

**Reports submitted for the  
Annual Business Meeting  
of Christ Church Detroit**  
Sunday, January 30, 2022  
1:00 p.m. on Zoom

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## **Vestry**

Denise Crenshaw, Senior Warden

Your vestry has attended to the business of the church in concert with our spiritual leaders: our beloved rector, Emily Williams Guffey, and associate rector, Anthony Estes. This year of COVID challenges and major building issues has been unique, inspiring, frustrating, and hopeful.

For the first six months, the vestry met bimonthly and then monthly. At first, each meeting took place on Zoom; in September, we started embracing the opportunity to meet in person, while some continued to join by Zoom. We are grateful for virtual connections, which allow members to participate even when quarantined or out-of-state. Each meeting was framed with prayer, reflection, and Bible study to remind us of our opportunity and responsibility as Christ's servants.

The majority of our time was spent in three areas:

- Consulting with Rev. Emily on worship plans, as we transitioned from one level of pandemic response to another. Our worship ranged from virtual and outdoor services for Ash Wednesday, to virtual and indoor services on Christmas Eve. Throughout, we sought above all to keep our parishioners healthy and safe, while being mindful of the tradeoffs involved.
- Working with the Buildings & Grounds Committee on known and new challenges in the upkeep of our beautiful, yet aging, campus. You can read more in that committee's report.
- Seeking to be good stewards of the church's finances. We commend the Finance Committee for their efforts towards greater transparency in the

operating budget, the endowment, and other long-term investments. But responsibility for managing the funds entrusted to the church by its members, past and present, ultimately resides with the Vestry, and we took that responsibility seriously. That, and the need for financial transparency as we prepare to launch a capital campaign, prompted us to vote for a full 2021 audit. We also repeatedly sought, and sometimes received, funding from outside sources.

If Christ Church is to continue as a beacon of hope in Detroit, we need to know how our buildings and finances can support ministries to our members and neighbors, both now and in the future. We therefore commissioned an assessment of the state of our facilities, and a feasibility study regarding a capital campaign, both of which were conducted in the early months of the year. This summer, after reviewing both studies, we hired the nonprofit Partners for Sacred Places to provide capital campaign consulting services. You will hear more about that campaign in the coming months. I ask you for your support as we seek to build on the legacy we have inherited from the parishioners who came before us.

The Vestry's work wasn't all buildings and money, though. The Vestry continually aimed to align resources of time and talent with our church's mission and ministries. In the spring, the Vestry conducted a Mutual Ministry Review with our Rector, with the guidance of our new Canon for Congregational Development, the Rev. Canon Ellen Ekevag. The Vestry also continued its leadership of Emily's Angels, whose purpose is to support our isolated parishioners during the pandemic. We reviewed parish surveys on topics from views on resuming in-person worship to interest in supporting an Afghan refugee family. Vestry members also served as liaisons to ministry teams, including Worship (Mary Brown, Denise Crenshaw), Education (Carolyn Maher), Parish Life (Claire Brown, Jose Rodriguez), Outreach (Anthony Mitchell, Ruth Boeder), and Operations Support (Howard Matthew, Desmond Jones, John Leney, Jim Treece).

Each of your Vestry members volunteered untold hours to the various programs outlined in this annual report and brought their shared vision and wisdom to the discussions and actions taken by the myriad volunteers in our congregation. This extraordinary group of individuals has brought their talents, energy, and love to this ministry of the church, and has been an inspiration to us all.

My faith has been enriched and nourished as a result of our time together. Thank you to each of you for all your graciousness and kindnesses.

## **Outreach Committee**

Seth Lloyd, Chair

Despite the effects of the pandemic, the Outreach Committee continued its activities in 2021, utilizing - and even leveraging - Zoom for its eleven meetings. Embracing Zoom's capacity to connect us across distances, we invited representatives from partner organizations to meet with us on Zoom early in the year. At a time when in-person volunteering was difficult if not ill-advised, it was a great gift to Zoom with representatives from the Pope Francis Center, Crossroads of Michigan, Meals on Wheels, Episcopal Relief & Development, Hands Across the Nile, and the Advancement Project. Each conversation deepened our awareness of needs and our resolve to address them.

