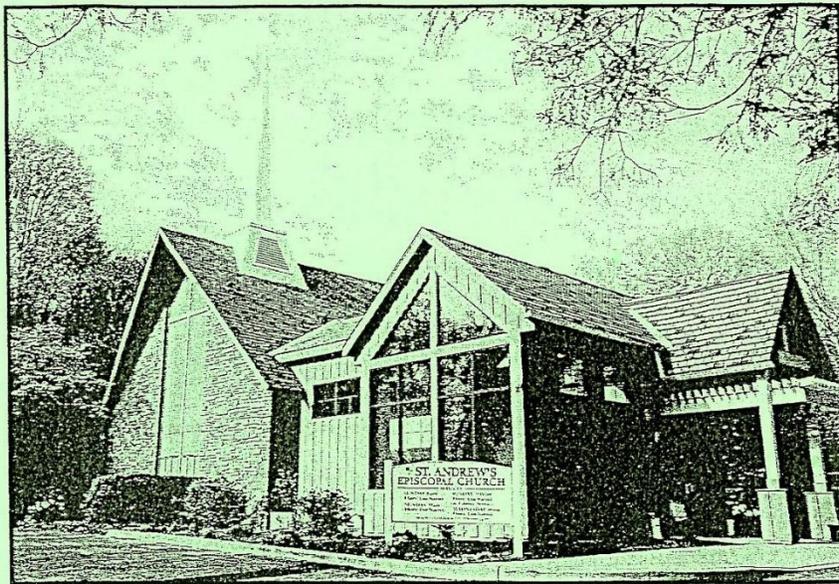


# 2020 Annual Meeting

St. Andrew's Church  
February 2, 2020



Honor our Past    Rejoice in our Present    Faith in our Future

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# **AGENDA**

February 2, 2020

Invocation

Presentation and adoption of the roll of voting members

Minutes of the last annual meeting

Parish Covenant

Celebration of Ministry –

    Vision and Planning Committee

    Website Task Force

    Camino Pilgrimage

Report of the Treasurer

Presentation of the 2020 Budget

Other Reports

Report of the Nominating Committee

Election of the wardens, clerk, treasurer and vestry

Election of delegates and alternates to diocesan convention

Old business

New business

Benediction

Adjournment

St. Andrew's Church  
Annual Parish Meeting  
Minutes  
February 3, 2019

**I. Invocation**

The Rev. Shariya Molegoda called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. and offered the opening invocation.

**II. Presentation and adoption of the roll of voting members**

The roll of voting members was unanimously accepted without reading the roll. The motion was made by Jennie Gerst and seconded by Lucinda Embersits.

**III. Minutes of the last parish meeting**

A motion to approve the minutes of last year's annual meeting was unanimously approved after being made by Rebecca Rastetter and seconded by Jane Kraus.

**IV. Celebration of Ministry: Summer Arts Camp**

Music Director Grant Underwood and St. Andrew's Preschool teacher Tina Phelan, who co-directed the Summer Arts Camp, made a slide show presentation about the camp's activities. They also provided statistics that showed how the camp has grown in size and popularity during the past four years.

**V. Report of the treasurer**

Since Treasurer Colleen McHugh-Heflin was absent, the treasurer's report was presented by Senior Warden Gary Naegel.

Naegel said that although last year's budget had anticipated ending the 2018 fiscal year with a \$41,000 deficit, it closed the year with a \$21,000 deficit due to an increase in pledges and a decrease in expenses.

Naegel said that the preschool, which is a mission of the church, had anticipated a surplus of \$11,000 after expenses, but ended up with one \$26,000. He also said that the spring spaghetti supper and auction, and the November Holiday Fair had both brought in slightly more than had been budgeted.

After explaining the preschool's policies regarding tuition and staffing, and the thinking behind the decision to combine the Memorial Fund and the Memorial Garden Fund, a motion was made by Ian Merkle-Scotland to accept the treasurer's report. It was seconded by Ray Hencir and passed unanimously.

### **2019 Budget and Supplemental Draws from the Endowment**

Although the budget for the new fiscal year is presented annually to the congregation at the annual meeting, no vote is taken since it already has been adopted by the vestry. However, the congregation must vote to take supplemental funds out of the endowment.

The motion to take out \$40,000 in supplemental funds passed unanimously on a motion made by Kristen Garnett that was seconded by Gary Naegel, but not until after considerable questioning from some of those present.

Dave Mason said he was concerned about deficit budgeting and the amount taken out of the endowment. Ray Hencir, who chairs the Endowment Committee, said that the amount of supplemental funds taken out of the endowment to balance the budget had been going down over the past three years.

Naegel said that the vestry was seeking to address the deficit and looking for ways to reduce operating expenses. He also noted that the budget did not include possible income from the summer arts camp, facility rental or other sources.

The repairs to the church's elevator during the past year also required taking \$14,400 out of the endowment. The motion to do so was made by Gary Cimmino and seconded by Tom Stott. It passed unanimously.

### **V Report of the Church School, Other Reports**

The motion to accept the reports was made by Mark Auletta and seconded by Sandy Butler.

The reports were from the wardens, Stewardship, the church school and youth groups, St. Andrew's Preschool, the Altar Guild, the Buildings and Grounds Committee, the Welcoming Committee, the Endowment Fund Committee, the Music Ministries, the Outreach Committee, the Verger, the Human Resources Committee, and the Rector.

### **VI. Report of the Nominating Committee, Election of Officers and Delegates to Diocesan Convention**

The motion to accept the Nominating Committee's slate of vestry officers, members and diocesan convention delegates and alternates was made by David Mason, seconded by Jane Kraus, and passed unanimously.

Officers elected to one-year terms were Gary Naegel, senior warden; Gary Cimmino, junior warden; Colleen McHugh-Heflin, treasurer; Louise Beecher, secretary.

Lucinda Embersits, Deborah Brown and Tom Stott were were elected to three-year terms ending in February 2021. Reese Puchalski was elected to a one-year term as youth representative.

Deborah Brown and Heather Meachen were elected diocesan convention delegates, and Cathy Golden and Lucinda Embersits elected alternate delegates.

#### **XI. Old Business**

No old business was presented.

#### **XII. New Business**

No new business was presented.

#### **XIII. Benediction**

The benediction was led by the Rev. Shariya Molegoda.

#### **XIV. Adjournment**

The motion to adjourn was made by Tom Stott, seconded by Mark Auletta, and passed unanimously at 12:15 p.m.

St. Andrew's Church  
Special Parish Meeting  
Minutes  
Oct. 20, 2019

The meeting was called to order in the sanctuary at 10:29 a.m. The Rev. Shariya Molegoda offered the opening prayer.

Senior Warden Gary Naegel explained that the meeting was called to approve funding for capital expenditures and emergency repairs that could no longer be ignored. He said the vestry was seeking special withdrawal of up to \$100,000 from the church's endowment, adding that the requests had been approved by the Endowment Committee as well as the vestry itself.

Naegel explained that the bulk of the money would go to the repair of the church's failing septic system. The funds would also pay for the installation of a security system at the entrances to the church school and offices, the replacement of the hot water heater at the rectory, and the removal of some trees.

Naegel noted that although the Endowment had enjoyed excellent returns in the past year, a capital campaign would be held at a later date to replenish it.

The assembled parishioners unanimously approved the withdrawal and expenditure on a motion by Lucinda Embersits that was seconded by Sandy Butler.

