also a spiritual exercise that is an “outward and visible sign” of commitment to their relationship with God. Some people both pledge and give to the plate, in part because 25% of the plate offering goes to fund our outreach programs.

How is the Stewardship Campaign different from a Capital Campaign?

The Stewardship Campaign is our annual pledge drive conducted in the fall to raise funds to cover our day-to-day operating expenses. In contrast, Capital Campaigns do not happen every year; they are carried out only in years in which we want to raise funds for major projects, such as building construction, repair or renovation.

Can I give a gift of Mutual Funds or Stock?

Perhaps you have an old stock certificate that your grandmother gave you years ago or some shares of a mutual fund in a brokerage account that have appreciated in value. You would like to do something with the security but you know that if you sell it, you will have significant capital gains. What can you do?

One possibility would be to make a gift of the stock or mutual fund to a charitable organization like St. Mary Magdalene. If you do this, you may be able to take a charitable deduction for the fair market value of the security at the time of the gift. And you will not have to report any capital gains on the gift.

If you would like to make a gift of stock or a mutual fund to St. Mary Magdalene to satisfy your pledge obligation or to make a gift to our Endowment Fund contact the Colorado Episcopal Foundation (www.coef.org) to help you facilitate the transaction. They will work with you and your broker/financial advisor to transfer your security, sell it, and get the proceeds to St. Mary Magdalene.

Please contact the Colorado Episcopal Foundation at office@coef.org to confirm the status of your donation.

Please make four copies of the COEF instructions: (1) send one to your broker; (2) keep one for your files; (3) mail one to the Colorado Episcopal Foundation; and (4) mail one to the SMM Treasurer, Jack Wheeler, jackwheeler4749@gmail.com.

Can I make a charitable gift of IRA Required Minimum Distributions (RMD's)?

Perhaps you are over age 70.5 and have an IRA from which you are taking required minimum distributions (RMD's). You are currently paying ordinary income tax on those distributions. You would like to minimize or avoid that income tax. What can you do?

One possibility would be to have a portion or all of the required minimum distribution paid to a charitable



O God who is merciful and bountiful to our community, we pray we continue to grow in grace, love to the community, and outreach to others so that youth may be attracted along with those who desire to grow in Christ's love. In Christ, Amen.

Frequently Asked Questions



O God, who knows each of us by name, we pray that SMM will be a place where each of us can flourish and contribute our gifts so that each of us can fully belong to this family. In Christ's name, Amen.

organization like St. Mary Magdalene. This is called a qualified charitable distribution (QCD). Any amount processed as a QCD counts towards your RMD requirement and reduces the taxable amount of your IRA distribution. This lowers both your adjusted gross income and taxable income, resulting in an overall lower tax liability for you.

A QCD may be an excellent way to satisfy your pledge obligation or to make a gift to our Capital Campaign or our Endowment Fund. However, there are specific rules that you need to follow. You are encouraged to consult with your tax and financial advisors to see if a QCD is right for you.





