



ST. ANDREW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Annual Report 2020

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Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda
January 31, 2021

11 am: Members [log onto Zoom](#)

- Welcome & Opening Prayer – The Rev. Brenda Sol, Rector
- Approval of 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes & 2021 Agenda – Jim McLennan, Sr. Warden
- Rector's Address – Brenda+
- Introduction of Vestry Candidates – Betsy Vaughn, Nominating Committee Chair
- Explanation of Bylaw Change Needed (*No Proxy Voting Allowed*) – Brenda+
- Call for Votes on Candidates & Bylaw Amendment – Jim
- Stewardship, Finance and Budget Presentation – Hope Mitchem, Treasurer / Erin Sacco Pineda, Controller
 - Budget Questions from the Congregation
- Announcement of all Election Results – Brenda+
 - Appointment of 2021 Sr. Warden
- Remarks – Jim
 - Building Project Updates
 - Questions & Comments from the Congregation
- Recognitions – Brenda+
 - Senior Warden's Address – Jim
 - Continuing & Outgoing Vestry Members – Brenda+
 - Staff – Brenda+
 - Servant Ministry Award – Brenda+
- Adjournment

2020 Vestry Roster

Name	Term Expiration
Jim McClellan, Senior Warden	January 2021
Harry Heyligers, Junior Warden	January 2022
Neville Willsmore, Clerk	January 2023
Hope Mitchem, Treasurer	January 2022
Adam Belt	January 2023
Ed Deane	January 2023
Rev. Lark Diaz	January 2022
Sharon Doar-Toth	January 2023
Jenna Duston	January 2022
Marc Graham	January 2021
Rev. Richard Hogue	Associate Priest
Karen Johnson	January 2021
Wes Lavender	January 2021
Rev. Brenda Sol	Rector

2021 Vestry Nominees

JULIAN BETTS

Julian and his wife Carolyn Lee have been members of St. Andrew's since 2000. Both appreciate the lively community that the church provides. Their daughters Phoebe and Ariel have benefited from many of the church's activities, especially the youth service trips.

Julian has served the church in a number of ways. Eons ago, when his younger daughter, now a high school senior (!), was three and four, he and another dad, Paul Garrison, led Sunday School lessons for that age group. Julian served as a chaperone for the week-long Youth Service Trips on the last six summer trips, acting as trip leader in 2016. Julian organized the monthly Parish Breakfast from 2016 to 2020 when the pandemic forced us to pause.

In 2018 he participated in the Dreamcatcher Committee that asked parishioners about what they saw as the greatest needs at the church, and at Mother Brenda's request, he served as co-chair of the Capital Campaign in 2019. Julian has served on the Stewardship Committee from 2018 through today.

Julian is a professor of economics at UCSD, where he runs a research center that studies the economics of education. In his spare time, he likes to hike, garden, and golf.

Julian would gladly serve on the vestry at this time. He would like to help work with others as we transform into reality the dreams for St. Andrew's that he heard during the

2018 Dreamcatcher work—when we enter into the building phase for the church campus.

TIMOTHY KRUGER

Hi! I am very excited to be a candidate for the vestry in 2021. I have been a part of St. Andrew's for a little under two years and it has provided me with a great sense of community, belonging, and reflection.

I am originally from Seattle and moved to San Diego in 2017. My wife Marie and I have a nearly two-year-old son, William. I work in the cellular phone industry, which up until COVID saw me traveling across the US weekly. In my spare time I like to work on cars and happily complete house upgrades (yes, Marie is reading this).

I look forward to contributing to St. Andrew's ongoing success and I look forward to getting to know you all.

KARA LEWANDOWSKI

My husband and I moved to Carlsbad with our 6-month-old son in the summer of 2014. We relocated from the East Coast for his job and being a new mom, in a new town, without knowing anyone was overwhelming. It was important to me that my son grew up with religion from an early age, so I set out to find a church. I wanted us to be part of an active congregation with a strong sense of community, such as the one in which I was raised.

I spent a few months attending services at both Catholic and Episcopal churches in the area (I had been raised Catholic, but attended an Episcopal high school and had been married in the church years earlier).

I remember my first time at St. Andrew's very clearly. I remember it just feeling "right" upon walking in and then feeling like Mother Brenda was talking directly to me in her sermon—as she addressed challenges I was experiencing at that moment.

In non-COVID times, I volunteer in the nursery, serve as a teacher in the Little Explorer room, shop for the food pantry, am a bread runner, was co-chair of the 2019 Harvest Festival, and served as the interim Sunday School Director prior to the wonderful Erin O'Brien joining us.

While I have found immense personal fulfillment in volunteering, my greatest joy is watching my children learn about God and develop their faith in a community where they are free to explore and ask questions. I also love the "Beatle Mania" they experience seeing Mother Brenda outside the church when we drive up. She is their personal rock star. I am honored to be considered for a vestry position so I may give back to the community that has given me so much. I hope everyone is doing their best to stay strong and safe right now and I pray for the day we can all worship inside St. Andrew's walls together again.

NANCY MCLENNAN

Hi Everyone. I would like to introduce myself as a candidate for the vestry. My name is Nancy McLennan and my husband Jim and I moved to Carlsbad 18 years ago. We became members of St. Andrew's about 15 years ago.

I graduated from Cal State San Marcos with a Bachelor's degree in Communications. I have for many years volunteered in numerous organizations, such as St. Anthony's Claret Elementary School, Servite High School, and Madre de High School, where my two boys, Kenny and David, attended. I also volunteered for the Boys Scouts of America Troop 1170 and I am currently a committee member for the Paul Ecke Jr. YMCA Poinsettia Ball. I am looking forward to serving on the St. Andrew's vestry, where I can use my past volunteer experience to help make the St. Andrew's community a better place for all.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

Annual Meeting Minutes

Sunday, January 26, 2020

The Annual meeting of the Parish of St. Andrews was held in the church at 11:15 am on January 26, 2020. The meeting was called to order by Mother Brenda.

Attendance: 64

Start of Meeting

A welcome was provided by Mother Brenda, Rector, and an opening prayer was provided by Rev. Richard Hogue, Associate Rector.

Minutes and Agenda

2019 Minutes: M/S/Approved; 2020 Agenda: M/S/Approved

Introduction of Vestry Candidates

The following candidates were introduced:

- Adam Belt
- Ed Deane
- Sharon Doar-Toth
- Neville Willsmore

Jim McLennan, Sr. Warden called for votes to be cast for the candidates.

Stewardship, Finance and Budget Presentation

The financial report was reviewed by Hope Mitchem. In addition to the usual activities, the financial team developed and adopted a financial committee charter and policy.

Overall, operating income fell short by about \$7,500. We were over-budget in

administration due to overlap between our Parish Administrators, Alison Lee and Gillian Campbell. There was a net operating loss of about \$9,500.

Hope also presented the budget for 2020. This budget includes a 2.5% cost of living increase for lay staff and clergy, \$7,500 for the audit of financial statements, and increased hours for the Director of Children & Families Ministry. Some funds from the Freed by Faith fund have been utilized to pay towards the salary for the Associate Rector.