The meeting adjourned at 10:42 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Louise Beecher

# St. Andrew's Parish Covenant

*This parish agreement is really a spiritual practice that guides our interactions with each other. Covenants are not a set of rules to be enforced, rather they are promises that we make to help us worship together and engage God's mission here at St. Andrew's.*

## **In a spirit of trust and love, we promise we will ...**

1. Believe that forgiveness grounds our faith community.
2. Actively listen to the ideas, needs and preferences of others before speaking our solutions and practice the skills of dialogue – listening and learning.
3. State what we think we heard from others and ask for clarification before responding.
4. Speak openly and face to face with any person with whom we have a difference or dilemma.
5. Foster acceptance of a diverse community.
6. Allow every person an opportunity to speak in a safe environment.
7. Share our ideas at meetings where all can hear.
8. Communicate with all parishioners, leaving no one out of the loop of information.
9. Recognize that conflict is inevitable and understand that conflicting ideas give us a chance to grow.
10. Focus on the facts and ascribe to others the best possible intentions and motivations for their actions (assume positive intent).
11. Respect our building, resources and environment.

## **2019 Report of the Wardens**

The vestry decided to hire an engineer in 2018 to carefully examine the septic situation in order to eliminate the occasional flooding in the front lawn. Numerous plans, evaluations, and contractors have been involved in order to propose a solution that we thought would be implemented in 2019. A special parish meeting was held in October 2019 and approved a special capital withdrawal from the Endowment to repair the septic, install enhanced security in the classroom school wing, and for the purchase and installation of LED light fixtures to replace the existing florescent units. More details regarding these projects are included in the building and grounds report. The septic repair, however, was not able to be installed in 2019 due to additional design changes, and the required Town of Madison approvals, and delayed the project with the approaching colder weather. A 2020 spring installation is now the new target date.

The vestry approved the installation of solar panels on the south facing church pitched roof in an effort for utility cost reduction and for the stewardship of the environment. This was the culmination of numerous meetings with the vestry, vendors, and solar panel experts spanning over an 18-month period to reach the best final proposal. The origin of this outcome dates back to a group of St. Andrew's parishioners with the showing the 2008 film, "Renewal", which is about eight stories from different religious traditions addressing various environment concerns. Further discussions and related environmental activities occurred over the years, including having our senior youth group conduct an audit of the St. Andrew's waste stream to identify trash by both quantity in amounts in weight, as well as items that would be more suitably placed in a "recycling container", rather than into the general garbage waste stream headed for landfills. Garbage cans were emptied onto large tarps on the parking lot to visually see the trash stream with the intention of modifying behavior to reduce unnecessary waste and to recycle. A modest "Green Fund" was created to help fund environmentally oriented projects.

The solar photo voltaic system was installed using a power purchase agreement, which meant that it was being paid for by the installer with no capital cost to the church. Lower annual utility bills are expected to save around \$2,000 per year. While this project was only installed and became "live" in June 2019, it has generated a lifetime production of over 18 mega watt hours of energy, saving over 28,000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions with the equivalence to the planting of 723 trees! An LCD monitor and mini-computer were donated and installed in the hallway on the bulletin board outside of the church office to show daily production values of photo voltaic electric generation as well as the St. Andrew's monthly calendar from the website. The vestry also replaced all of the florescent light fixtures in the school wing with LED fixtures to help reduce overall electrical consumption. The "Green Fund", mentioned earlier, was finally used and designated to partially offset the cost of purchase and installation of these LED fixtures.

Our Youth Education programs excel under the leadership of Mary Merkle-Scotland and Shelby Auletta as Youth Minister, and Christian Education Director, respectively, and are thankful to the adults and parents providing assistance and supervision to these children. In addition, the St. Andrew's Pre-School, under the leadership of Director Anita Spear, continued with another year with over sixty children enrolled in various programs, including a summer program. We are thankful to Jane Kraus, as the vestry liaison for the Pre-School, in facilitating the communication between the vestry and the Pre-School.

We are thankful that Kristin Garnett and others have reinvigorated the Welcoming Committee to ensure visitors/new parishioners feel welcome and included when they first start attending St. Andrew's Church.

We are happy to report that our 2018 audit of the finances and administrative practices has been met with approval noting many improvements, following a change this year with a newly selected auditor that was highly recommended from other ECCT parishes. We are thankful for Colleen, our Treasurer, in overseeing the financial operations and spearheading improvements and changes with sound financial practices, and for Jane, our bookkeeper, in maintaining our financial books and producing regular reports.

We are thankful for the creation, energy, and hard work of the Vision and Planning task force group this year headed up by Nancy Karas and included Kristen Garnett, Lauren Dodington, Tom Stott, Alice Hencir, Laura Downes, Gary Naegel, and Shariya. While explained in more detail in another report, this group is comprised with members from the vestry and with the parish at large, and were tasked at re-envisioning the mission and future of the church. This is a broader and more holistic approach than merely analyzing the financial sustainability of the church including the additional endowment subsidized support of church operations. They have been reporting their findings back to the vestry.

Special thanks goes to a new initiative started this year for the St. Andrew's website improvement team, with Grant Underwood, John Armstrong, Matt Valentine, Tom Stott, Gary Naegel, and Shariya. This was launched to design a new website platform with enhanced capabilities, especially for mobile devices, and to provide an easier mechanism for regular updates. More about this will be forthcoming in a report and with a demonstration at the annual meeting.

Our music program, long a strength here at St. Andrew's, remained vibrant with an adult choir, a youth choir and a junior youth choir along with additional musicians, including guitars, bassoon, violins, cello, harp, oboe, trumpets, saxophone, percussion, and flute. We are so fortunate to have Music Director Grant Underwood leading our music programs and attracting new choir members and instrumentalists.

We would like to thank our fellow Vestry members who shared this journey with us in 2019: Deborah Brown, Laura Downes, Ray Hencir, Anastasia King, Jane Kraus, Reese Puchalski, Mark Tardie, and Matt Valentine. We would especially like to thank Louise Beecher, Clerk, and Colleen McHugh Heflin, Treasurer, for their unwavering support of St. Andrew's. We could not have managed this year without all of your dedication and counsel. We are thankful for the outgoing vestry members for their dedicated time and service over the past year(s). These include: Gary Cimmino, Anastasia King, Ray Hencir, Colleen McHugh Heflin, and Reese Puchalski.

In peace,

Gary Naegel  
Senior Warden

Gary Cimmino  
Junior Warden



## Report from 2019 Stewardship Committee

“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

2 Peter 3:18

Your offerings of time, of your God-given talents, and of your money, help support all that we do at St. Andrew’s. St. Andrew’s could do nothing without the faithful offerings of our members. Together, we are the Body of Christ. When we are giving, we are being the faithful people God calls us to be. Our offerings bring about blessings on many levels.

This year’s Stewardship theme *Grow in Grace* reminds us that we all have room and space to grow in our life with Christ. The imagery of growing provides so many connections to our life at St. Andrew’s. As Shariya mentioned in her Stewardship letter, “It is to that end that the parish offers many collaborative opportunities for children, youth and adults to gather in worship, prayer, study, care of one another, and ventures beyond our walls to engage in God’s mission in the world about us.”

We wanted to celebrate the multitude of ways parishioners contribute to God’s mission at St. Andrew’s. We held two distinct stewardship efforts during the fall. In September we focused on financial commitments to St. Andrew’s with our annual appeal. In November, we highlighted several missions at St. Andrew’s in an appeal for time and talent from our parishioners, including Altar Guild and the Memorial Garden.

Our offerings help to transform others. Again, this year we asked parishioners to share the reasons that they give to St. Andrew’s. Jim Dodington talked about his family’s involvement, especially his young daughters’ love for activities at St. Andrew’s, and his commitment to giving so that these and other missions may continue. Alice Hencir shared her story of being married to her husband Ray at St. Andrew’s. She and Ray have a long list of involvement and have a commitment to giving. We also heard from Laura

Stott, Sarah Valentine, Lisa King, Mary Potenziani and David Mikus, among others. We offer special thanks for all of those who shared their personal stories.

Our success in our 2019 pledge drive is evident in the commitments of so many parishioners who maintained and increased their pledges so that we may continue the internal and external ministries of St. Andrew's Church. We saw an increase in the number of families and individuals pledging for 2020 and received 75 pledge forms supporting St. Andrew's in 2020. Thirty-three families or individuals increased their pledges for 2020 resulting in an increase in pledge totals of almost \$20,000, to just over \$190,000.

