



St. Mary's Episcopal Church 2020 Annual Report



St. Mary's Mission Statement

St. Mary's is a community of Christian worship, well-being and service.

2020 Ministry Priority

Continue to support and develop Invite Welcome Connect as a way of living into our mission.

2020 Leadership Priorities

- Continue with reorganizing for growth, by crafting a staffing plan that reflects our needs and ministry priorities in 2020 and into the future.
- Continue (and complete!) the historic church renewal project.
- Continue to manage and be good and responsible stewards for all of our resources – money (pledges, endowment and grants), property, building and grounds, and people.

Table of Contents

Rector's Report 2020	1
2021 Annual Meeting of the Corporation Agenda	2
St. Mary's Vital Statistics 2020	2
Minutes of the 2020 Meeting of the Corporation of St. Mary's	3
2020 Officers of the Corporation and Members of the Vestry	5
2021 Nominating Committee Report	5
Senior Warden's Report	5
Moving Forward Task Force	6
Worship	8
Well-Being	10
Service	12
2020 Financial and Investment Reports	13
Proposed 2021 Budget	14
Restricted Funds	15
Finance Commission	16
Stewardship	16
Sarah Gibbs Trust	16
Property Commission	17
Historic Church Renewal and Funding	17

Staff

The Reverend Jennifer Pedrick, *Rector* ~ Karen Laroche, *Parish Administrator* ~ Michael Templeton, *Pastoral Musician*
Jon Walker, *Property Manager*

Rector's Report 2020

As I read through this report, showing the ministry of so many members, I am grateful and amazed. It has been a year unlike any other, as we and the rest of the world have been adapting to the ever changing COVID - 19 pandemic. We have also lived through a divisive year of unrest in politics and a national reckoning with racial injustice. We used to joke about the church being hesitant to try new ways of doing things, but in 2020 we have become flexible, adaptive, and responsive to this ever changing environment. Never again will we be able to say, "we've never done it that way before," as an excuse not to try something new. St. Mary's members and friends have not only stayed on mission in this time of challenge, we have thrived and grown, deepening our loving and faithful connections with each other, the wider community and God.

In this year of challenge the simplicity of our mission has given us clear focus. Our commitment to be a community of worship, well-being and service was central to **our understanding of how to be the church during a crisis**. We kept our resources and vision on what was possible in this new context, rather than lamenting what had been lost. We supported worship and people first. Who among us will ever forget our outdoor worship services? The constantly changing online adaptations? Or the commitment of our pastoral care team, reaching out to every member and friend in our directory - again and again? We saw that the church is surely the holy people of God, and we remain the Body of Christ even when we are not in our church buildings.

Another key to our thriving during this first year of the pandemic has been the commitment of excellent

leaders and the faithful participation of so many members. As we look back at 2020, with God's help, we not only survived, we remained healthy and growing. We have a new outdoor worship shell and event venue. We have reduced our dependence on our endowment, finally arriving at a prudent annual draw. We have continued the once in a generation restoration of the historic church. We have new members who have joined and are finding ways to serve and give.

We may be a bit weary, but we have reason to celebrate and to look toward the coming year with hope and resolve. The pandemic has forged us into a community where ministry is shared more broadly than ever before. New leaders have emerged and current leaders have been generous in sharing roles, resources, and responsibilities. Nowhere is this more evident than in the upcoming change in the officers of the vestry. Three key leaders, Murry Edwards, Paul Westrom, and Chris Bartlett are passing the baton with incredible grace. They have worked as Sr. Warden, Junior Warden and Treasurer, respectively. Each has accomplished so much and God has blessed St. Mary's through their ministry. I give thanks daily for the pleasure of serving with a dedicated staff. Karen Laroche, Jon Walker and Michael Templeton have served with flexibility, skill, and commitment facing the unusual demands of this past year. It has been a privilege to serve as the rector of this extraordinary church. I thank God and each of you for the ministry and mission we have been called to share.

Faithfully, The Rev. Jennifer Pedrick+



2021 Annual Meeting of the Corporation

Sunday, February 7, 2021

Call to order – The Rev'd Jennifer Pedrick, Rector

Invocation – Jennifer Pedrick

Determination of a Quorum – Mattie Gustafson, Clerk

Acceptance of the minutes of the 2020 annual meeting of St. Mary's Church

Acceptance of 2020 annual reports by title as published

Acknowledgement of Retiring Vestry Members, Officers, and Gratitude for other Leaders –
Jennifer Pedrick

Nominating Committee Report and Elections – Murry Edwards, Chairperson of the Nominating
Committee