In 2019, the Vestry approved the use of Capital Campaign funds to pay off existing mortgage on the church to avoid the interest and in 2020, we will continue to pay the same amount from the operating budget into the Capital Campaign to replenish these funds. The Capital Campaign will not otherwise be utilized as reserves in any way.

Remarks:

Jim McLennan, Sr. Warden, provided remarks about the work of the vestry in 2019, including the architectural plans for the upcoming renovation to the parish hall and campus project.

Julian Betts and Catherine Campbell were thanked for their work as co-chairs on the Capital Campaign Committee in 2019, along with all of the committee members.

Ray Burnett, Harry Heyligers, Chase Fields, and Debbie Hickson were thanked for their work on the Architectural Committee in 2019. It is anticipated that we may be able to begin construction in approximately 6-9 months.

Harry Heyligers was also recognized for his work as Junior Warden, responsible for buildings and grounds, including his work renovating the kitchen in the preschool building.

Mother Brenda provided a report about the health of the parish and our engagement with the community, and thanked the parish and Rev. Richard for their support during her sabbatical in 2019. Questions from the parish were discussed.

Rev. Richard provided a report on the status of the Community Organizing Committee, the Young Adults Group, and the 2019 and planned 2020 confirmation classes.

Constance provided a report on the Youth Group and success of combined time with St. Andrew's and Bethlehem Lutheran high school youth groups, the 2019 confirmation class, and the goals for blending middle school youth groups at both churches in 2020 as well.

No additional questions were raised.

Recognitions

Brenda recognized the staff including the following: Tammy Bozich, Alison Lee, Constance Mithelman, Virginia Sublett, Nancy Thibeault, Paula Fitzgibbons, and Erin Sacco Pineda.

Brenda also recognized the outgoing vestry members: Rebecca Gantzer, Gigi Miller, David Hankins, and Pete Martin.

Jim McLellan recognized the continuing vestry members.

Announcement of Election Results

Betsy Vaughn announced that the following candidates were elected to the vestry:

- Adam Belt
- Ed Deane
- Sharon Doar-Toth
- Neville Willsmore

Mother Brenda announced that Jim McLellan will continue as the Sr. Warden and Harry Heyligers will continue as Jr. Warden.

CAT Survey Results

Mother Brenda presented the results for the CAT (Church Assessment Tool) Survey taken by 144 parishioners, including our top drivers and our top four areas of focus, and how that might differ between age groups. The results were compared to our completed CAT last survey in 2015. Results showed that we are a very progressive and adaptable church.

Adjournment

Brenda adjourned the meeting at 12:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Gantzer, Clerk of the Vestry
Next Annual Meeting – January 31, 2021

Bylaw Amendment Reversal
Of
The Parish of
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE, Inc.
of
ENCINITAS, CALIFORNIA
Also known as
ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH of ENCINITAS

*Amendments to be Reversed (indicated by **strike-through**):*

ARTICLE III. Members

Section 9. QUORUM. Twenty-five (25) members present in person shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of members. If a quorum is present, the affirmative vote of the majority of the members present, eligible to vote, and actually voting on any matter shall be the act of the members, except as may be otherwise provided in these Bylaws. If a quorum of less than one-third of the members is present, only such business may be conducted at the meeting as was referred to in the notice of the meeting. The members present at a duly held meeting in which a quorum was initially present may continue to do business until adjournment, notwithstanding the withdrawal of enough members to leave less than a quorum, if any action taken is approved by at least the number of members whose approval would have been required for the said action if a quorum had remained present. ~~A member who, for personal reasons, is unable to attend the Annual Meeting, may be permitted to vote by obtaining permission from the Reector, or either Warden, no sooner than 7 days nor later than one day, before the Meeting. A log will be kept of any such permissions granted, and the members will be given the standard form ballot to fill out, sign and return to the Reector or Warden, before the Meeting, who will add those ballots to those cast at the Annual Meeting.~~

Section 16. NO PROXIES OR ABSENTEE BALLOTS. ~~Except as provided for in Article III, See. 9, above, v~~ Voting rights may not be exercised by proxies or through absentee ballots.

***Financial Report – Hope Mitchem, Treasurer and Erin Sacco
Pineda, CPA, Controller***

The unexpected and challenging COVID-19 pandemic had a significant financial impact on St. Andrew's. One thing that helped St. Andrew's weather the "storm," are changes in staffing that were underway when the stay-at-home order occurred early in the year.