We thank the members of the Vestry, the Vision and Planning Committee, and the Stewardship Committee for 100% participation before the Fall Campaign began. Special thanks to Liz Chatfield, who took the time to make follow-up phone calls, to gently remind parishioners to return their pledge forms. We also thank Katie Wilker whose artistic talents brought to life our growing vine representing the return of pledge forms during the appeal. We are encouraged by the generosity of so many in our St. Andrew's family this year. Of course, we continue to welcome pledges at any time.

All of the ministries of St. Andrew's Church, carried out in Christ's name, are possible through the generous giving daily, weekly, monthly, and annually by church members in service to our community inwardly and outwardly. Thank you!

Your St. Andrew's 2019 Stewardship Committee,

Laura Downes, Chair, John Armstrong, Kristen Garnett, Helen Kitzman, Gary Naegel, Rebecca Rastetter, Rev. Shariya Molegoda

## **2019 Report of St. Andrew's Church School & Youth Groups**

### **CHURCH SCHOOL**

We continue to be blessed with willing parents and other parish adults to serve as church school teachers. For the 2019/20 school-year, we have 13 thoughtful and caring teachers for our 66 formally registered Church School children. Our Church School calendar continues to follow the school calendar. We held a Safe Church training session on September 25, 2019 at St. Andrews 17 parish adults and 2 teens received their certification which lasts 3 years.

We continue to use email contact for our Church School activities as well as the Middle School and High School Youth Groups. We look forward to the new website with enhanced access to calendar and curriculum information.

All of our Church School Curriculum materials are web-based and accessible online through Sparkhouse Digital. This ensures our volunteers and leaders feel prepared without having to invest a large amount of time before teaching.

We have maintained our subscription to the Children's Worship Bulletins. Shelby Auletta prints them and on a weekly basis sets them in the back of the church to be distributed by the ushers. There are two different age appropriate versions.

### **Preschool through grade 5:**

We are in our sixth year of using the Spark curriculum for these grades. The Spark curriculum follows the lectionary and is presented in a color leaflet with corresponding stickers for the younger children. It has an online component which enables the teachers to login in from anywhere to review, download and print lesson materials. Weekly materials and the classrooms are set up for the teachers by Shelby Auletta. The online component also offers flexibility in the delivery of the lesson with "art extras" and large group lesson plans

### **Grade 6-7:**

This year we continued to use the "Connect" curriculum by Augsburg Fortress. From their website: *"Preteens connect with the narrative arc of the Bible through videos, Bible exploration, and hands-on projects. Kids use Connect Bibles, which feature visual icons, vibrant maps, and instant activities while providing relevance for preteens. Connect curriculum is notorious for its witty, quirky humor-filled videos."*

### **Grade 8 and older:**

We continue to use the Confirm Not Conform curriculum. In October 2018 we began a new 2-year confirmation cycle. As of this writing, we have 17 youth registered in this class. Florie Earle, Rebecca Rastetter and Sarah Valentine have worked diligently to provide a robust formation experience for our youth. The class meets twice a month for "classwork" with other activities interspersed during the month. The class enjoyed the overnight experience of Nightwatch at St. John the Divine in March 2019. This confirmation class has chosen homelessness/poverty as the focus of their service projects. In October, all of the students volunteered to serve a meal at The Community Dining Room in Branford. In order to prepare for this, the students had to attend a training during which they learned about the mission of CDR. The kids worked hard and interacted with the guests which was a meaningful experience. In November, the class members put together baskets of gifts for 2 struggling families within our own parish. The family identity was kept confidential, but the lesson of "in reach" was learned by all. In 2020, we will have 2 more service projects, both based in NYC. Also

in November, the class celebrated “Friends Giving” with a potluck turkey dinner at the Earle’s home.

Confirmation is scheduled for May 2 at St. Andrews.

### **General Church School:**

In addition to time spent discussing the curriculum in the classroom setting, our youth are involved in various events and activities around the church. These activities help foster a sense of community, ritual and service for the children and include: the Blessing of the Animals, Youth Sunday (during which our youth participate in every aspect of the 9:30 worship), Advent wreath making, the Holiday Fair, and Christmas carolling to homebound. Additional activities that help the children connect to the broader parish and keep them excited and engaged with church include Lenten Pretzel making, Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, Resurrection Rolls and an Easter egg hunt. Our annual blessing of our high school seniors took place in June recognizing their contributions over the years to many aspects of parish life and offering them the prayers and blessing of the parish on life’s journey.

### **Vacation Bible School:**

June 24-28, 2019 marked the eleventh year that St. Andrew’s and First Congregational Church in Madison have teamed up to offer an ever-popular and consistently sold-out week of faith-filled fun to three-year-olds through 8th graders. In all, over 159 children and youth participated in this dynamic, fun and faith-filled week themed “To Mars and Beyond”. This week cannot run without the help and support of numerous volunteers from both churches - hats off to St. Andrew’s adults and teens who, once again, made up well over half of the volunteer force at VBS.

The pre-school VBS team was co-led by our very own Anita Spear. The preschool continues to be a large draw. The program was full and offered a parallel program to what their older brothers and sisters were doing in the elementary program for kindergarten - fourth graders. St. Andrew’s high schoolers staffed many of the leadership positions for the elementary school age group and did a fantastic job.

48 middle school aged young people (grades 5-8) participated in a week of mission and service led by the inveterate team of Shelby Auletta and Mary Merkle-Scotland. The entire group was split into two smaller groups which were engaged in parallel activities throughout the week. Mission and service are the guiding themes for this week and students prepared and served a brunch to the seniors in Farmer Hall, performed extensive trail maintenance (clearing underbrush, sawing and trimming, raking pathways, lugging out debris, and repairing a stone walkway) at the Neck River Uplands North Trail, hiked the Chatfield Trail and tried their hands - and feet - on the climbing wall at City Climb in New Haven. This was our third time using our own Farmer Hall to make and serve brunch to the seniors of both congregations - St. Andrew’s and First

Congregational Church on the Green. This worked well for both churches and helped our own parishioners see first hand what our tweens are up to during the week of VBS. This year we added the camp-wide collection of birthday items (cake mix, frosting, candles, balloons, etc) for the middle school campers to turn into “birthday kits” for the food pantry. We donated over 40 complete kits to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen and Madison Food Bank! Hard work, nature walks, some time for reflection, a little singing and more were a part of the middle school experience.

### **NURSERY CARE**

Two teenagers certified in safe church practices work in the nursery every Sunday whether or not there is church school to staff the room for families needing this service. There are currently five teens who work in the nursery on a rotating basis. We are grateful to Sarah Auletta, Luke Conway, Jane Merkle-Scotland, and Reese Puchalski. On average, there are four children who come to the nursery each Sunday. It is not unusual to have seven children in the room on a given Sunday. We are blessed with several new, young families!

### **Middle School Youth Group**

The middle school youth group meets monthly and continues to be engaged in a variety of social and service-oriented projects. A very big shout out to Sarah Valentine and Amy Greenleaf who have jumped on board to help with this age group this past fall. Many many thanks and blessings to Sandy Butler whose support and leadership with this group over the past three years has resulted in a community of high energy, fun and engaged young people. Many of our older kids have moved up to high school and we now have younger and smaller people as we welcome a new group of 5th graders. 2019 began with an evening of dinner and improv with Lara Morton, an independent theatre teacher; an evening of laser tag, bumper cars and arcade fun at the Sportsplex; making and serving dinner to families of sick children at Ronald McDonald House; the annual Green Up Clean Up at Tuxis Pond; and an end of year bbq and bonfire at the beach in May to close out the school year. September kicked off with an overnight of camping fun at Hammonasset; Friday evening taco dinner and pumpkin carving; the 3rd annual Meals-to-Go night in November which resulted in the preparation of over 80 meals for parishioners and \$800 raised; and the annual cookie baking and caroling in December. The group enjoyed another evening of improv and dinner evening this past January. Laser tag and arcade fun are scheduled for February and more meal preparation and service to come at the new Ronald McDonald House in New Haven in March. We'll finish up in mid-May with more outdoor fun. Friends are always welcome, so please encourage your middle schooler to get on the MSYG fun bus with their friends. If you have middle schoolers, please ensure you are receiving our emails.