Financial and Investment Report for 2020 – Chris Bartlett, Treasurer

Budget for 2021 – Chris Bartlett

Closing Prayer and Adjournment – Jennifer Pedrick

From the Bylaws of St. Mary's Church, Portsmouth

Article IV, Section 1. Membership. *The Members of the Parish shall be all persons who have received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism and are registered as members of the Parish. The Voting Members of the Parish shall be the rector or minister in charge and all Member communicants of eighteen years and over who are regular worshipers in the Parish, and who are not in arrears in the fulfillment of the pledges to support the Parish.*

St. Mary's Vital Statistics 2020

Baptisms	2
Confirmations	4
Receptions	6
New Members	17
Deaths of Members	3
Active Membership	270

Minutes of the 2020 Meeting of the Corporation of St. Mary's

Sunday, February 2, 2020

The Rector, the Rev. Jennifer Pedrick, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. in St. George's Chapel. She thanked Murry Edwards for putting together a wonderful Annual Report, and urged all to sign the clip-boards at the back of the room, so we would have a record of attendance.

The Rector then offered a prayer.

Mattie Gustafson, Parish Clerk, confirmed that a quorum was present.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting, held on February 3, 2019. The motion was passed.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the *2019 Annual Report* and its contents, excluding the report from the Nominating Committee and the Proposed 2020 Annual Budget. The motion passed.

Acknowledgment of Ministries

Michelle Freitas has completed a three-year term of vestry service. While on the Vestry she served as a Sarah Gibbs Trustee, and was on the audit committee. Though she is leaving the Vestry, she has joined the Stewardship Committee.

Trish Culver is also completing her term of vestry service. Trish has been willing to say "yes" to a number of positions both on the Vestry and on various other committees, including a term as head of the Stewardship Committee. She has been an invaluable member of any committee she has served with.

Millie Cozzens retired this past summer after 50 years of dedicated service as head of the Altar Guild. She was feted this summer and thanked for all that she had done.

Jennifer then went on to name and thank all the various leaders and staff who played so critical a part in the success of this past year:

Staff -

Karen Laroche - for her skills in both administration and biblical studies

Jon Walker - our first full-time property manager - a courageous staff member in charge of many things, seen and unseen

Michael Templeton - our Pastoral Musician, who has seen us through changes in music styles and schedules throughout the year

Gabe Giella - who served through much of 2019 as our full-time director of Christian formation

Committee Chairs -

David Brierley - Stewardship; Bill Hall - Finance; Ruth Seibens and Ann Gizzi - Altar Guild; and all who serve with them to make our Worship Services inspiring - Jennie Nestlerode - Acolytes; Carol Nicodemus - Readers; Lauren Lema - Greeters; Michael Templeton - Choir; Marlo Pratt, Regina Slezak and David Spengler - *Invite, Welcome, Connect*; and last, but not least Ray Elder who has taken over our weekly ENews.

Nominating Committee Report

Murry, Senior Warden and Chair of the Nominating Committee, thanked those who served on this committee with her, Michelle Freitas and Julie Zecher, and then presented the slate of nominations for the coming year:

- **For Vestry:** The following have accepted the nomination to run for three-year terms: George LeBlanc and Matt Spohn
- **Also running for three-years terms as officers of the corporation:** Chris Bartlett for Treasurer and Mattie Gustafson for Clerk
- **For Delegates to Diocesan Convention:** David Brierley, Harry Gustafson and Judy Hall, with Murry Edwards as an alternate.

No nominations from the floor were forthcoming. A motion was made and seconded to close the nominations. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded to cast one vote for the entire slate of nominees. Motion passed.

Financial Reports

Chris Bartlett gave the Financial Report and started by saying if it was possible to have a Treasurer's Report that was joyous - this was the year joy would be appropriate. We had an incredibly strong year with pledges and donations and grant monies all increasing over last year. His primary goal for 2019 was to reduce the draw on our Endowment, and this happened.

Other news of note: We sold (finally!) the Oliphant Lane property. All monies from this sale will go into the Tuck Fund. As Jennifer reported in her report, St. Mary's has 27 new members. Chris congratulated the *Invite, Welcome, Connect* ministry for their contribution to this increase in membership. If we have 2 more years of a similar increase in membership, our goal of a 5.5% draw on the Endowment will be within our grasp.

Chris then went through the written Financial Report. (See pages 9-10 in the *2019 Annual Report*.)

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Financial Report, and place it on file. Motion passed.

Then Chris presented the proposed Budget for 2020 (see page 10 in the *2019 Annual Report*). He mentioned that we need to address some major capitol expenses this coming year, so we will have more expenses and a higher endowment draw.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Proposed Budget for 2020. Motion passed.