2020 Operating Income & Expenses

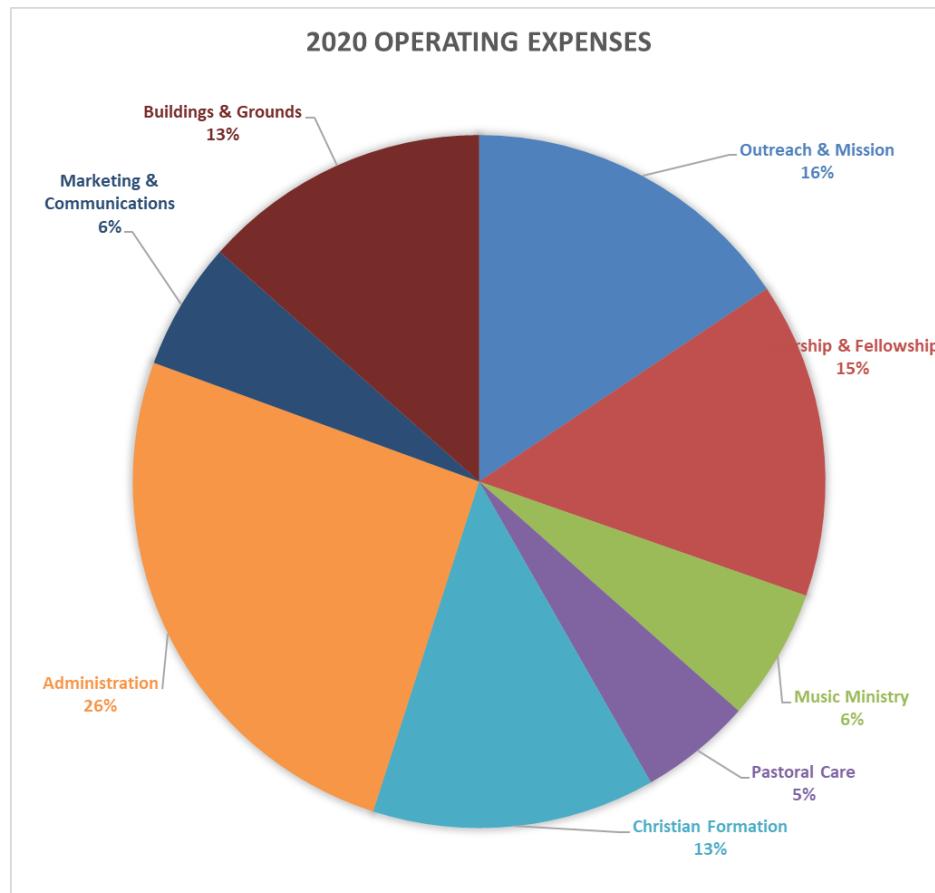
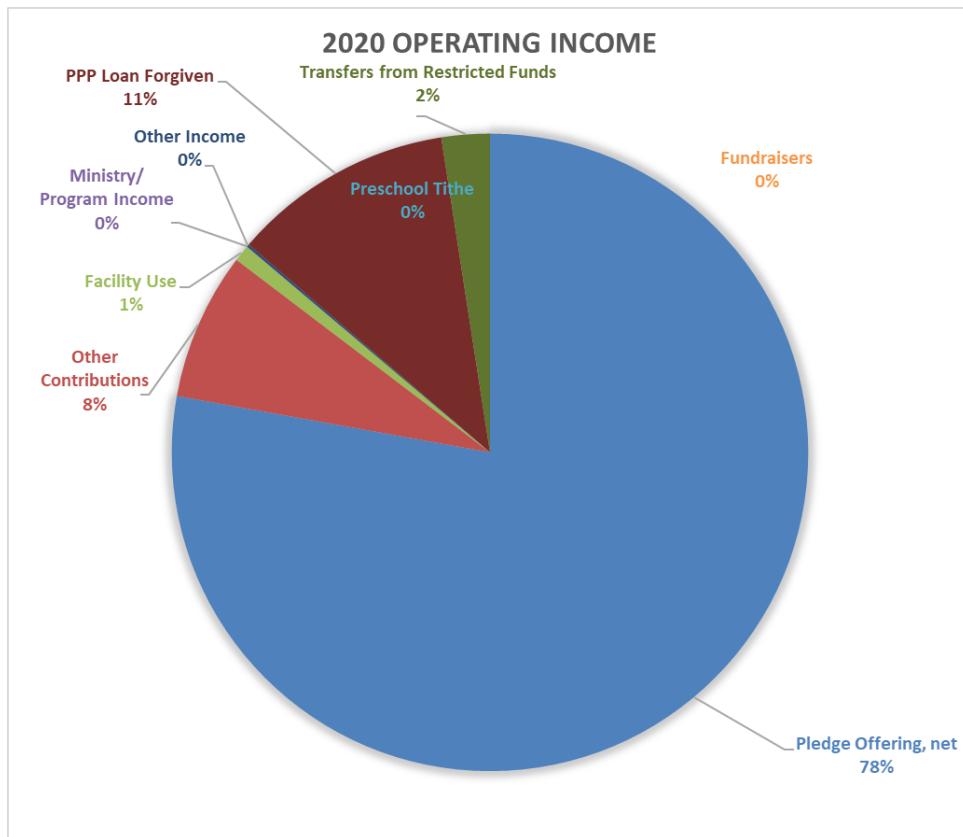
As compared to other years, the 2020 budget expectations did not align especially well with how operations turned out. Initially in 2020, staffing changes had a sizeable impact. When reviewing the accompanying Budget vs. Actual report, you will note most of the expense departments show significant variances (over 5%). These variances are due largely to staffing changes: Father Richard moved to part-time in March and reclassified his compensation as primarily outreach & mission related, Erin O'Brien was hired in late February to support Children's and Family ministries, and Tammy Bozich resigned mid-year as bookkeeper and was replaced temporarily with volunteer support. In the aggregate, operating spending was \$591,187 or 92% of budget.

The pandemic had a more significant effect on income. Pledge collections were a bit light (at 94% of budget). Facility use income and program income dropped off rather substantially with site closure and transition to remote programming. The preschool closure was handled in a manner such that income collected to benefit the preschool (including a portion of the PPP loan) were used to provide separation benefits to the preschool director and teachers. Total operating income ended up at \$626,696 or 94% of budget largely due to the PPP Loan income of \$70,672 obtained to continue compensating church staff.

OPERATING INCOME & EXPENSES

(Unaudited)

For the year ended December 31, 2020	2020 Actual	2020 Budget	% of Budget
Income			
Pledge Offering			
Pledge Offering	\$ 489,070	\$ 532,011	92%
Estimate for uncollectible pledges	-	(10,630)	0%
Pledge Offering, net	489,070	521,381	94%
Other Contributions	47,094	75,700	62%
Facility Use	5,212	11,380	46%
Ministry/ Program Income	102	600	17%
Preschool Tithe	-	3,000	0%
Fundraisers	-	5,000	0%
Other Income	(836)	6,200	-13%
PPP Loan Forgiven	70,672	-	
Transfers from Restricted Funds	15,382	40,000	38%
Total Income	626,696	663,261	94%
Expense			
Outreach & Mission	82,265	74,972	110%
Worship & Fellowship	85,750	111,293	77%
Music Ministry	33,110	34,893	95%
Pastoral Care	32,050	37,985	84%
Christian Formation	78,295	87,826	89%
Administration	158,955	174,119	91%
Marketing & Communications	35,651	34,338	104%
Buildings & Grounds	85,111	88,700	96%
Total Operating Expenses	591,187	644,126	92%
Transfer to Building Fund	19,135	19,135	100%
Net Income/(Loss)	\$ 16,374	\$ -	



2020 Non-Operating Income & Expenses

While some programs and ministries were slowed by the stay-at-home order, some were able to continue in full force. Food Pantry, for example, converted their activities to make them more COVID-friendly, but continued to serve during this much needed time.

Building Fund campaign activities continued throughout 2020. Building Fund contributions of \$195,244 were received. Final insurance settlement of \$109,091 for the Friendship House fire was negotiated and received. Architectural, design, and construction planning activities also continued at a cost of \$170,505.

In total, we had direct non-operating outflows of \$210,010, of which \$15,275 was used for Program/Ministry, \$23,480 was used for Outreach, and \$171,255 was used for facility maintenance and capital building planning. Spending for program and outreach were about two-thirds of amounts spent in 2019 due largely to the impact of COVID-19.