**High School Youth Group** - High school youth group meets monthly for service projects, fun and fellowship. 2019 highlights were the second January weekend ski trip to Pico Mountain in VT to Heminway House, the Shrove Tuesday dinner, the H.O.M.E. pancake breakfast in April, several H.O.M.E. fundraisers in May and June and staffing

vacation Bible school the week of June 24-28. A very special thank you to our parent chaperones who make HSYG possible with their support and presence, from Sunday meetings to our mission trips. This past year we have been delighted and blessed with the continued help of Jess Baycroft, a former St. Andrew's youth grouper herself who has returned to help lead our motley crew. We are so grateful for her! This fall kicked off with the annual social gathering and making of the college care packages (we can shop year-round for fun things to pack into these important reminders of love and home - leave them in the youth office), our all trips launch, dinner and social in November, and the annual cookie baking extravaganza followed by parish-wide caroling to parishioners later in December. A huge shout-out to Brenda Naegel and her posse of elves who decorated the adorable small Christmas trees that we delivered with our cookies and song to parishioners in December. Hats off to the inimitable Mark Tardie whose delicious soup nourished carolers before stepping out to drive and sing. Once again we caroled to our fellow parishioners and the response was truly gratifying. We received many notes of thanks from parishioners grateful for the cheerful singing and cookie toting elves. Many thanks to our youth and to all of the families who participated in this special event. We have taken a break from the ski trip in 2020 and hope to get it back on the calendar in 2021. The rest of this year will be filled with H.O.M.E related events and preparation for the pilgrimage to Spain to walk the Camino de Santiago in late June. The April H.O.M.E. 2019 pancake breakfast raised close to \$600 to support the youth mission trip to Maine.

Additionally, a big shout out to the Salvos for their help in coordinating a very successful car wash to support the H.O.M.E. trip for the THIRD year in a row. So grateful for this incredible gift of time and talent to support H.O.M.E. Over \$1000 was raised in four hours - AMAZING! Thank you to all of the parishioners who came by after the parish picnic.

Want to help out? Please contact Mary Merkle-Scotland (203)980-8175/  
merklemaryk@gmail.com.

**Mission Trip - H.O.M.E. 2019** - This past July 7-13, twenty young people and seven adult chaperones landed in Orland, Maine for a week of exploration, community building, swimming, home repair, cleaning, building, trimming, painting, floor laying, hiking, cooking, washing dishes and more. It was a tremendous week! Our group spent the week working on multiple renovation projects and on laying new floor in an apartment house that shelters men and women in transition from incarceration to independent living. Many good conversations about life choices ensued. We even had a group of kids building a mini shed to protect and store multiple garbage cans! A small group worked to complete a very large cross made of logs and learned how to chisel and notch the logs so they could then be secured together. We have an amazing group of teenagers deeply committed to this trip and this special place in Maine. H.O.M.E. dates for 2020 are July 5-11, and plans are in the works for a terrific week. This trip is open to rising 9th graders who have been a part of the Confirmation program and to all high school students. Don't miss this opportunity for life-changing fun and perspective.

**Camino de Santiago - the Pilgrimage to Spain. June 27-July 7, 2020.** In last year's annual report I wrote about the idea to take a group to Spain to "walk the Camino." This is also known as the "Walk of St. James" for it is said that his remains are buried in Santiago. It is really happening! We have a group of 14 participants committed to walking the last stretch of this dusty trail in northern Spain that people have been walking since the 800s. We still have a few spots open!

**Dominican Republic Mission Trip** - St. Andrew's helps make a difference in the lives of kids at Santa Margarita parish in a barrio in Santo Domingo. Trip dates for 2020 are June 27 - July 4 and we are hopeful a few young people will be inspired to join this special week of adventure and mission. This trip is an incredible opportunity to practice your Spanish, make new friends, immerse yourself in a completely different culture and serve others. The trip was such a positive experience for the group that went last year they are all signing up for another week of faith filled fun under the Dominican sun! Trip cost is typically split between the diocese, the parish and families of participants and runs \$1500.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Merkle-Scotland and Shelby Auletta

### **St. Andrew's School Report**

This school year started off slower than in the past several years. We are currently at about 75% enrollment.

There was a new security system, along with a large 4 screen monitor, put in place a few months ago, we are still getting used to it. And although I find it extremely cumbersome, the families seem to feel the safety it ensures. The staff has a new punch in system, for payroll that syncs with their smart phones. This too is something we are trying to get used to as we perfect the workings of it.

The Fire Marshall visited in January. Their report was fully satisfactory and we passed with no violations.

Ms. Tina set up a survey sent to current families, with regards to the hours and times being helpful for our program. It had 3 questions on it along with any helpful comments to enhance the quality of our program. The conclusion was that the opening and closing times seemed to work well. Although we may have lost families interested in earlier and/or later opening and closings, we had close to a dozen back this past September, which had an impact on higher enrollment numbers. We will revisit this topic for future, successful full capacity in the program.

Our annual picnic that was held in August, seems to be a big hit as close to 40 families attended.

The Christmas pageant is the highlight of events during our school year with only 3 children and their family members missing out!

The summer camp program grew to our largest attendance to date, bringing in over \$30,000.

With the changes in treasurer and added bookkeeper in full swing over this past year, and continuation of growing pains, as we continue to have full transparency and compliance with the diocese, along with the many volunteers who are trying to help with input, we are trying diligently to work together for cohesiveness.

Still waiting on our unannounced yearly state inspection from The Office Of Early Childhood.

Ms. Anita Spear  
St. Andrew's School Director

### **Altar Guild**

The Altar Guild worked throughout 2019 to prepare and set up for all of St. Andrew's services as well as maintaining and caring for all of the items that are part of our worship. Members of Altar Guild support all aspects of worship in the church. This includes setting up for the Eucharist services, including baptisms, weddings and funerals, changing the frontals and hangings for the various celebrations and organizing the pews. The Altar Guild also holds two Saturday cleanups (polishing silver, cleaning pews and anything that the worship spaces needs) to prepare the church before the Easter and Christmas seasons.

Altar Guild expenses are reflected in the line item "Liturgical Expenses." The items that are included in the 'Liturgical Expenses' line item are Communion wine and wafers, candles and paraffin oil, cleaning supplies, and dry-cleaning. We purchased some replacement linens during 2019 which included small service linens and two (2) new Fair Linens for the Altar which also are easier to launder. The Altar Guild is grateful for any gifts to the Altar Fund. The money in the Altar Fund is used to purchase the vessels, linens, and hangings that decorate our church space and are used during worship.

The behind the scenes work of the Altar Guild has been very fulfilling during this past year. Current members of the Altar Guild are Cathy Golden, Claudia Haeckel, Alice Hencir, Lynn Milner, Carrie Nye, Mary Potenziani, Nancy Rankin and Matt Valentine. We again are thankful for Joan Adams for her continued weekly devotion to cleaning and ironing the small altar linens in 2019.

New members are always welcome to this wonderful and essential ministry. Speak to any Altar Guild member if interested.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Potenziani

## **Resurrection Garden Report**

Spring 2019 highlighted much needed attention to a weed-infested Memorial Garden. St Andrews Building and Grounds Director, Gary Cimmino and Asher Raynold, St Andrew's landscaper, completed the necessary spring maintenance that restored the Garden to its natural beauty.