For example, when a representative from Pope Francis Center told us in a February Zoom meeting that their most pressing material need was for socks, we organized a Lenten Sock Drive, and collected so many pairs (1,337!) that the Center was overwhelmed! In September, Committee member Ruth Boeder coordinated a fundraiser for the Pope Francis Center's efforts to provide permanent supportive housing in Detroit, which raised \$3000.

When, at an April Zoom meeting, Ashley Carter (daughter of Josephine Powell & Al Carter) told us about the Advancement Project's work to increase justice in the bail system, particularly among incarcerated mothers in southeast Michigan, we sent \$5,000 from Committee funds to The Bail Project for the 2021 Mother's Day Bailout, matched by \$5,000 from the estate of late parishioner Nancy vom Steeg for a total of \$10,000. The Committee also voted to expend the amount in the parish budget for Outreach (\$2500) on relief for Haiti following the devastating earthquake there in July, through Episcopal Relief & Development.

Throughout the first half of the year, as we continued to meet and worship from home, we developed alternate ways to collect material goods for Crossroads and the Pope Francis Center, including drop-offs at drive-through parish events like "Peace, Love, & Lent" or at "depots" at certain Committee members' doorsteps, and encouraging financial contributions that were used to purchase items (such as socks, and then diapers) in bulk. We also continued our attempts to safely maintain a Blessing Box outside of the church - a "little free pantry" of nonperishable food and hygiene items - however the box and its contents repeatedly were damaged by weather and passersby. We have put the box into storage and hope to try again at another time.

When the summer and fall brought opportunities to volunteer in-person again, we were very excited to do so. On October 19th, we returned to Gleaners Community Food Bank for a work session for the first time since the pandemic began; the eight volunteer slots filled quickly, and all had a great time.

The parish has participated for well over thirty years in the Rotating Shelter program organized by Cass Community Social Services. 2020 was an exception, the program having been canceled because of the pandemic. In 2021, however, although Cass continued to house its homeless guests itself, it invited churches to provide meals for the 54 guests. We swung into action and for one week in early November, more than thirty members of the parish assembled lunches and helped prepare dinners, and delivered them to Cass each day. The program would not have been possible without the selfless work of Genet Barthwell, who, except for one dinner prepared by Evelyn Sanom and Carolyn Maher, prepared most of the food for dinners, and ordered most of the food that volunteers then assembled into lunches and breakfasts. Cass was very grateful for our assistance, and the committee is grateful to all those who participated.

When it became clear in August that the United States would evacuate tens of thousands of Afghani men, women, and children to the U.S., the Committee agreed to explore whether the parish should sponsor a refugee family, just as we sponsored a Syrian family a few years ago. We held parish meetings in September, facilitated by Eileen MacDonald and Ruth Boeder, to explain what would be involved and see whether there was support for this undertaking. The survey results were clear: a significant number of parishioners wanted to sponsor a family and were willing to work on the project. Margo Norris and Mary Herring are now the co-chairs of this new initiative.

Despite the obstacles the pandemic creates for in-person activities, in December the Committee sponsored another Advent Diaper Drive for Crossroads' comprehensive parenting program. For the eighth year in a row, parishioners, neighbors, and friends were most generous, purchasing diapers or contributing money toward the purchase of diapers. The goal was 24,000 diapers, yet the grand total was 30,137 diapers! The Committee thanks Eileen MacDonald and Sally LePla for their excellent leadership.

Christ Church has a long and impressive history of responding to the needs of the community, and indeed 2021 was no exception!

## **Buildings & Grounds**

Terry Lloyd, Chair

2021 was a difficult year with access to the church buildings much more limited due to the pandemic, and with many of our events virtual, yet talented and committed committee members continued to identify and seek solutions for the maintenance of our facilities.

As the year began, the first of three stages of the belltower's restoration was underway, having begun in spring 2020. This stage reached completion in May. If you look up at the bell tower, you'll see that the north (front) and east sides look really nice! Very fortunately, due to the generosity of several parish families, we were able to proceed with the second stage as well, which began in October. The second stage focuses on the west elevation, and will be completed in spring 2022.