DESIGNATED & RESTRICTED FUNDS (NON-OPERATING) (Unaudited)					
For the year ended December 31, 2020	Beginning Balance	Cash Inflows	Transfers	Cash Outflows	Ending Balance
Permanently Restricted Fund					
SDEF Endowment	22,056	3,415	-	-	25,471
TOTAL PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED FUNDS	20,954	3,415	-	-	25,471
Columbarium Fund					
Columbarium Perpetual Care Fund	35,852	1,102	-	(750)	36,204
TOTAL COLUMBARIUM	35,016	1,102	-	(750)	36,204
Building/Campaign Funds					
2807 Building Fund	427,091	195,244	131,133	(167,225)	586,243
2930 Friendship House Fire 2016	6,183	109,091	(111,994)	(3,280)	-
TOTAL BUILDING/CAMPAIGN FUNDS	106,272	304,335	19,139	(170,505)	586,243
Temporarily Restricted Funds					
2801 Freed by Faith (Cap Camp 2003)	37,616	-	(15,383)	-	22,233
2802 Altar Guild	1,963	239	-	(1,168)	1,034
2803 Food Pantry	6,705	15,055	-	(8,511)	13,249
2808 Pastoral Needs Fund	346	13,349	(216)	(8,902)	4,577
2810 St. Cecelia Fund	2,376	-	109	(2,240)	245
2811 Music Scholarship	7,111	5,510	-	(8,306)	4,315
2816 Fri Lunch/Parish Brkfast	1,474	4,763	-	(2,646)	3,591
2819 Labyrinth Care	338	564	-	-	902
2822 Community Garden	1,014	-	-	-	1,014
2830 Outreach Fund	255	-	-	-	255
2830 Showers of Blessings	2,525	2,847	-	(3,215)	2,157
2832 Community Organizing	-	-	206	(206)	-
2832 Faith in Action	-	10,000	(206)	-	9,794
2890 Pre paid Pledges	25,700	37,227	(25,700)	-	37,227
TOTAL TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED FUNDS	81,855	89,554	(41,190)	(35,194)	100,593
Designated Reserves					
2902 Vestry Restricted Reserves	51,611	-	-	-	51,611
2915 All Memorials	-	-	-	-	-
2917 Maintenance Fund	843	20,880	-	-	21,723
2920 Rector Sabbatical Fund	7,307	(2,772)	-	-	4,535
TOTAL DESIGNATED RESERVES	79,356	18,108	-	-	77,869
Designated Ministry Funds					
2955 Youth Service Trips	1,816	-	-	-	1,816
2956 Youth Activities+Projects	-	1,383	833	(1,321)	895
2958 Tea Society	109	-	(109)	-	-
2960 Women's Retreat Fund	612	-	-	-	612
2960 Vestry Retreat Fund	-	2,024	216	(2,240)	-
TOTAL DESIGNATED MINISTRY FUNDS	3,693	3,407	940	(3,561)	3,323
TOTAL DESIGNATED & RESTRICTED FUNDS	327,146	419,921	(21,111)	(210,010)	829,703

2021 Budget

The Vestry has adopted a balanced operating budget for 2021. Please review the summary of the 2021 budget with the 2020 budget for comparative purposes.

Due to the uncertainty around continued Stay-at-Home Orders due to COVID-19, projecting 2021 operating results was more difficult than budgeting has been in prior years. The finance team elected to be as conservative as possible in the income projections. Pledge income of \$493,500 is based on actual 2021 commitments made through early January. No income was projected from facility use and programs in 2021.

The 2021 budget includes using \$12,460 from Freed by Faith and other reserves primarily as an investment in the audio-visual position and other costs of continued online offerings.

Making expense projections was also difficult in part because as we return to in-person gatherings, we will want to continue some of the online offerings to reach people who are not prepared to make that transition. The 2021 expense budget reflects the current staffing levels and plans to replace the bookkeeper/administrative support role as well as add a part-time audio-visual support position.

During 2019, and in preparation for our upcoming construction project, the vestry approved paying off the existing mortgage using capital campaign funds. In both 2020 and 2021 the operating budget includes \$19,135 that will be transferred to the Building/Campaign fund as repayment.

If you want to know more about the 2020 operating results, the 2021 budget, or the non-operating funds, please do not hesitate to contact Mother Brenda or one of us. Hope can be reached at treasurer@standrewsepiscopal.org. Erin can be reached at controller@standrewsepiscopal.org.

2021 PROFORMA BUDGET

vs. 2020 Budget

	2021 Budget	2020 Budget
Income		
Pledge Offering		
Pledges (committed)	\$ 493,500	\$ 521,011
Pledges (anticipated)	10,000	11,000
Estimate for uncollectible pledges	(10,060)	(10,630)
Pledge Offering, net	493,440	521,381
Other Contributions	81,200	74,700
Facility Use	-	11,380
Ministry/ Program Income	-	600
Preschool Tithe	-	3,000
Fundraisers	5,000	5,000
Other Income	600	6,200
Transfers from Restricted Funds	12,460	40,000
Total Income	592,700	662,261
Expense		
Outreach & Mission	89,520	74,972
Worship & Fellowship	84,530	110,794
Music Ministry	35,396	34,893
Pastoral Care	29,961	37,785
Christian Formation	75,775	87,826
Administration	146,936	173,819
Marketing & Communications	34,175	34,338
Buildings & Grounds	77,272	88,699
Total Operating Expenses	573,565	643,126
Transfer to Building Fund	19,135	19,135
Net Income/(Loss)	\$ -	\$ -

Report from the Rector — The Reverend Brenda Sol

In a video I prepared for our participation in the annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Eve service, I noted that one of the things I'm most grateful for during this COVID-era is our need to be innovative. We all should have been offering recordings of our worship online a long time ago to help create greater access for more people. But doing so would have required research, testing, and an implementation plan, not to mention a very costly cabling project to bring Wi-Fi to the church building. Instead, the Stay-at-Home orders forced us into the 21st century! While so many of us are missing the opportunity to worship together inside the church building, we have surely had to think about what we mean by "being Church" in new ways. I am inspired daily by the ways so many of you have committed to keeping St. Andrew's vital even though our campus remains closed. All of the enclosed reports will attest to that commitment.

This year also included a shift from two full-time priests on staff to sharing our Associate, Rev. Richard, with Holy Cross, Carlsbad. Fortunately, the timing was great budget-wise, and allowed us to hire a part-time Director of Education, Erin O'Brien. The gap left by Rev. Richard's full-time presence, however, is notable in my increased hours. Other staff changes included the resignation of our long-time bookkeeper, Tammy Bozich. While we miss Tammy and her years of institutional knowledge, I'm grateful for the ways our office volunteers, Chase Fields and Hope Mitchem, have helped us pick up the slack and shave a bit off our personnel expense for the near-term. Our 2021 budget includes replacing this position in mid-year.

As we move into 2021, we look forward to finally breaking ground on our building project. Luckily, construction will be able to start while staff is still working remotely, which will cut down on the usage conflicts we might otherwise have had to work around. My prayer is that just as things begin to ease up on COVID restrictions, we'll be able to "come home" to our new and renovated spaces!

I continue to be amazed with and grateful for our shared ministries that have become even more vital to the Encinitas community!

Senior Warden's Report — Jim McLennan

As we close out 2020, which presented unprecedented challenges to us both as a nation and as individuals, I would like to spend a little time reflecting on what we were able to accomplish at St. Andrew's notwithstanding those challenges. We benefited from both the hard work of Mother Brenda and those many volunteers who were willing to step up to those challenges. Yes, it has been almost a year now since we have been able to worship together at our Sanctuary in-person, but a good work-around was developed. Sunday services continued, albeit in a different form—initially online only—but then we moved to 8:30 am on the grass and 10 am Drive-In Church, in addition to the online services. I would like to thank and commend those that participated in developing the organization of these services. When the pandemic forced us to curtail the outdoor and drive-in services, we went back to online, but this time with a "Zoom watch party."

And it was not just worship services that continued. Many of our ministries were able to continue, and I refer you to their reports included herein. In particular, I want to acknowledge those volunteering for the Food Pantry—they are angels here on earth! What they have are accomplishing week-in and week-out is phenomenal. The substantially increased need in the community driven by the pandemic has been prayerfully met by this incredible team.

I am also immensely proud of the entire congregation of St. Andrew's. Even in this time of extreme challenge, most continued to honor and, in some cases, increase their financial support. The vestry and I are very appreciative of that support as it is what has allowed us to continue with the important work that we do.