New Business

Jennifer asked for questions and/or comments.

Q. When will the church be "open for business?"

R. Depends a great deal on the status of the interior and the work that needs to be done for the completion of Phase III of our restoration project. Jennifer affirmed that if the church is safe, dry and not being worked on, we will try to get back by Palm Sunday.

Jon Juhase and Jennifer related that work has been started on Phase III - which first requires a study of the interior of the church. This work is being done by the architect and must be completed before any actual work can be started.

Q. What happened to all the slate?

R. Funny you should ask! We have saved much of the slate and we have a wonderful project in mind that you will all find out about after Easter.

- Bob Vernagni complimented Jon Walker on an excellent job in his first year as Property Manager.

- Judy Hall compliment Michael Templeton for bringing us to a whole new place in music!

Jennifer reiterated that if you have any concerns or questions, please don't hesitate to talk to members of the Vestry or any other leaders.

Jennifer offered a closing prayer, and the meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mattie Gustafson
Clerk



2020 Officers of the Corporation and Members of the Vestry

Murry Edwards, Sr. Warden, 2021
Paul Westrom, Jr. Warden, 2021
Chris Bartlett, Treasurer, 2023
Mattie Gustafson, Clerk, 2023

Class of 2021: David Brierley, Peter Collins,
Julie Zecher

Class of 2022: Dave Ferkinhoff, David Spangler,
Christine Winslow

Class of 2023: George LeBlanc, Marlo Pratt,
Matt Spohn

2021 Nominating Committee Report

Each for a 2-year term on the vestry ending in 2023:
Peter Collins and Julie Zecher

Each for a 3-year term on the vestry ending in 2024:
Chris Bartlett, Lee Ferreira, and Richard Updegrove

Each for a 3-year term as an officer of the corporation ending in 2024: Marlo Pratt for senior warden, George LeBlanc for junior warden, and David Brierley for treasurer.

For diocesan convention for 2021:

As delegates: Paul Westrom, Harry Gustafson

As alternates: Murry Edwards and Judy Hall

Senior Warden's Report

When I was a child, my grandmother told me that I was "optimistic." Now, that's some word to use with a ten-year-old. And in 2020, I tried to believe that good must ultimately prevail in the universe.

Anyway, I am an optimist, and the gracious and generous way that St. Mary's rose to its mission last year has reinforced my belief that good does prevail, especially God's goodness.

Since March, St. Mary's has lived into our mission as a "Christian community of worship, well-being, and service" as never before. The work and generosity of this community to make this happen gave me great hope over the past months.

Our worship didn't falter as we have shifted from in-person to online to outdoor worship. We have had faithful ministers and worshippers throughout this whole period. We **expanded** our worship offerings to include Evening Prayer online and an Advent service of lessons and carols outdoors. Through our staff's leadership and work, the laity rose to new levels of ministry. Each of these opportunities reminded us of God's love for us.

Well-being thrived during 2020. Even though we were socially distanced, we were spiritually connected. We continued to reflect on God's word in weekly emails; offered our grounds as a respite for those who want exercise, quiet, and a place for peaceful reflection; and extended our pastoral care for each other. Our laity generously gave its time and talents to minister to St. Mary's parishioners. We learned to serve others and ourselves in new ways. We fed people through a "meatloaf sandwich kitchen," our free community garden plots, and our renewed food pantry donations. Our own souls and curiosity were allowed to seek answers through Zoom book discussions and Sacred Ground. We reached out to the greater community with a "trick-or-treat" parade on Halloween.

During this time, we worked on the 2020 vestry priorities. While we didn't necessarily concentrate directly on growth, we grew. We had regular visitors at worship, new members, a greater online presence than before, and new people taking on roles in ministry. The church restoration continued. We completed the roof renovation, and we began to look at what the interior restoration will entail. Our resource management was still on a positive path. We used our grounds like never before and took care of our buildings with due diligence. We continued to be judicious in our financial affairs. And most importantly, our faithful members remained faithful in honoring their pledges from last year. Thank you so much for sharing your faith and hope.

I have enjoyed serving you, the rector, and staff and working with the executive committee and vestry. As I end my tenure as senior warden, I never thought that I'd put leading during a pandemic on my "senior warden resume." I bet that you didn't know that I have one! Anyway, what a way to go.

Faithfully,
Murry Edwards, Senior Warden

Moving Forward Task Force

In mid-March, the COVID-19 pandemic took hold quickly on the daily lives of the members of St. Mary's. As was true the world over, all aspects of life were impacted from going to work, to school, to the grocery store, and even to church.