Summer 2019 was kind to the Garden with reasonable temperatures and enough rainfall to nurture the plants and keep the soil moist.

A special thanks to Colleen and Jon Heflin and all volunteers who beautifully prepared the Garden for the burial of parishioner Terry Abbott on July 2, 2019. As we remember the 2019 friends or family interred in the Garden, we also remember David Hill who for years was sole keeper of the Garden, preparing each burial space, recording each burial plot, totally the overseer of all Garden activity. A bench will soon be placed in the Garden in memory of David.

Fall 2019 brought loyal Boy Scout volunteers from Troop #490 to complete raking and removal of leaves from the Garden. Early winter 2019 saw a 10th memorial boulder added to the Garden. Each memorial boulder has a specific name affixed onto a metal nameplate which is then affixed to the boulder until the nameplate is full. The ground in front of each boulder is measured into dedicated space to receive burial ashes.

The names and ashes of the following individuals are now interred in the Garden:

April 27	Anne Pyne
May 28	Manuel Joseph Perez
July 2	Terry Abbott
September 7	David Hill
September 28	David Joseph Morris

Anyone wishing to experience the peace and quiet of the Resurrection Garden is encouraged to walk the steps behind the church that will take you through the Garden and the outdoor Chapel which is open for services during warm weather.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucinda Thomas Embersits

## **Report of the Endowment Fund Committee**

The Endowment Fund is managed by the Endowment Committee consisting of five church members and the church treasurer. Rules of Governance provide that a prudent investment and spending policy shall govern with a dual goal of supporting the Church's daily mission and provide for the benefit of future activities. During 2019, the Fund provided annual support to the operating budget according to a total return driven

spending formula. Supplemental funds were also authorized to balance the budget and to support various projects.

The Endowment Fund value increased \$171,098 during 2019 after withdrawals of \$152,285 to the church budget.

At December 31, 2019, the Endowment Fund had a market value of \$2,053,505 as compared to \$1,882,407 at December 31, 2018.

For 2019, the total rate of return of the Endowment Fund was an 18.3% increase. This compares to a 29% increase in the equity market on a total return basis, as measured by the Standard & Poor's stock index and a 9% increase in the fixed income market as measured by the Barclay Aggregate Bond index. The Endowment Fund allocates 50% of the endowment assets to an independent advisor for Vanguard Funds utilizing a Conservative Growth model that increased by 23% for 2019. The balance of the Endowment Fund is invested in the Dodge & Cox Balanced Fund, various Vanguard Funds, the Episcopal Church of Connecticut D&B Fund and cash. The year-end asset mix was 55% stock, 40% fixed income and 6% cash. The fund had an overall dividend and interest income yield of approximately 2% on invested cash.

The net balance of the Fund changed during the year as follows:

Endowment Fund Market value 12/31/18	\$1,882,407
Additions to Endowment Fund – gifts	5,000
Dividend, interest income and capital gains	82,566
Unrealized market appreciation/(depreciation)	235,817
Transfers to Church Operating account – formula	(80,821)
Transfers to Church Operating account – supplemental	(40,000)
Transfers to Church Operating account – projects	(31,464)
Endowment Fund Market value at 12/31/19	\$2,053,50

The Endowment Fund over the past 22 years, through December 2019, has provided \$1,408,399 of funds for church budgetary and other purposes.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Butler, Chairman  
Bill Downes  
Colleen McHugh

Ray Hencir  
Priscilla Rensis  
Marty Gerst

## St. Andrew's Music Ministries

### Annual Report: January 2020

What a great year it was St. Andrew's music ministries. Here are a few ways in which our parish "grew together in God's love" through music in 2020:

#### 2020 Notable Events: Year in Review, By Month

*These events are (mostly) in addition to music ministries provided for our weekly corporate worship and feast days.*

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#### Epiphany

Choirs Began 2020 Year

Fifth 12<sup>th</sup> Night Revue

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#### Lent

Taize Tenebrae Service

S&CC Sings *Good Friday Anthems* For Good Friday

*St. Andrew's Hosts Shoreline Chorale Rehearsals*

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#### April

S&CC Sings For Easter

*Waterford UCC*

*St. Andrew's Thankfully Accepts Donation of Choir Robes from*

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#### May & June

Music Ministries End-Of-Year Celebration Dinner

Instrumentalists at Anniversary Liturgy at 11 AM Eucharist

Musicians Sing/Play at Holy Advent, Clinton Gathering

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#### July

St. Andrew's Arts Camp!

*St. Andrew's Hosts Opera Theatre CT and Cappella Cantorum*

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#### September

Choirs began for the fall

*St. Andrew's Purchases Piano Cover for Choir Room Piano*



meals to freeze away for later use by the Loaves & Fishes ministry. The ministry team is most appreciative of their efforts. Additionally, an upright freezer was donated to provide adequate storage for the frozen meals and is located in the church kitchen. Having ready access to wholesome frozen meals has had the added benefit of providing meals more spontaneously when the need arises.

#### *Community Garden:*

For the fifth consecutive season, volunteers, Brenda and Gary Naegel, and Alice Hencir, cultivated two 20' x 20' garden plots at the town's Bauer Park on Copse Road. The church received a generous donation of seedlings from a Madison resident that, in turn, yielded several hundred pounds of produce, herbs, and flowers all of which were donated to the Madison Food Pantry. These donations provided fresh, nutritious food to our neighbors in need. In support of parish initiatives, some of the herbs were harvested and turned into pesto that was sold at the Holiday Fair.

We especially appreciate the efforts of Alice Hencir for gathering, cleaning, and delivering of produce to the Madison Food Pantry on a weekly basis. Alice has completed her final year of volunteering and Lois Nichols has volunteered to join the team in 2020. Volunteers are most welcome to join this ministry whether for occasional assistance or a regular rotation of a particular task.

### **Raise the Roof**

St. Andrew's had another active year supporting Raise the Roof, the shoreline connection to Habitat for Humanity of Greater New Haven. Mark Auletta, Jim Dodington, Marty Gerst, and Matt Valentine teamed up with Christ Episcopal Church in Guilford to do work at 352 Peck Street in April. The build was completed in May and is now the home of Maritz Rodriguez and Jason Villa.

Louise Beecher represented St. Andrews with Raise the Roof in the Guilford Fair parade in September.

Mark Auletta, Louise Beecher, Marty Gerst, Bill and Will Haydon, Heather Letkowski, Colin Morris, Gary Naegel, Agota Perry-Hill, and Matt Valentine participated in the build at 66 Sylvan Avenue in November. This home has now been completed and will be dedicated for the Lopez-Sandoval family in January.

St. Andrew's continued to support Raise the Roof's *Gala of Stars: Dancing for the Cause* fund-raiser with a pledge of \$2,000, as well as attendance by several members. In total the gala gathered \$78,000 to help families build their own home. Construction begins in January on another new home.

Parish members interested in volunteering can contact Matt Valentine at [matt\\_valentine@hotmail.com](mailto:matt_valentine@hotmail.com).