As most of you are aware, we also had to make an extremely difficult decision this year with respect to the preschool. Given the pandemic-driven attendance limitations, we could not economically continue the program and, therefore, with a lot of prayer and careful consideration of alternatives, we made the hard decision to discontinue the program.

We are also continuing forward with our campus building project. While it is taking longer than any of us would have hoped, it is progressing. Costs continue to be an issue; however, we are close to completing the appropriate modifications to keep the costs in line with what is the true need for the various ministries of St. Andrew's. The most important thing, in my mind, is to ensure that what we ultimately do best serves those ministries now and in the future.

And finally, as I come to the completion of my three years as Senior Warden, I want to express what an honor it has been to serve in that capacity. I have no doubt that as we begin to receive our vaccinations and recover from the pandemic, St. Andrew's will continue to thrive—both for our parishioners and for the community services that we continue to perform. I am not going anywhere and will continue to be available to assist where needed.

Thank you all for your support,

Jim

Junior Warden's Report – Harry Heyligers

Given the crazy year we had in 2020, and due to the lack of normal occupancy, there were, fortunately, few issues on our campus. Within this year we did have to replace our water heater in the parish hall. We now have a tankless heater with hot water on demand. We also replaced the commercial garbage disposal in the kitchen. Everything else that needed attention were minor issues and repaired quickly. Looking forward to getting started on the new construction project and the plans for 2021.

2020 Ministry Reports

Acolyte Ministry — Christie Hamel

The acolyte ministry is an opportunity for our children ages seven to 18 to contribute directly to our worship. It gives them a sense of purpose and a chance to serve their parish family. They can earn community service hours for serving as an acolyte.

Currently we have 15 families participating in the Acolyte program. We would love to have more join. Training sessions are scheduled twice a year, but an interested child can be trained and start with the ministry at any time. Contact Christie Hamel at christie.hamel@gmail.com or text 760-470-2770.

Adult Education — Erin O'Brien

When I came on board in March, we already had an engaged group of adults reading and discussing The Path: A Journey through the Bible. After the stay-at-home order, we transitioned to online meetings and finished up the 24-week course with a core group exploring the overarching stories of the Bible. We continued meeting online and took deep dives into Richard Rohr's The Universal Christ and Krista Tippet's Speaking of Faith. The group has asked to move forward with books that challenge us to examine, dig deeper, and, at times, reimagine our relationships with God, the church, our communities, and the world. The group of anywhere from 5-10 participants meets weekly on Wednesdays and is open to seekers, questioners, thinkers, readers, and talkers wherever they find themselves on their faith journey. Please contact me (education@standrewsepiscopal.org) if you are interested in this group. I am especially grateful for Michael Reichle and Catherine Campbell, whose efforts are the foundation of our program.

In the wake of George Floyd's killing, we introduced *The Episcopal Church's Sacred Ground* curriculum. This curriculum encourages transformational conversations about race using dialog circles. We initially led an ecumenical 4-week session that was a brief dip into the program. These well-attended sessions included participants from St. Andrew's and Holy Cross parishes and our neighbors, St. John's Catholic and Bethlehem Lutheran. After the 4-week session, we created three dialogue circles that continue to meet and delve into the intense 12+ week curriculum. Participants report they have been powerfully moved by the documentary films, readings, and most especially the story sharing within the circles. We hope to begin new circles after the originals finish (probably after Easter). Please contact me if you are interested in joining a future circle. I give special thanks to Catherine Campbell, who developed and helped lead the 4-week session, and Gigi Miller and Betsey Vaughn, who jumped in to facilitate circles.

Altar Guild — Lorraine Gritzen & Jill Svendsen

Altar Guild is the group that regularly takes care of setting up the altar for the various services held throughout the week, ensuring that there is an adequate stock of necessary supplies, and maintaining the supplies and equipment for services in good order. There

are currently 18 members who serve approximately once a month during their team's assigned weekend.

Income is generated through memorial giving in the form of donations when a parishioner passes away, flower donations for memorials or in thanks for various reasons such as birthdays and anniversaries, and income from the votive candles "poor box." Income for 2020 has been down due to the restrictions required by the Covid-19 virus.

Expenses include consumables such as weekly altar flowers, communion wafers and wine, sanctuary lights, candle oil, and such. Other expenses which are not regularly occurring include replacement or repair of broken or damaged items such as crystal cruets, chalices, and worn linens. Just as income for 2020 has been down due to the Covid-19 restrictions, expenses for 2020 are also down for the same reason.

We are always happy to add new members to our ministry. Please prayerfully consider whether or not this ministry might be a good fit for your time and talents. If it is, then feel free to contact Lorraine Gritzen (trugrit1531@sbcglobal.net), Jill Svendsen (jilltreadwell@cox.net), or the clergy (contact@standrewsepiscopal.org).

Art & Soul — Linda Counts & Sing Baker

Art & Soul is a periodic gathering for anyone who appreciates God's gift of art & beauty in its many forms. We started the year with a trip to Escondido, where we enjoyed Nike de Saint Phalle's whimsical mosaic sculptures in Queen Califia's Magic Circle Sculpture Garden. Then on to the show at the Escondido Art Partnership Municipal Gallery where we were able to meet with one of the artists. Our activities came to halt in March, thanks to Covid-19.

Capital Campaign

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, a number of new financial commitments to our Capital Campaign were made. Likewise, many parishioners made contributions toward their commitment over this past year.

Children and Families Ministry — Erin O'Brien

Upon my arrival in March, our ministry was in the capable hands of volunteer coordinator Kara Lewandowski, a team of strong area leads, and exceptional volunteers. None of us expected to have to re-imagine our ministry so completely as we did in response to the Covid-19 virus. We began with the simple goal of ensuring our families felt connected and cared for. In the beginning, we provided online resources designed to help families engage their children in faith at home, along with articles and other content that offered them support and information for guiding children through the uncertainty and loss that the virus is causing. We finished Lent at home, we celebrated Easter at home, and then Pentecost at home with Zoom-exhausted families opting for meaningful weekly activities instead of online Sunday School. In the summer, we

contributed to and presented the diocese-wide online VBS program. We also accepted the gracious offer from Bethlehem Lutheran to utilize their online VBS program created by Constance Mithelman. The parish-wide walking program invited children to find God in nature with weekly family activities. We collaborated with St. Paul's Cathedral and Christ Church Coronado to create videos to explore the Beatitudes. In November, we offered each family an Advent bag that contained supplies for families to engage in a thoughtful and fun season of waiting and wondering. The highlight of the year was the Zoom Nativity Pageant on Christmas Eve. Twenty-four St. Andrew's children presented the nativity story to almost 50 different households. The evening was a blessing to all who participated.

After years of service, many of them after Dakota "graduated" from Sunday School, Amy Burnett decided it was time to step down from the role of Sunday School lead and explore other ways the Spirit might be calling her. Her contribution to our ministry over the years is incalculable, and she was valued support to me throughout this year, even after she stepped down. I offer her my deepest gratitude and hope to give her a proper send-off once we are meeting in-person again.