When the pandemic first emerged, the rector in consultation with officers of the vestry immediately decided to close the church and to move to online worship. As the state and the diocese established new guidelines, it became clear that being the church was going to be different for some time.

With that in mind, the rector established the Moving Forward Task Force in May. The goal of the group was to guide St. Mary's through the pandemic by keeping the parish spiritually connected, while physically distanced. The group met for an hour weekly to assess the latest developments in the rapidly changing pandemic environment and reported to the vestry monthly. Serving on the task force in 2020 were the rector, the Rev. Jennifer Pedrick; parish administrator, Karen Laroche; Sr. Warden, Murry Edwards; and vestry members, Marlo Pratt, David Spengler, David Brierley, and George LeBlanc. The team shared leadership of each meeting by dividing up roles and responsibilities.

One of the first pieces of business was creating the document "Decision Making in the Time of Pandemic." Every time an issue came to light, this rubric set parameters and proved to be a solid foundation for guidance. This process was used to decide on everything from how to offer virtual services to whether or not groups would meet in the parish house to how the offering was going to be collected on Sunday morning and much more.

The diocesan "Covenant for Regathering" was another document that was foundational in guiding the process for reopening. Using the Baptismal Covenant as its basis, this covenant established the terms for gathering in a safe environment once that became feasible.

All of the nitty gritty questions of providing for the wellbeing of St. Mary's ministries and groups came to this group. For instance, if and how would parishioners be allowed in the buildings? Could meetings for recovery groups be held? What about the knitting group? What could be done to continue to provide soup kitchen meals?

And perhaps, the most essential question of all: how would we keep our community connected and safe as we returned to Sunday morning worship? As the team weighed the various options, they used the decision making guide to come to the conclusion that outdoor worship was going to be the new way for St. Mary's to gather, weather permitting.

However, this decision only led to more questions. Would some people be worshipping in cars and others on the lawn? How could we offer a safe environment for people with compromised immune systems? What did the worship team need for a sound system? How could we improve the worship area on the lawn? How would the tellers perform their duty of counting the offering? Could Holy Communion be offered in person or when we returned to online worship? These are just some of the questions that the group faced, answered, and refined as St. Mary's moved to in-person, outdoor worship.

The Task Force employed creativity, team-work, and problem solving skills as it developed ministries and worship that served St. Mary's and the wider community. One of the first accomplishments was an outdoor sound system that allowed people on the lawn to hear the service as well as people in cars to hear on their FM radios. Building a worship shell to serve as a focal point for worship, a safe place for the worship team to gather, and a future place to host community gatherings was another major accomplishment. The Task Force also oversaw the "trunk-or-treat" parade and the lighting of St. Mary's grounds for Advent and Christmas.

As the year progressed, the pandemic didn't abate, and the Task Force was able to recycle some of its "old ways" of doing things from earlier in the pandemic such as a return to on-line services, updated with drive through Holy Communion. The Task Force became a nimble group, addressing whatever came its way. This allowed the group to begin to wonder how it might deal with the next adaptation of being the church in this time of global pandemic.

Collaborators: The Rev. Jennifer Pedrick, Murry Edwards, Marlo Pratt, Karen Laroche, David Brierley, George LeBlanc



Moving Forward Task Force Decision making in the time of Pandemic

Accepted on May 20, 2020

As we are faced with decisions about reopening our church, moving forward in ministry and starting new ministries we will use the following criteria:

- Does the decision support our mission? Does it clearly promote Christian Community, worship, well-being and/or service? (Our mission is to be a Christian community of worship, well-being and service.)
- Does the decision support the safety of our members, staff, and community? Is it in accordance with the directives and guidelines of the local government and diocese? This will require us to always be aware of the latest directives and guidelines in place.
- Is the decision pastorally sensitive to the various constituencies of our parish (ages and stages of life).
- Have we considered accommodations for those who may be or feel left out? Particularly around technology.
- Does the decision comply with the doctrine and discipline of the Episcopal Church? (Book of Common Prayer, Constitutions and Canons etc.)
- Can we afford the decision financially?
- How does the ministry or decision impact St. Mary's staff?
- How are we applying Invite, Welcome, Connect?
- Is God calling us to move in this direction?
- Do the Vestry and Rector support the decision?

When we make a decision or begin a new ministry, how will it be communicated? Evaluated? How can we tell if the members support the decision?



Covenant for Regathering

I promise, to the best of my ability with God's help, to abide by the guidelines of the Diocese of Rhode Island and St. Mary's for participation in church as we regather during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In fulfillment of the Baptismal Covenant (BCP p. 304-305), I will strive to:

Love my neighbor as myself, I will...