## Report of the Buildings and Grounds Committee 2019

- Septic system has been 2 years in coming--with many uphill hurdles this past year. I am pleased to announce that we finally received Madison Health Department approval of the engineered plans (after 3 system changes). The newest system--a Mantis-type system--is scheduled to go in beginning May 18, 2020 with a planned 2-week installation time. Bathroom use in the church and pre-school wing will be uninterrupted. The installation cost for this system will be less than the previous type by approximately \$4,000. New cost is \$57,000. (This number does not include what we have already paid out to Engineer and town offices.) Anderson Brothers will be doing the work. They indicated that they will also donate their time to help fix the pot holes in our parking lot.
- New Church Sign--which is the Eagle Scout project of Christopher Kearney Troop 490 based here at St. Andrews--can be completed once the septic is installed. Kearney came to the vestry last year and proposed a new sign for our church and some landscaping around the new sign. The wonderful new sign is ready and waiting in the Rectory garage. We have already received town approval to change the orientation of our sign and move it closer to the rock wall. This beautiful new sign will boost visibility of the church to traffic on Route 79 and create a greater sense of welcoming.
- Trees were removed from playground area and front lawn of church. The ones by the playground were dying and needed to be removed for safety. In addition, the other trees over the playground were trimmed. Trees removed from front lawn area were in the way of the new septic system installation and one memorial tree was dying. The memorial tree will be replaced once the septic is in place.
- Clean-up work days were a great success in 2019! We had 2 very successful clean-up work days. We cleaned out the garage which resulted filling up an 8-yard Bull Bag the first clean-up day, then a 20-yard dumpster the second day. (Public Service Announcement: PLEASE--if you have something to store (or get rid of) please talk to the Jr. Warden before leaving things in the garage.) We also re-organized the garage to provide people/groups/committees with space that they requested. Additional shelving was graciously donated by Louise Beecher. Thank you, Louise! Among many other projects done on these work days, Farmer Hall chairs were steam-cleaned (what a job!), motion lights were added on the garage and church building, light bulbs were changed, and many folks helped to prune bushes and work on the gardens around the church grounds. A lock-box for keys was added to the building. "No Thru Traffic" signs located in the garage rafters were taken down and installed in spots suggested by the Pre-School director, i.e., around back of the school wing. Thank you to Asher and his landscape crew for installing these. Thank you to all parishioners and families who helped—you did so much!
- Asher, our landscaper, now cares for the outside church grounds needs--including memorial garden. He does our mowing, mulching, snow removal, spring and fall clean up, weeding, adding of new plantings, pursuant to a monthly contracted rate.

- The Memorial Garden received special tending and clean-up this summer. A shout out goes to Asher and his landscape team, along with Jon and Colleen Heflin, for all their hard work. Another monument stone was added to the garden, as well..
- Historically, the Boy Scouts have done our leaf clean-up, but since that is now included in our landscaping contract, the Scouts helped to spread mulch from the tree work mentioned above in places that needed the TLC, Thank you to the Boy Scouts!
- An odor became apparent this fall in one pre-school classroom. Further inspection revealed some rot on the school building wall. Jose, our cleaner, now has a handyman, Saul, on his staff. Saul removed the rot as well as the A/C cut in the wall and repaired everything. The smell is now gone. (Saul also replaced some non-working emergency lighting in the school wing.) Many thanks to the Butler family, as well, whom I asked to remove all the shrubs from the back of the building. What a job!
- Kitchen vent hood was cleaned in June by Trans Clean. This is required yearly, according to the Fire Marshal.
- New smoke and carbon monoxide detectors were added, pursuant to new Fire Marshal/ Code requirements, with labeling in boiler room, utility room off kitchen, and hallway in school wing.
- Sink in Sacristy—non-working hot water line was removed and the sink was reconnected to main hot water line.
- Issues with ductless A/C units in Sanctuary--one has leaked water since day one and two others needed to be repaired for similar problems. R & B Refrigeration has been very difficult to work with. A very special thanks goes to Helen Van Antwerp for making the call that finally got them to take address these ongoing issues.
- Sanctuary heating issues--the furnace would randomly decide not to fire up. After a few visits from SCG the issue has been fixed. They also replaced some bad thermostats and helped diagnose a longtime issue of no heat in Sacristy and Hallway outside sacristy. Turns out that at some point in the past, a part was repaired but subsequent to that a thermostat was removed. So, a new thermostat wire needs to be run by an electrician. Most of the repairs/issues were covered under our service contract with SCG.
- Thermostat lock box was added to large classroom and key for teacher access is on a large wooden key fob to prevent it from being misplaced.
- Cabinet latches and locking cabinets in the preschool wing were fixed. Also, a locksmith made keys to our locking fire-proof file cabinet and to Anita's beautiful donated desk.
- Security cameras and door locking system was added for school safety. See the security report for more information on this. Many thanks to Ray Hencir for his tireless effort on this project!
- Solar panels were installed on the church roof and have been operational since late spring/early summer. Many thanks go Gary Naegel for his indefatigable pursuit of this project! Through much research and hard work, he found a company that had no out-of-pocket cost to the church. The solar panels are expected to save us about \$2,000 per year.
- School wing lighting was replaced with new LED fixtures which are greener and will help save on electric costs—particularly as these lights are in an area where lighting is on

nearly every day. We received excellent pricing which made the switch cost-effective. Next on the list—changing the Sacristy and hallway outside the Sacristy to LED fixtures. Also, a few defective lights were received for the school wing project. The LED lighting company will credit us the cost of the install of the defective lights being changed out.

- Dishwasher in kitchen was repaired twice this year.
- Urinals in both Men’s bathrooms were leaking water and have been repaired
- Rectory hot water heater was replaced. Water had a foul smell caused and testing performed by Waterflo revealed that there was iron build-up and they made adjustments to system. A carbon filter needs to be changed every 4 months. The new water heater is on demand and powered by natural gas.
- A list of future needs and cost of such maintenance and repairs is being compiled. Among the needs are: Parking lot paving; Sandblasting and painting of the steeple; Painting of the church, Rectory, and garage; Removal of individual A/C units in school wing walls as well as repairing those walls; adding ductless A/C units to school wing.

A big thanks to all those who helped throughout the year. Please reach out if you have a few minutes or hours to help with any buildings and grounds projects!

Respectfully submitted,  
Gary A. Cimmino,  
Jr. Warden

## **Report on Communications**

Keeping parishioners and others in our community abreast of the many activities at St. Andrew’s is quite a challenge. We use a number of tools (some say too many). Our printed weekly service bulletin includes announcements for all Sunday churchgoers. We update our website (<https://standrewsmadison.org/>) at least once a week. The website includes a link to our Google calendar, and it’s an ever-present source of information where the outside world, and any interested parishioners, can look up service times, learn about our many ministries, and download stewardship forms.

As often as we can, we post on our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/standrewsmadison](http://www.facebook.com/standrewsmadison)) to bring events and news to the attention of the many people who “like” us. We also use Constant Contact to routinely send out email “eBlasts” with information about each Sunday service and other upcoming events. And as the need arises, we send out email “alerts” with pressing information. Of course, our various groups and committees use email to schedule meetings and exchange information. Our High School and Middle School youth groups use Shutterfly to keep themselves organized.

But there is much work to be done! Our website is not very slick and not “phone-friendly” so members of our website task force—Matt Valentine, Tom Stott, Grant

Underwood, Gary Naegel and John Armstrong—will soon switch us over to a new website. We are also short of writers, editors, photographers and others able to prepare content for the website, email blasts, Facebook, and printed weekly bulletin. And lastly, we lack an organized effort to tell our story and increase our visibility in Madison and along the shoreline.

Special thanks to parish administrator Barb Gibbons, who takes the lead in preparing all our printed bulletins and our eblasts (and of course this annual report!).

--John Armstrong

### **Report of the Human Resources Committee**

In 2019, members of the Human Resources Committee reviewed St. Andrew's compliance as to records required to be kept by the church pursuant to various employment laws and regulations. Members of the Human Resources Committee also worked with St. Andrew's staff and Vestry members to ensure that the appropriate employees, Vestry members and volunteers were aware of their Safe Church Training obligations as required by the Diocese. Committee members also advised about upcoming opportunities to complete such training, including the training session conducted by ECCT representatives on September 25, 2019 in Farmer Hall. Many thanks go to Shelby Auletta for arranging a training session to be held in our home parish, i.e., at St. Andrew's, and for collecting/maintaining records of Safe Church Training completed by our Church School teachers and others. And, thanks are due to our parishioners who found the time in their busy schedules to attend Safe Church Training in addition to all the other ways they support St. Andrew's. In addition, members of the Human Resources Committee were asked by the by Vestry at the December 17, 2019 Vestry Meeting to work with representatives of the Vision and Planning Committee, via an Ad Hoc Budget Committee, to look more closely at budgeting issues and return with recommendations to the Vestry in 2020.