In January, Committee members identified that fiber optic cable is the only type of internet service strong enough to support our new need for livestreaming, and is also the only one available in our area. Roger Maki-Schramm, Desmond Jones, and Associate for Operations Sarah Tribelhorn pursued the process toward its installation. Although a contract was signed in February for a summer installation, there were several pandemic-related delays, and the fiber optic cable is scheduled to be installed, finally, in early 2022. Once the cable is in, we will begin the purchase and installation of new streaming and recording equipment. Howard Matthew is also working closely on this project, and we are very grateful for the expertise that Pastor Anthony Estes brought to it during his time with us.

Also in February, architects from Quinn Evans, an historic preservation firm that has overseen major projects on our campus for more than 25 years, began a comprehensive assessment of our facilities. The report was completed in June, and identified a number of short-term and long-term projects necessary for the health and safety of our buildings.

In the spring, we embraced opportunities that warm weather provides. Facilities Manager KaClarence Haynes led a series of work sessions to care for the grounds. Thanks to all who participated! Detroit Steeplejack also stopped by on several nice days to perform several small repairs to the roofs and downspouts of the church and Ledyard Hall.

In July, long-awaited repairs to the floor in the sanctuary began. After a worship service in July, many parishioners helped to carry pew cushions, hymnals, and other items out of the sanctuary and into storage, so that they would not get damaged during construction. The restoration of the aisle sub-floors was completed at the end of August, however, when the replacement tiles arrived and were not what we were expecting, the search for replacement tiles began all over again. Fortunately, due to the generosity of an anonymous donor, we have been able to source authentic, custom tiles from a local studio, and we anticipate they

will be installed in spring 2022. Once the new tiles are ready, the original linoleum floor underneath the pews will be replaced by a black material that looks just like it, only new. It is amazing to think how many people have stood upon that floor during its 160 years.

Unfortunately, the summer also brought a couple of setbacks. The Sibley House air conditioning broke. A new unit was installed, with Barry Dickson and KaClarence Haynes overseeing the project. And in June, July, and August, rains hit Detroit with historic volumes of water, and the Ledyard Hall basement flooded repeatedly. The water damage was extensive, making the lower-level rooms unusable. Upon inspection it was determined that there were many sources of water entry, both below and above grade, around Ledyard Hall. To determine the sources of water, we have been having drains scoped, roofs inspected, and crawl spaces examined to make the building watertight again. Quinn Evans is now helping us develop a comprehensive plan involving landscaping, tuckpointing, waterproofing walls, gutter and downspout improvements, and window well refurbishing to secure the building envelope.

In September, we prepared for our worship services to return to the sanctuary. For safety, we researched and purchased three large high-volume air purifiers and two small ones for use in areas where people gather and engage in activities or ministries that pose higher risk for COVID-19. The large air purifiers are stationed in the chancel during worship, and in the choir room during rehearsals, and also are brought into Ledyard Hall for events; the small ones are used most frequently in Cary Lounge and the Nursery.

In September a new water heater was installed, replacing one that had broken in early 2020. There were some glitches to the process, such as the delivery of the incorrect size water heater, then a second heater was brought to site damaged, and the third heater was fine but damaged the hall flooring tiles while being installed. We are working with the installer to repair the floor, and we are grateful to the leadership of Howard Matthew, KaClarence Haynes, and Barry Dickson.

Also in September, organ pipes in the west chamber of the rear gallery (balcony) somehow dislodged from the wall and toppled over. Very fortunately, no one and nothing else was hurt, but nearly all the pipes in that chamber are "totaled" and it will be a very long process toward their restoration and replacement. We are working with our insurance company and engineers to determine causation.

In December, Barry Dickson fabricated and installed a new handrail leading down the stairs from the Baptistry to the Vesting Sacristy. Now our priests in their long robes will be able to manage the stairs in a safer fashion.

The B&G Committee is now meeting with this new Capital Campaign committee to determine what needs to be funded by the annual B&G budget and what is to be funded as capital improvements.

## Finance Committee

Jane Forbes, Chair

The mission of the Finance Committee is to assist the Vestry with the management of the financial resources of the parish. Basic functions performed by the Committee in 2021 included preparing proposed budgets, reviewing investments, seeing that receipts and expenditures of operating and special purpose funds were appropriately recorded, arranging for outside review of statements and recommending updates to financial policies and procedures to the Vestry.