- Wear a mask or scarf over my nose and mouth at all times in church buildings, except momentarily to receive the sacrament or lead worship by an assigned speaking part, and follow public health guidelines for hand sanitizing and disinfecting.
- Only attend worship if I am non-symptomatic for the COVID-19 virus or any other transmittable disease that could compromise the health of another person also attending.
- Abstain from attending if doing so would put me at greater risk due to my own health status.

Respect the dignity of every human being, I will...

- Make no physical contact with people beyond the members of my own household.
- Maintain a six foot or more distance from other members of the congregation.
- Respect any requests for distance, masking, cleaning, and disinfecting to ensure the safety and comfort level of others.

Seek and serve Christ in all people...

- Support the decisions of my diocesan and congregational leaders.
- Stay connected with others in my community by telephone, video chat, mail, or other means

This is our expectation for all those who wish to worship with us in person. By participating in our worship, you assume responsibility for following the above.

Worship



St. Mary's exhibited great flexibility and adaptability in 2020, and nowhere was this more apparent than in worship, the core of the community's life.

When the year began, regular events such as Epiphany, baptism, the bishop's visit and confirmation took place in regular worship spaces with St. Mary's regular teams providing leadership.

However, in mid-March with the onset of the pandemic, all of the future plans for worship in 2020 shifted. No longer able to meet together inside, **worship moved online**. Jennifer Pedrick, David Brierley, and Michael Templeton served as the worship team. They planned and produced worship services in the St. George's Chapel for upload to YouTube for the first two weeks.

As the State of Rhode Island tightened restrictions on gatherings, Jennifer and her family, Lydia and Bella De Angelo, became the worship and production team. They shifted worship from the St. George's Chapel to the rectory, the historic church, and the grounds of St. Mary's. While Jennifer and her family served as the basis for the team, Michael Templeton and Julie Zecher provided music remotely. Lydia and Bella spent hours on Saturdays crafting and editing the worship service video and uploading it to YouTube in time for an online Sunday morning worship experience. Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter were all celebrated in this fashion. This model lasted through the spring.

St. Mary's services from mid-March to the end of May had an average of 91 views per week on **YouTube**. One thing to keep in mind is that views do not represent the total number of people who might be watching in a household. Given this, the online outreach was probably even greater!

The rector formed the **Moving Forward Task Force** in May to plan how St. Mary's would function during the

pandemic. The team evaluated how ministries could move forward as well as overseeing Sunday morning worship.

A **bell-ringing ministry** was one of the new ideas for worship that came out of the Task Force. In May, under David Brierley's leadership, ringing the church bell every day at noon began. The bell could be heard up to two miles. Not only did those living locally hear the bell, but those beyond. Streamed on Facebook, the ringing brought comfort to people in 2020's uncertain times. Ann Gizzi, Ed Traynor, Harry Gustafson, Jennifer Pedrick, Judy Hall, Lee Ferreira, Marilyn Ferkinhoff, Meredith Collins, Murry Edwards, Paul Westrom, and Ray Edler committed to tolling the bell of St. Mary's.

The Task Force oversaw the regathering of the parish in outdoor worship on June 28th. Under the direction of Jennifer Pedrick and Marlo Pratt, the Task Force formulated all details of coming together to worship safely in a time of pandemic. Eighteen people served on **three major teams** to provide hospitality and logistics for safe, reverent, outdoor worship. While people on the teams originally agreed to work for one month, many were faithful in their ministry from mid-June through mid-December.

The **Welcome Team** checked all people coming onto the property to worship for COVID. They also made sure that people knew where to park or sit and received a bulletin, and if needed, they provided a mask, which was made by a parishioner. Judy and Bill Hall, David Spengler, Lee Ferreira, Rose Muller, Gretchen and Tara Alaniz, Murry Edwards, and Jenny Nestlerode all warmly welcomed people to worship including many first-time guests.

The **Parking and Safety Team** oversaw the safety of people worshipping in cars and those worshipping on the lawn. They directed people to parking spaces before worship and guided them out after worship. They also guided pedestrian and automobile traffic. The team made

circles on the lawn and painted lines for parking spaces in the parking lot to ensure safe, social distancing during worship. Under George LeBlanc's leadership, the team included Harry Gustafson, Lynn Carlson-LeBlanc, Steve Bakios, and Ray Edler.



And at the core of worship was the **Worship Team**. The rector and Marlo Pratt managed this group who worked together. For the first three months of worship, this team was unchanging. Michael Templeton and Julie Zecher provided music while Scott Pruit and David Brierley oversaw the sound system. Lydia D'Angelo filmed the worship service. Sheila Benevides served as altar guild, and Debby Timby provided flowers. Laura Palmer served as

lector and intercessor. Matt Spohn assisted Jon Walker in setting up and taking down.