### **Food Ministry**

#### *Loaves & Fishes:*

In 2019, the Loaves & Fishes team continued to provide meals to parishioners who were in need of extra support during times of illness, the passing of a loved one, or the arrival of a new baby to name a few. Several adult members of St. Andrew's parish, prepared and delivered meals. And, this year, two St. Andrew's youth -- Isabelle Meachen and Zach Cheslog -- approached the team to provide assistance as part of their scouting requirements. Under the guidance of Heather Meachen, they hosted a parish potluck dinner inviting attendees to donate ingredients that they later turned into prepared meals to freeze away for later use by the Loaves & Fishes ministry. The ministry team is

most appreciative of their efforts. Additionally, an upright freezer was donated to provide adequate storage for the frozen meals and is located in the church kitchen. Having ready access to wholesome frozen meals has had the added benefit of providing meals more spontaneously when the need arises.

*Community Garden:*

For the fifth consecutive season, volunteers, Brenda and Gary Naegel, and Alice Hencir, cultivated two 20' x 20' garden plots at the town's Bauer Park on Copse Road. The church received a generous donation of seedlings from a Madison resident that, in turn, yielded several hundred pounds of produce, herbs, and flowers all of which were donated to the Madison Food Pantry. These donations provided fresh, nutritious food to our neighbors in need. In support of parish initiatives, some of the herbs were harvested and turned into pesto that was sold at the Holiday Fair.

We especially appreciate the efforts of Alice Hencir for gathering, cleaning, and delivering of produce to the Madison Food Pantry on a weekly basis. Alice has completed her final year of volunteering and Lois Nichols has volunteered to join the team in 2020. Volunteers are most welcome to join this ministry whether for occasional assistance or a regular rotation of a particular task.

## **Report on Healing Prayer**

Here at St. Andrew's in 2019 the worship of God, with a special focus on healing prayer, happened frequently outside the church walls and on days of the week other than Sunday.

Continuing a long-standing practice, a small group gathered on Wednesday mornings to learn about the church's long line of saints, and to celebrate holy eucharist using Rite I of the Book of Common Prayer. At the end of the service Shariya anointed each worshipper and prayed for the healing of any person or concern weighing on their heart.

Outside our walls, Shariya visited and brought the eucharist and healing prayer to a number of homebound or hospitalized parishioners during the year. Also, taking on a new ministry in 2019, parishioner John Armstrong, a lay assistant, began visiting Watrous Nursing Center in Madison and Apple Rehab Guilford, offering a service of morning prayer each month.

In addition, one evening a month another small group of parishioners gathered to pray with, and for, each other and for others they were concerned about. Despite the strife and suffering in the world around us, the group was able to find the warmth of God's love in its monthly gathering. In the coming year some members of that group, devoted to the practice of healing prayer, will again be offering to pray one-on-one with

worshippers at the back of the church during eucharist. The group hopes to welcome newcomers to its ministry of prayer in 2020.

Throughout the year—in homes, hospitals, nursing homes, Classroom #1—and in the midst of doubt and trouble—prayer helped the faithful cast away guilt, accept forgiveness and find healing.

--John Armstrong

### **Report of the Verger**

The Verger is the principal lay assistant to the clergy having responsibility for the care of the fabric of the church and for the coordination of the ministries of those who are participants in the service making sure that all is carried out with readiness and decency. It is customary that the Verger, vested in appropriate regalia and carrying his verge, lead all Processions and assures that the various participants are directed to their places during the liturgy.

The Verger may also train and schedule the service participants which include the lectors, chalice administrators, and acolytes. The verger is an important liturgical assistant especially when there is visiting or supply clergy leading our worship services.

In 2019 our roster of 11 acolytes divided into 3 teams continued to serve our worship community very well at the 9:30 service. They continue to learn and to better understand their roles as co-leaders in the worship services. They are also deepening their knowledge by understanding why things are done a certain way and the symbolic meaning behind it.

It has always been a great privilege to serve with, not only the acolytes, but all of the lay liturgical assistants. Thank you. I also want to thank my co-verger, Jordan Mattei. I want to acknowledge her constant dedication and commitment to the role of verger.

I am looking forward to an even better 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

David R. Mikus

Verger

## Rector's Annual Report

Here we are gathered this morning at St. Andrew's on our Annual Parish Meeting Sunday, which this year just happens to be February 2<sup>nd</sup>, a day referred to throughout this nation as Groundhog Day. But by our liturgical calendar, it is the Feast of the Presentation, or if I may use a lovelier designation it is Candlemas.

Candlemas occurs 40 days after Christmas – and our Gospel lesson today, taken from Luke, moves us imaginatively into what the Holy Family was doing after Jesus' birth.

Mary, Joseph and the infant travel to Jerusalem - they come to the Temple as observant Jews, following the customary ritual of the faithful, to present Jesus before God.

And they bring another gift as well, a pair of doves. There is a subtle poignancy about their choice. The rich brought sheep as an offering, but the law allowed the poor to give doves instead. By this detail, then, are we reminded that Jesus is presented in the Temple as one who finds his place among society's 'least'.

In the Temple the new parents encounter two elders – Simeon and Anna – who, for the entirety of their lives, had yearned for the fulfilment of God's promise. Now, it appears, they discover such fulfilment in the infant Christ.

Simeon takes the baby, and cradling him in his arms, he sings his praise. His eyes behold God's salvation; he glimpses in Jesus revelation and glory. Basking in the peace such vision bestows Simeon can, serenely, take his leave of life.

But for Mary, who still has much of her journey ahead, the way will not always be smooth. Jesus will reveal "the inner thoughts" of many, Simeon says, and such disclosure will bring opposition and turmoil – conflict which, we who are privy to the rest of the Gospel story know, will lead to the cross, and thereby deeply pierce a mother's soul.

Luke's narrative paints a vivid portrait of communal faith.

The infant, God Incarnate, at the very beginning of his earthly life is at the center; the new parents, wide open with hope to the tentative joys and potential sorrows their roles will bring, constitute a ring around him; and the other figures, eager to engage and invest in relationships shaped by the hand of God, form concentric circles surrounding.

The multi-faceted, multi-generational, tapestry this scripture conveys is such that, should our theological imagination not fail, there is room for each of us in the story. And so, we would do well to ask - where do we find ourselves in the narrative? What do we yearn to offer to God? What gift do we bring? How do we present ourselves before our Maker? What privileges and responsibilities does life lived in the context of a community of faith bestow?

With those questions echoing, we turn to some of the work of an Annual Parish Meeting. Let us take a quick look at the year past, make a cursory survey of our present state, and envision the prospect of our future. In doing so, let us recognize that it takes all of us – each and every one of us – to weave the beautiful fabric that is our shared life.

First, to a reflection on the Sacraments and Sacramental Rites of the church -

In 2019, St. Andrew's was fortunate to welcome 5 new members through Baptism. This included an entire family who were baptized in the Long Island Sound at our parish picnic.

Two young couples were married during the year. And we had a marvelous celebration of 11 couples who marked 50 + years of wedded life. Their fidelity is a blessing that spills over to gladden us all!

We had 9 burials at St. Andrews in 2019. These occasions granted our congregation holy opportunities to tend those experiencing grief. Services for relatives of parishioners, memorials for one-time parishioners who had drifted away, and recollections of those still integral to our common life as a parish - these constitute communal privilege. And so, we pause today, to remember with deep gratitude – Terry Abbott, Valerie Hayward, David Hill and Anne Pyne.