I am continually amazed at the strength and resilience of our children and families. I am looking forward to another exciting year and welcome anyone who wants to be a part of this ministry. Remember, you don't have to have a child in Sunday School to support our community's youngest members. Please contact me

education@standrewsepiscopal.org) if you want to help shine God's light on St. Andrew's children and families.

Communications— Paula Fitzgibbons

Besides making sure internal communications (bulletins, letters, weekly eblast, newsletter, etc.) run smoothly and communicate both our mission and our ministries, our communications strategy strives to engage our broader community. We do that regularly through the use of social media, our website, press releases, and attendance at community events.

This past year provided some deep challenges as we all learned to navigate a world where nearly all communications and activities were forced online due to COVID. I am grateful for the tremendous patience and understanding of our parish during this learning process. We were blessed to employ two young members during the process. Petra Engstrom edited our worship videos for part of the year (until she returned to college) and Scotty Bostick took over her position editing and putting online our worship videos. I appreciate their hard work.

As we took our communications completely online, including two vital eblasts each week, we have integrated much of what was once included in the paper newsletters into our weekly eblasts—reducing the number of newsletters published each year.

Thank you to all who have shared their talents with the newsletter, who join in communications activities, and who so loyally read, like, and share social media, the

website, our weekly emails, and our newsletter. The more we share, the more people we reach with our active and inclusive mission.

Community Meal Ministry — Gigi Miller & Diane Beyer

In 2019, our Community Meal program shifted from a Friday sit-down lunch to a Saturday morning breakfast/brunch, which allowed our guests to enjoy a hot shower offered by our Showers of Blessings ministry followed by a delicious full course meal (pancakes, eggs, bacon, hash browns, fruit salad, pastries, coffee, and juice) in the parish hall. From January through March of 2020, we served 60 to 80 folks every Saturday. For many, it was the only hot meal they had in days. Our weekly teams of eight to 10 generous volunteers (mentored by our “kitchen angel,” Estela Le) came from a variety of organizations—Bethlehem Lutheran, St. Vincent de Paul, Encinitas Rotary, Boy Scout Troop 777. In fact, over 60% of the volunteers were not St. Andrew’s parishioners.

With the first COVID-19 Stay-at-Home order, both Showers of Blessings and the Community Meal Program were paused to ensure the safety of both guests and volunteers. We served our last community breakfast on March 14.

When the COVID-19 situation seemed to improve during the summer, we re-imagined a different meal to accompany a renewed Showers of Blessings (SoB) initiative. Our fearless leader and coordinator, Diane Beyer, took a well-deserved break, and Gigi Miller stepped into that role (very big shoes to fill!). On September 5, we began serving again in coordination with the SoB team. Instead of a sit-down meal in the parish hall, we made sandwiches (turkey/ham and veggie) and packed them up with chips, fruit, water, cookies, peanut butter crackers, and yogurt, distributing to guests waiting for Showers. Due to the pause, guest attendance for both programs was sparse in the beginning but gradually increased to about 30 weekly lunch guests!

However, with the surge in cases after the Thanksgiving holiday, we were forced to pause both programs. Showers of Blessing stopped in early November, and without that program, the lunch attendance trickled to 3 or 4 guests. We paused the Community Meal program on December 5. We’re hopeful that state orders allow us to resume both Saturday programs as we know how important they are to our marginalized neighbors.

Education for Ministry (EfM)

Three students participated in EfM during 2019-20. One parishioner completed the four-year program and graduated. During 2020-21, St. Andrew’s EfM is on hiatus.

Faith In Action — Betsy Vaughn & Adam Belt

Faith in Action (FIA) was established as a St. Andrew’s ministry in 2019 with a vision to live out our faith beyond the confines of our church family. Over the years, the St. Andrew’s community has served our neighbors through ministries such as the Food Pantry, Interfaith Shelter, Community Meal, and Showers of Blessings programs. The mission of FIA complements these activities by looking to understand and address the root causes creating the need for outreach programs in our community.

FIA learned principals, strategies, and tactics of community influence and organizing through our partner, San Diego Organizing Project (SDOP), a faith-based community organizing network. FIA conducted research meetings with local leaders, Encinitas City Council members, county supervisors, and state assembly persons to understand local needs and define our area of focus. In March 2020, FIA identified homelessness and the issues surrounding homelessness in Encinitas as our primary center of attention.

FIA has developed relationships with the Encinitas City Council and other civic leaders, which has enabled St. Andrew's voice to be heard. Some of our efforts are as follows:

- Advocated for the **Encinitas Safe Parking Lot**, which was approved and implemented;
- Organized a **St. Andrew's forum** with City Councilman Joe Mosca to discuss the city's COVID 19 response;
- Supported an **Encinitas eviction moratorium** during COVID-19, which was approved;
- Supported the **hotel voucher program** during COVID-19, which was approved;
- Provided input to the **Encinitas Homeless Action Plan** (in progress); and
- Advocated for low/very low cost housing options in the **Encinitas Housing Element** (in progress).

FIA drove other civic activities over the course of 2020 including:

- Envisioned and advocated for a “**Drop-In Center**” supporting the homeless on the St. Andrew's campus (more to come on that from the implementation team);
- Organized and conducted **candidate forums** for the 2020 Encinitas City Council and County Supervisor races;
- Supported Anti-Black Racism efforts including a national conference for white clergy and the SDOP Clergy-Led Press Conference on Anti-Black Racism; and
- Worked with Food Pantry team to create safe food distribution protocols and processes in order to re-open during COVID-19 and assembled a voluntary list of food pantry clients.

2021 brings renewed commitment to our long-term goal of ending homelessness in Encinitas. FIA is working to build a network of partner organizations to educate our community and de-stigmatize homelessness. We are researching long term options to provide affordable housing, mental health, and other services in Encinitas. If you would like to learn more and/or join our team, please contact Betsy Vaughn (betsy Vaughn@yahoo.com) or Adam Belt (adambelt@mac.com).

Fellowship Ministry – Leslie Hernandez

Prior to the shutting down of Sunday worship and fellowship activities, the Fellowship Team, along with cheerful and industrious volunteers, hosted our traditional winter events:

- Candidate Forum in the parish hall
- Annual Meeting with full coffee hour refreshments in the church
- Cardiff Kook Sunday featuring VG's donuts
- Mardi Gras Potluck Feast with King's cakes and delicious New Orleans fare.

It was indeed a festive start to 2020, which, as unforeseen events unfolded, proved to be our last refreshments-based events for the year. We look forward to when we can resume our traditional St. Andrew's fellowship events, as well as welcome new ideas and new additions to the Fellowship Ministry Team. We welcome your involvement at any level! Please contact Leslie Hernandez at 760-942-4460 or rugbyandme@gmail.com.

Food Pantry – Anne Heyligers

We served approximately 100-250 families, seniors, and homeless each week. Our parish hall had been transformed into a storage area for all our dry foods and the over 200 boxes we must pack each week. I have had to let some volunteers go as social distancing is necessary and there are only 12 people in the parish hall at one time, three at four different areas of the room. We now pack the boxes with dry goods on Wednesday and on Thursday add the perishable foods, then the outdoor volunteers put everything into the trunks of the cars that are lined up. We still have Rancho Coastal Humane Society bring pet food and supplies.