Those who served as ministers for outdoor worship were generous and gracious in their commitment to this worship service. They arrived first and left last and were at church for at least two hours on Sunday morning to make each service happen.

From mid-June through mid-December, the community gathered at 9:00 until the end of Daylight Savings Time and at 10:30 (after DST) on Sunday mornings to worship on the lawn or in cars. During this time the worship team expanded as well. New members – Lydia De Angelo, Bella De Angelo, Hailey Pratt, Connor Pratt, Rose Muller and Marlo Pratt, Carol Brierley – joined the video production team. Ray Edler, Ann Gizzi and Anne Wood also joined as lectors.

Outdoor worship was rolled out in phases. First the parish gathered for Morning Prayer, and as people became comfortable gathering, we began to celebrate Eucharist. During this period the bishop officiated at one of the services, and the rector blessed animals and celebrated a baptism. The weather was certainly a bright spot in an otherwise difficult year since worship was outside all of the Sundays except for November 1! During this time an average of 68 people worshiped weekly outdoors.

Our online worship presence continued while we gathered in person. For the first three months, we uploaded a **recorded video of the service to YouTube**. During those weeks, the average views per service were 60. About 3 months into outdoor worship we went to a live stream via

Facebook as well as uploading to YouTube each week. Our **Facebook stream** reached more views weekly (and probably reached more people as well) with an average of 141 views per service. Certainly these numbers show that an **online presence was important in St. Mary's spreading the Good News!**

For the first Sunday in Advent, a **service of lessons and carols** was held at dusk on the lawn. The trees on the property were decorated with white lights, snowflakes, and balls. Sitting on the lawn or in their cars, 86 people attended this service that began our Advent theme of "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light."

Advent also brought another online opportunity to worship. Under Carol Brierley's leadership, she, David Brierley, Mattie Gustafson, Michael Templeton, and Anne Wood started **online Evening Prayer on Facebook**. Offered every evening at 5:30, Evening Prayer allowed people far and wide to gather in a prayerful community.



In mid-December worship moved back inside when the Moving Forward Task Force decided that the weather was getting too variable for even hearty New Englanders. A small team led a live-streamed, weekly worship service from the Historic Church.

While the Task Force had big plans for a very well-attended Christmas Eve service outside, an earlier snowstorm caused another adaptation. Christmas Eve was live-streamed from the historic church with drive-through Holy Communion administered to people in their cars following Eucharist. After Christmas, a service of Lessons and Carols also was streamed from the historic church and followed by drive-through communion. And so, drive-through communion became the new "usual" for Sunday worship.

St. Mary's adapted very well to the circumstances of 2020. The parish showed great agility as it changed weekly services and added new ways of "being church" at a moment's notice whether because of a Rhode Island health restriction or the weather.

Contributors: Carol Brierley, David Brierley, Murry Edwards, The Rev. Jennifer Pedrick

Well-Being



If anything, 2020 was a year where well-being was foremost in everyone's mind. Whether it was a physical, emotional, or spiritual need, St. Mary's took care of friends and members.

An active part of St. Mary's tending to physical needs was the opening of the property for walking. While many St. Mary's members have known of the beauty and peace that are at 324 E. Main Road, others did not. A mere signboard on the side of the road invited people to come walk on the grounds in a COVID-19 safe manner. Throughout the weeks and months, many new people enjoyed the exercise, fresh air, and meditative beauty of the grounds.

Just before the pandemic hit, the **Social Issues and Service Committee** welcomed a group of local physicians who provided information sessions on the topic of health care for all.

St. Mary's buildings were closed from the beginning of the pandemic, and this changed our ability to offer space for the Sacred Center, the recovery groups and other outside groups. This change also ended our partnership with the Sacred Center.

The **Pastoral Care** team took an early lead in taking care of members' and friends' emotional, physical and spiritual needs. The Pastoral Care team reached out to all members and friends of St. Mary's church community regularly. A team of people connected with the church family through phone calls, emails, and text messaging to check in on how they were doing and to remind them that they remained in St. Mary's thoughts and prayers. Through these communications any concerns were passed on to the rector, who followed through as needed. The Pastoral Care team maintained a very active prayer ministry as it lifted up the requests of the parish to God. Despite the pandemic, or maybe due to being quarantined at home, the 15 members of the **Prayer Shawl Ministry** and several members of the Parish who knit/crochet at home, stayed very busy. The group went from a weekly gathering to not meeting to regathering on the lawn of Gibbs House to

meeting in the St. George's Chapel to not meeting again. In each change of meeting, the group followed the essential COVID-19 protocols that were in place and showed great adaptability since coming together was as important for them as knitting or crocheting.