Two liturgies in our Memorial Garden – the Kindling of the New Fire and Lighting of the Paschal Candle on Easter Eve, and the reading of names on All Souls' Day – were opportunities to reconnect, almost viscerally, with our belief in the Resurrection. Such events are as much about the living as they are about those who have gone before. It was in a setting not unlike our Garden after all that Mary Magdalene encountered the Risen Christ and became the first apostle to proclaim conviction about eternal life. I encourage you to bring our children to participate in such occasions – because tangible expressions of light in the darkness convey truth to young hearts and minds more than words do.

In February 2019, in compliance with a resolution passed by the Episcopal Church in Connecticut – music, sermons, litanies, presentations and a forum were devoted to the subjects of Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation. It is our intention to continue such work in the years ahead.

Our life together is, at its core, shaped by worship – we are not unlike those figures in the Temple in the Gospel scene – Jesus is at our center. And so, we continue to offer gatherings in a wide array of liturgical styles in order to more truly meet the diverse needs of a varied population. We are attentive to the seasons of the Church Year and to events in the world around us, so that in our prayer we seek to walk with Jesus and our neighbors around the globe.

I remain so thankful for Grant Underwood, the choir, musicians, vergers, acolytes, lectors, chalice bearers, flower guild and ushers who enhance our worship in so many ways. Mary Potenziani, and the Altar Guild, serve faithfully in what is often unseen, underappreciated, but essential ministry. Mary's quiet constancy and remarkable flexibility make my heart glad. She steps down from her role as Director now – and I give thanks for her and for Cathy Golden who will take on her tasks.

In 2019 we walked with Jillian Morrison in her journey of discernment – and we rejoice that she has been formally admitted into the ordination process.

### Care of our buildings and grounds -

Our buildings and grounds are the venues in which we offer expressions of God's hospitality to each other and to our neighbors. We are particularly indebted to those who steward our property diligently. Gary Cimmino, who has given much time to, and invested sweat equity in, his role as Junior Warden over the past years, deserves our heartfelt thanks. Gary is stepping down for what I hope will be a period of refreshment. Gary Naegel led the effort to obtain our solar panels providing a vital step in our attempts at conscientious environmental stewardship. Ray Hencir headed the enhancement of security in the preschool wing – the new system is a boon to the school and to us. More people than I can possibly name, or count, have pitched in to labor alongside fellow parishioners in a whole host of buildings and grounds projects.

### Formation and Education –

Mary Merkle-Scotland, Shelby Auletta, Grant Underwood and several volunteers encourage the curiosity of our children and youth. Together, they help create an open atmosphere in which theological discovery occurs through worship, music, art, study, mission endeavors, service projects, fellowship and fun. We heard from HOME youth missionaries last summer and will again in 2020 – and we anticipate with joy the Camino pilgrimage which will occur in the spring.

The Arts Camp and Vacation Bible School continue to be vibrant collaborative ventures. Representatives of St. Andrew's work with members of the wider community and thereby deepen our engagement in God's mission. St. Andrew's preschool remains the source of great joy. Jane Krause, as our vestry liaison to the school, has invested many hours with the dedicated and gifted preschool staff.

### Outreach and Service –

Outreach efforts by St. Andrew's to neighbors along the shoreline, and in far flung places around the globe, continue to be on the hearts and minds of many. Matt Valentine led teams on Habitat builds, others toiled in the Community Garden, or at the Food Pantry, or for Meals on Wheels. Ministries of care to members of our own congregation – Loaves and Fishes, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Carol singing, Prayer Group – touched the lives of many, in gentle expressions of love. John Armstrong now conducts worship gatherings in local nursing homes. Such ventures are inspired and inspiring - and I hope we are all able to learn more about how we may each participate. Throughout the years Barbara Gibbons has provided St. Andrew's continuity in the parish office – that long tenure has made her the familiar voice and face in this place.

### Financial Stewardship and Oversight –

St. Andrew's is blessed with excellent Endowment and Stewardship Committees. Rob Butler headed the former in 2019 and Laura Downes the latter. They have served us graciously and well. Colleen Heflin, our Treasurer for the past two years, has been extraordinary in her dedication. To an extent more than we fully recognize, she has given time and focus to bring transparency to our accounting. Her efforts to implement sound practices and procedures have been tireless – and Jane Marin, our bookkeeper has been a wonderful aide. Colleen has helped the vestry reckon with the implications of

our deficit budgets, and as we contend with hard realities we will attempt to do so with a spirit of hope and trust. Colleen steps down as Treasurer now having brought us a long way – I give thanks to God for her tenacity and clarity and for the sacrificial gift of energy she has devoted to a challenging task. I am grateful to Anastasia King and Debbie Brown who worked throughout the year to ensure our compliance with diocesan guidelines in Human Resources and Personnel matters.

Looking ahead -

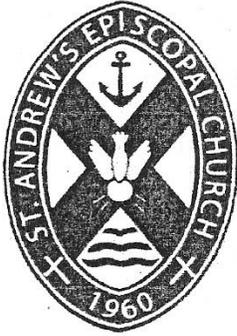
As was stated at our last Annual Meeting, a Vision and Planning Committee was appointed in 2019. Nancy Karas with her gift for facilitation convened and led their efforts. They began their work in the spring and have continued to meet regularly. You will hear from them shortly. I am grateful for the committee's enthusiasm as they engaged in this labor of love. Their findings catalyzed the vestry decision to participate with the Episcopal Church in Connecticut's *Joining Jesus* venture in 2020. St. Andrew's is one of fourteen congregations availing themselves of the program to shore up financial resources. Synergy is a wonderful thing – even as the Committee emphasized communications as a growing edge for us – another task force, convened by Grant Underwood, and led by Tom Stott and Matt Valentine, has been at work on a new parish website.

Lay Leadership –

St. Andrew's has tremendously talented and marvelously generous lay leadership. Our Wardens, Gary and Gary; our Clerk, Louise Beecher, who wears more hats than anyone else in this congregation; our Treasurer, Colleen; and our outgoing vestry class – Ray Hencir, Anastasia King and Matt Valentine – continue to inspire me with their dedication. Reese Puchalski, our 2019 youth vestry member, has been a steady and delightful participant in what can often feel like tedious meetings. And our Convention Delegates, Debbie Brown and Heather Meachen have been joyful companions, as we attempted to represent St. Andrew's at the diocese. Heather steps down from her role this year. Please join with me in applauding these leaders who are fearless in their service to God!

And let us now return for a moment to that Temple scene in Jerusalem. May it inform how we continue our life as a community of faith. Let us keep Jesus always at the center – and may we, old and young, find our place in the circles surrounding. May we gather rejoicing in the Light of Christ – Let us weave together our own various offerings of talent, time, treasure and skill; so that we may present a lovely communal tapestry to our God!

Shariya +



## NOTICE

The Annual Meeting of St Andrew's Episcopal Church will be held on  
Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020  
immediately after the 10:00 service

### VESTRY NOMINATIONS

#### Officers

*Serving a 1-year term ending Jan. 31, 2021*

Sr. Warden: Gary Naegel  
Jr. Warden: Matt Valentine  
Treasurer: Kristen Garnett  
Clerk: Louise Beecher

#### Vestry Members

*Serving a 3-year term ending Jan. 31 2023*

Chris Abbott  
Lauren Dodington  
David Mikus

#### Youth Representative

*Serving a 1-year term ending Jan. 31, 2021*

Zachary Cheslog

#### Diocesan Convention Delegates

*Term expiring Jan. 31, 2021*

Lucinda Embersits  
Debbie Brown

#### Alternate Delegates

Mary Potenziani

Submitted by:

*Clerk of Vestry*

#### Nominating Committee

Rev. Shariya Molegoda, Anastasia King, Rob Butler, Rebecca Rastetter, Helen Kitzman,  
Gary Naegel and Tom Stott.

**NOTE:** as per the by-laws:

*"Any other qualified person shall also be eligible for election at the Annual Meeting provided his/her name, endorsed by at least five members, shall be filed with the Clerk for nomination at least two weeks before the meeting." (no later than Jan. 15, 2020)*