The Committee also works on special projects as needed and assists other parish groups in carrying out their activities. In 2021, those projects included the following:

- *Investment Reporting:* The Church continues to invest endowments and other restricted and unrestricted funds in a pooled "Growth & Income Fund" administered by the Trustees of the Diocese of Michigan. Without changing the investments themselves, members of the Committee worked with the Diocese and the Vestry to establish a revised form of quarterly report under which the assets, earnings and dividends of each of the six "funds" included in the account are reported separately, making it easier for the parish to assure that the purposes of the funds are being carried out.
- *Capital Campaign Support:* The Finance Committee has been working with the Vestry, the Building & Grounds Committee and the Capital Campaign leadership to arrange funding for the repairs being done on the bell tower and the sanctuary floor and to keep track of campaign receipts and disbursements and the status of agreements governing the construction, supervision and financing of campaign projects.
- *Woodbridge Parking Lot Lease:* Members of the Finance Committee and the Buildings & Grounds Committee negotiated a lease with a new tenant for the Woodbridge Street parking lot.
- *Grant Support:* On several occasions, members of the Committee furnished financial and other information for grant applications seeking support for capital campaign projects and other ministries.

Many thanks to the members of the Committee who served last year, including Senior Warden Denise Crenshaw, Christine Galli, the Rev. Emily Williams Guffey, Seth Lloyd, Treasurer Howard Matthew, Megan Norris, and Jim Treece. Thanks also to Glen Olivache who has continued to help with the preparation of annual financial statements. We were grateful to welcome Bookkeeper Robyn Campagne aboard in May, and we appreciate her skilled support. We also especially appreciate the assistance provided by former Associate for Operations, Sarah Tribelhorn, who has carried out her duties with diligence and grace, often under difficult circumstances.

## **Stewardship Committee**

Jim Treece, Chair

The Stewardship Committee seeks to promote a culture of gratitude and generosity in our parish, as part of our spiritual growth into the teachings of Jesus. In practical terms, the committee had two main activities in 2021.

The annual pledge drive encouraged parishioners to "guesstimate" how much they will be giving to the church in 2022. This reminds us to be intentional in our support of the church's ministries to members and our neighbors, and allows the Vestry to plan the coming year's activities and ministries responsibly. This year's drive was conducted knowing that a capital campaign will be in full swing in 2022. Although annual giving is not the same as giving special gifts to meet one-time needs, it's not unreasonable to think that for some folks, the two requests overlap somewhat.

As of January 20, 2022, Christ Church had received pledges from 100 households, down from 104 a year earlier, in part due to the deaths of some members. Yet the amount pledged rose by almost \$14,000, or 3 percent, to \$427,092 from \$412,905 a year earlier. This is an enormous commitment of generosity by our parish in the midst of a pandemic that doesn't seem to abate. We thank everyone who pledged, as well as those who plan to give but did not make a pledge, for their support for the church's ministries and missions.

Our other main activity was the "Faith, Legacy, and Dignity" series. These talks, most of which are available on the church's YouTube channel for viewing, dealt with planning for the end of one's life, or that of a loved one. They covered funeral planning in general and during a pandemic, dealing with grief, and ways that parishioners can fund future ministry. The latter suggested parishioners remember the church in their estate plans, so as to leave a legacy that will share your faith with others for generations to come.

I invite everyone to include the church in your plans. You don't need a huge estate to have a will, and if you don't have a will, the government--not you--will decide what happens to your assets. You can designate how your gift to the church will be used, but frankly, it may be better if you allow the church to determine where the need is greatest. After all, nobody knew three years ago that we would need an online video ministry. Also, I happen to know that the diocese received a bequest back in the 1920s designated to help children



suffering from tuberculosis--not exactly a top concern today. That said, Christ Church will of course honor the wishes of any designated bequest.

FYI, the first 10% of all undesignated bequests go to the Outreach Fund and another 10% to the maintenance of our buildings, per past Vestry resolutions. The remainder is split between current needs and our long-term undesignated endowment.

I wish to thank members of the Stewardship Committee: Susan Larsen, Jose Rodriguez, Beth Ann Tesluk, and Rev. Emily.