We unfortunately lost the one-on-one interaction with all our clients and that is something all our volunteers miss.

- We have vegetarians and gluten-free clients and try to provide food for them as well.
- We have been a part of the Fresh Rescue Program with Feeding San Diego for many years. This program involves supermarkets donating food that they pull off the shelves.
- We receive produce, bread, desserts, dairy, prepared salads, and meals.
- We are contracted with Gelson's supermarket to pick up whatever the store donates on Thursdays. Bob Moran coordinates this part of the food pick up; volunteers are from St. Andrew's and our community.
- We pick up produce and canned goods every Wednesday from the San Diego Food Bank and have five volunteers for this part of our food pantry program. Produce is free and everything else is available for 19 cents per pound.
- We also get a delivery through San Diego Food Bank each Thursday from three Vons stores.

- All together we have approximately 30 volunteers, including missionaries from the Mormon church, students, and others from the community, Bethlehem Lutheran, as well as St. Andrew's.

Grace-filled Regathering Options (GRO) Taskforce

After the Governor's Stay-at-Home Orders in mid-March, Mother Brenda invited representatives from the various ministries to participate in the Grace-filled Regathering Options (GRO) Taskforce. The intention was set that the committee would not simply figure out how to "get back to normal" with worship and campus programs as quickly as possible. Instead, we hoped that our work in exploring options for regathering in person might lead us to discover new ways of being Church in the process and lead to our personal and collective growth (i.e. GRO=grow). In mid-May we began meeting weekly to explore the safest, most inclusive ways of gathering. In September, we began Drive-In Church using the technology of FM radio, and in October added an 8:30 am outdoor liturgy with no music or responses in the sun-yard. Part of our task was to create detailed protocols and procedures for safety/health regulations based on state, county, and diocesan guidelines.

The group continued to meet twice a month throughout the fall and now meets monthly. While those who participate in either of the worship offerings were quickly staunch supporters, our biggest challenge has been convincing others to join us. On the other hand, we have gained two or three new families through social media listings. Unfortunately, with the reimposed Stay-at-Home Orders issued in December, and at our bishop recommendation, all in-person gatherings have been temporarily suspended. The taskforce will dive back in at our January meeting so that we are ready to start the outdoor worship options back up as soon as our region sees an increase in available ICU beds.

Meal Delivery Ministry — Chase Fields

The Meals Team at St. Andrew's is a group of volunteers who serve our parishioners by preparing (or purchasing) and delivering healthy meals during times of need: the birth of a new baby, a sickness, or death in the family. For the year 2020, the Meals Team was paused in order to protect the volunteers and possible recipients as the pandemic progressed. Once it is safe to resume, the team will be reinvigorated to serve as the parish's needs arise.

Music Ministry — Virginia Sublett

As a result of the COVID-19 restrictions, St. Andrew's adult choir has not followed its usual rehearsal and Sunday morning service activities since March 8. That doesn't mean we've not been together, however. Choir members continue to meet on Thursday nights for an hour of fellowship and singing via Zoom. We have had special presentations during these meetings, such as Jim Stiven's art book presentation of Maya Angelou's poem "On the Wings of Morning," and Jane Booth's solo marimba performance. We all look forward to the day that we can again sing together in the church and see all our

dear ones in person.

Despite the lack of choral singing, our services haven't been devoid of music. Jack Deane, our Choral Scholar, and I provided video recordings of hymns for the online services, and from August 16 through December 6, the two of us appeared "LIVE AND IN PERSON" on the sidewalk for the drive-in services. We are especially grateful for his contributions to our worship experience and again look forward to the day we can celebrate drawing our whole family together.

Sadly, we lost one of our longest-participating members, John Galey, who last sang with us on Christmas Eve, 2019. He passed away in January. John had been a member of St. Andrew's Adult Choir since my first tenure here, joining us in 1995. He loved to tell how he had started his musical life as a boy chorister in the 1930's. We all miss his beautiful voice and cheerful presence.

Parish Breakfast Team — Julian Betts

This past year the Parish Breakfast Team aimed to serve breakfast nine times between September 2019 and summer 2020. Thanks to the many volunteers of all ages who contributed to the Parish Breakfasts we provided, typically on the third Sunday of each month. Of course, when the pandemic hit, we had to place Parish Breakfast on long-term hiatus. With news of vaccines that are effective, we now know that the day will come when we will be having services in person again, and Parish Breakfast Shall Return!

Pastoral Care — Michael Reichle

The principal function of lay pastoral care is to visit those members of our parish community who are in the hospital or ill or recovering at home. This is something virtually all of us do on an informal basis.

The pastoral care team also takes Holy Communion, on a rotating basis, to those who cannot attend services but desire the comfort of Communion. We currently have 7 Eucharistic Visitors. During 2020, pastoral care activities were changed significantly. Mother Brenda and the lay Eucharistic Visitors made 21 visits before lay visits were temporarily discontinued in late February because of the pandemic.

If you think this might be a ministry for you, please contact Mother Brenda (rector@standrewsepiscopal.org) or Michael Reichle (mreichle@sbcglobal.net). There is some training required. But this is a highly rewarding ministry providing spiritual care, by Communion and prayer, to those in need.

Prayer Ministry — Nancy McLennan

St. Andrew's prayer ministry was one of the few that didn't require a pivot in the midst of a pandemic! As always, we continued to be available to all members of St. Andrew's

and beyond. Just as we have in the past, prayer team members spent time daily in 2020 praying over the full prayer list, including confidential and long-term needs. If you would like to join the ranks of this vital ministry, or are in need of prayer support, please contact Nancy McLennan at prayer@standrewsepiscopal.org.

Showers of Blessings (SoB) — Joe Arlauskas

The SoB began its fourth year of operation in 2020 by offering weekly showers, haircuts (thanks to volunteer stylists), and clothing on Saturdays from 8:30 am until noon, serving up to 28-30 clients. Using SignUpGenius.com, our pool of over 75 volunteers could schedule their time and task during shower operations. We received numerous toiletry and clothing donations from a variety of sources including the UCSD Dermatology office and the City of Carlsbad. In addition, the Encinitas Starbucks was donating weekly coffee, creamer, and sweeteners. There was a growing coordination with the Saturday Breakfast ministry including sharing volunteers and addressing client needs. The SoB unit was also used for two weeks in February for St. Andrew's guests from the Interfaith Shelter.

In addition to articles published in the Carlsbad and Encinitas local papers, the CBS local affiliate station put a video piece together which ran on KCCI in Des Moines, Iowa on February 21st. With the advent of COVID19, the SoB operations made adjustments, but was closed down in March as COVID19 cases soared. However, the SoB unit was rented out to the Jewish Family Services (JFS) from April through July to serve an overnight parking shelter off of Monroe street in San Diego, which JFS operated. During that time, the SoB steering committee prepared a Safe Return to Operations Plan (Plan), following CDC and local guidance, for review and approval by the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego and the San Diego Health Department. The SoB began operations under the approved new plan on August 8th and continued until November 21st, when COVID19 conditions worsened.