All of **this flux didn't change the hard and good work of this faithful group**. In 2020 the ministry gave to members of the parish and the community 62 adult prayer shawls, 2 children's prayer shawls, 2 baptism blankets, 1 lap robe and 48 prayer patches. The Seaman's Church Institute received 25 hat/scarf sets and 8 hats to distribute to their clients. A total of 147 items, including hats, scarves, mittens, baby blankets, baby sweaters, were given to the Santa's Workshop at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center.

The card ministry **expanded its reach to those who might be feeling lonely or isolated because of the pandemic**. The group increased the number of cards sent from 60-75 to about 100 this year. Not only did the number increase, but **the groups who were blessed by this ministry did as well**. The card group sent cards to members and friends who work in health care and to community organizations such as the police and fire departments and hospitals.

The Pastoral Care team was privileged to serve the community in this extraordinary year. They received so very much from the community as they maintained St. Mary's connections.

New ways to meet the spiritual needs of parishioners emerged in 2020.

The year began with Tonya Douce a military spouse and ordained Methodist minister, leading the Children's Christian Formation program. Due to her husband's assignment to the Pentagon in Washington, DC, Tonya had to focus on relocating her family in the time of pandemic. Unfortunately, these circumstances prevented St. Mary's from giving her and her

family a heart-felt thank-you for their role in the parish during their time in Newport.

In the spring, anywhere from a dozen to twenty people gathered on **Zoom on Sunday morning for coffee hour**. People touched base and discussed what was happening in the world around them. While this didn't totally fulfill the need for socializing in person, people did feel connected to the St. Mary's community.

Adult spiritual formation pivoted in 2020. As the year began, Karen Laroche led a **weekly Bible study** following the worship service. Average attendance for this discussion was about 30 people. However, when gathering together for study was no longer feasible, Karen wrote and sent out a weekly email with a scripture passage, reflection, and questions to friends and members of the parish.



Because of the pandemic, Halloween was very different in 2020. Trick-or-treating and trunk-or-treating were discouraged. However, St. Mary's used its gift of a well-laid-out campus to offer a **"trunk-or-treating" parade** to members of the greater

Aquidneck Island community and to give children a sense of normalcy in an otherwise abnormal time. Ten families of St. Mary's offered hospitality and an opportunity for the wider community to celebrate this holiday. While the Moving Forward Task Force anticipated **maybe 50** trick-or-treaters, **we hosted 160!** This event was a victim of its own success!

Lee Ferraira and Judy Hall prepared 60 **Advent wreath kits** to distribute to families. Each kit contained the makings for an Advent wreath and the booklet *Living Well Through Advent*. Kits for families with children also included a booklet explaining Advent wreaths. All of the 60 kits were distributed, of which 17 were focused on families for children. Lee and Judy also prepared 20 gift bags to celebrate St Nicholas Day. Each red bag contained a clementine, a candy cane and chocolate "gold coins". St. Nicholas, portrayed by Harry Gustafson, handed out the bags to children after services on December 6.

During Advent, Judy Hall and Jenny Williams led an **online Advent book club** for children. During the thirty-minute weekly time, they provided the opportunity to light an Advent candle, meditate, sing, and hear an appropriate children's book to mark the season. This new ministry included not only St. Mary's children but children from a greater, online community.

2020 was a **great year** in the St. Mary's **community garden**. This may have been due to the decision to offer free garden plots, other community gardens on the island not being

available, the pandemic, or a combination of all of the above. More people participated in the garden this year than ever before. Approximately twenty plots were taken this season in addition to the Sea Rose summer student gardening area. Several plots are already reserved for the 2021 growing season!

Garden bore many gifts - new friendships; first time gardeners growing amazing crops; fellow gardeners helping each other by sharing information and hands on help; flowers for the Pastoral Care ministry; students learning; community food pantry support; and composting. We had gardeners participate from Newport to Providence - from preschool to senior gardeners - and from all walks of life. The garden gate was open to all. Our God given beautiful corner of the earth for our community garden was a gift at a time when it was needed most - a peaceful place in nature to escape and a place of well-being.

St. Mary's contributed to the financial well-being of members through the **Rector's Discretionary Fund** and the Tuck Fund. Members' generous gifts and honorariums for funerals and weddings support the discretionary fund. The rector dispersed almost \$6000 to support members in their need for food, utilities, and medical supplies.