St. Andrew's Preschool

The pandemic weighed heavily on schools with restrictions in class size and health-safety procedures. After detailed financial analysis, much prayer and lots of discussion, the vestry decided to permanently close St. Andrew's preschool earlier this spring. Although the school has successfully served thousands of families over the years, and the staff was much beloved, the consensus among our parish leadership was that the institution would not be financially sustainable because COVID restrictions and concerns would likely affect enrollment for at least 18 months. Instead, the existing preschool reserve funds were used to provide separation packages to the dedicated staff.

Stewardship

Practicing the concept that stewardship is a year-round activity, the committee created a gift of windshield stickers for each family as part of the annual pledge campaign. The stickers, which recreated the cairn image used in our marketing materials will,

hopefully, serve as reminders of our wonderful St. Andrew's community and our commitment to be a spiritual guidepost for our neighbors. Videos of our vibrant parish life and a Zoom skit were also shared during the campaign.

Ushers

As in all areas, the role of our usher teams changed drastically after our buildings were closed. When we regathered in-person at outdoor services, a number of people new to the usher role were asked to serve due to many existing ushers being in high-risk health categories. A new usher requirement is the ability to move swiftly around the parking lot to direct attendees at Drive-In Church. These days, instead of sports jackets and khakis, our ushers are identified by yellow safety vests with our FM radio station printed across their backs!

Welcome Ministry — Debbie Hickson and Chase Fields

What an interesting and challenging year it has been for members of the Welcome Ministry whose call it is to welcome the stranger and draw them into fellowship at St. Andrew's! Even though we have not been able to stand at the front door of the church to warmly greet those who come to worship, through the blessing of technology, we continued to worship and welcome 20 new families, seven of whom (that we know of) have returned to worship regularly or become active members. Our merry band of bread runners even made eight contactless bread deliveries! We recently welcomed a visitor through a Zoom watch party, and she stayed for coffee hour! Our church has always grown and flourished because of the welcoming atmosphere in which we endeavor to share God's love to all who seek help, hope, and healing. Through God's grace, we will continue to do so.

Women's Spiritual Formation Group — Debbie Hickson

For the past 25 years, this dedicated group of women have gathered from 8 am until 9:30 am on the first and third Saturday mornings to live, learn, and grow spiritually in the knowledge and love of God. This year, COVID has brought changes in that we meet via Zoom and have found it so meaningful in this somewhat isolating time that we now meet every Saturday. We have welcomed many new members and have discovered that while we enjoy seeing each other in person, the Zoom format makes it even easier to attend, even in PJs! This year our selections have been varied and include the following: Bible Women by Lindsay Freeman, Learning to Walk in the Dark by Barbara Brown Taylor, Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates, The Soul's Slow Ripening by Christine Paintner, Love is the Way by Bishop Michael Curry, and The Sanctuary Between Us by Jan Richardson. Our format is simple—there is no advanced preparation required, as we read the text together and reflect on those readings with the prompting of the Holy Spirit. We complete each meeting with prayer petitions for ourselves, family, neighbors and the world. We invite all women to join us and share in this nurturing faith community.

For more information, please contact Debbie Hickson (deborahhickson@gmail.com).

Worship and Liturgy Committee — Pat Moran

Never more have we so strongly realized the importance of being grounded in prayer. Being together is foundational to who we are as a faith family. This past year, due to the Pandemic, we have broadened our exploration of what that means and adapted to the many different ways we can come together.

There was great creativity in our worship services as we lived into our changing circumstances. We prayed, listened to scripture, sang, were encouraged and challenged by sermons, and because it was not safe to share in the Eucharist, shared in spiritual communion, and celebrated an online Christmas pageant. When it was possible, we worshiped in our cars in the parking lot or in our labyrinth green space. At other times, we worshiped on Zoom.

We are grateful for the generosity of heart shown in the way our liturgical ministries carried on safely in these challenging times following all appropriate mandates and guidelines.

As we make our pilgrimage in faith through the church year, be present in whatever way our circumstances dictate. You and your presence bless our faith family.

XYZs & Aging Gracefully — Connie McIntire

The seniors of the XYZ and Aging Gracefully groups have remained resilient and hopeful for the past year while remaining in compliance with the “Stay-at-Home” restrictions, especially during the holidays, and while missing celebrations with families, friends, and church. Some have even been more restricted if they are living in senior residential facilities, having to quarantine for two weeks in their apartments if they leave the premises for anything other than for medical appointments.

But through it all, we have stayed connected with each other, mostly by phone, at least once or twice a month, and so far, everyone is very thankful for their continued good health and for their family’s health as well. We’ve enjoyed learning new ways of live-streaming and Zoom, giving us the ability to stay connected with church services and events. This has included diocesan special services and the bishop’s messages and homilies.

Milestone events among our group have given us joy to celebrate (even if distanced) such as the one-hundredth birthday of Charlotte Rowe, who says she “feels no different than 80!”; Chuck and Pat Knox’s celebration of their sixtieth anniversary; and the birth of Jane Ashley’s twin great-grandchildren.

We continue to pray for those who have lost so much in this darkest time of COVID-19,

for peace in our country, and for successful vaccines. As a group, we remain very hopeful that we will once again worship in church, enjoy luncheon gatherings, and resume more regular activities sometime in 2021.

Young Adult Ministry — The Reverend Richard Hogue

The young adults' group of St. Andrew's is operating virtually only at this time, like so many other ministries. We continue to meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month for Bible Study and/or social time. While we would do more were we in a position to do so, we will have to remain content with this form of gathering until such time as vaccinations are widely available. We still welcome newcomers who wish to join us and try to be a safe space for faith exploration for anyone we come across. As the situation relating to COVID-19 improves over time, we will try to ramp up picnics-in-the-park and dinner church, as is sensible.

Youth Ministry — Constance Mithelman

Greetings dear friends!

Again, as in years past, the youth programs began 2020 in the mountains at Luther Glen on their respective middle school and high school winter retreats, along with our Bethlehem counterparts. Our weekend theme was "Under Construction," based on Ephesians 2:10. We talked about how God makes us new and never gives up on us—God created us to be exactly who God needed us to be, flaws and all.

The High School Youth Group was meeting on Wednesday evenings for fellowship, devotion, and fun.

Then, March 2020 happened and everything changed.

The youth and I would check in and exchange text messages with one another every week, and I began putting out devotions in my weekly youth email blasts. Then we started to meet via Zoom to catch up, support one another, and find something to laugh about. The High School Summer Service Trip to Navajo Nation and our weekly beach hangouts had to be cancelled.

In the fall, when we were able to safely gather outside, masked and socially-distanced, we began/resumed in-person High School Youth Group gatherings on the lawn at Bethlehem. Given the size of the High School Youth Group, in partnership with their Bethlehem counterparts, I mixed up and then split the group in two to meet with each one every other week. We were also able to begin having youth worship during Drive-In Church on the patio. In September, we began another round of Confirmation classes with six youth and their parents. We met in-person and via Zoom to learn more about our faith and traditions. In December, everything shifted back to gathering via Zoom due to new protocols.

It has been a roller coaster of a year for our youth and families but it is a gift to be with you as we navigate this together.