While St. Mary's college students were balancing new ways of school -- online, in person, hybrid -- St. Mary's eased some of the stress of funding a college or graduate education with a \$2000 per semester **Tuck Fund scholarship**. Recipients were



members or children of members of St. Mary's. Michael Adkins, Bella DeAngelo, Andrew Gustafson, Caroline Hall, Cece Harvey, Savannah Geasey Kacher, Abby Kaul, Julie Kaul, Rayna Lombardo, Sara Lundberg, Connor Pratt, and Claire Williams received the scholarship in 2020. The Tuck Fund provided a total of \$42,000 in financial support to these students. And along with that, the Pastoral Care team sent them Starbucks gift cards to let them know that St. Mary's was thinking of them around exam time in the fall semester.

This pandemic allowed St. Mary's to really live into looking after the well-being of those in our community both within and without our walls.

Contributors: Lynn Carlson-Le Blanc, Pauline Davis, Connie Dealy, Murry Edwards, Judy, Hall, Lee Ferreira, Elise LaParle Garcia, Susan Kelchner, The Rev. Jennifer Pedrick

Service



The Social Issues and Service Committee (SISC) began 2020 with many exciting plans for programs and opportunities for service. A few of these plans began before COVID-19 hit. In January the group discussed ways to strengthen St. Mary's relationships with existing agencies as well as finding opportunities to offer the gift of our wonderful building and property to the community.

A new program was "**Sacred Ground,**" which began in January. Created by the Episcopal Church, the Sacred Ground curriculum uses documentary films, readings, and discussion to explore race, racism, and the latest scholarly thinking on the topic of racial healing. Twenty-six participants, from St. Mary's and the greater community, learned about and discussed this issue. The group completed half of the curriculum with much lively discussion before all in-person activities at church were paused. Sacred Ground resumed via Zoom in the fall. Some former members opted to study the materials independently while new members joined the Zoom discussion format. The program ended with nine active participants and **a list of plans and activities for the future.**

During the summer while "Sacred Ground" was on hold, Michael Templeton facilitated two Zoom **discussion groups on anti-racism.**

St. Mary's relationship with the the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center (MLKCC) in Newport was strengthened. Heather Strout, executive director of the MLKCC came to St. Mary's in early February to talk about the work of the center as well as how to volunteer. Throughout the year, St. Mary's **continued its support of the MLKCC.** Needless to say, the pandemic changed how this occurred as well.

During Advent, St. Mary's supported the MLKCC's **annual Santa's Workshop,** a special event that enables local families to shop for holiday gifts and food. Because of COVID, parishioners were asked to purchase gift cards this year. The Welcome Team collected gift cards and money on Sunday mornings before services from mid-November to mid-December. Again, St. Mary's was extremely generous as over \$2000 in cards and checks were donated to the Center.

The St. Mary's community donated a total of 2191 pounds of nourishing food in 2020, which based on a standard from the non-profit relief organization Feeding America, was worth \$3681! Parishioners remained **faithful in supporting the food drive** when they could during regular worship and outdoor worship.

St. Mary's also continued to feed people at the **soup kitchen.** Before COVID, monthly volunteers served a meatloaf hot meal to 50 or 60 guests. When indoor gatherings were stopped, the soup kitchen adapted. Rather than cooking a hot meal, volunteers bagged a meatloaf sandwich and other sides to distribute to 40 to 45 guests. Although many regular volunteers had health concerns related to the virus, approximately 24 people still made meatloaves, donated food, helped make sandwiches, prepared the bagged meals, and distributed them at St. Paul's UMC in Newport. New volunteers joined the group, and as a result, **this ministry grew.**

The SISC also sought new ways to connect St. Mary's to the larger community. Representing the SISC, Harry Gustafson attended the Aquidneck Land Trust's annual meeting to gather information in the hope that St. Mary's will **partner with ALT** to provide lectures on environmental topics.

The SISC originally planned to include members of St. Mary's on a Habitat for Humanity build day in the spring of 2020. Because of the pandemic, this was postponed to 2021. However, George LeBlanc and Lynn Carlson-LeBlanc continued their work with the Buzzards Bay Chapter of Habitat for Humanity,

Ray Edler, Mattie Gustafson, and Murry Edwards kept people in touch with St. Mary's activities via the weekly eNews, website, and Facebook.

Despite the pandemic, St. Mary's continued in service to the community and began to look at the world with new curiosity and questioning.

Contributors: David Brierley, Lynn Carlson-Le Blanc, Jon Edwards, David Ferkinhoff, Judy Hall

2020 Financial and Investment Reports

INCOME:

Pledge Income came in approx. \$9,000 under budget, while Donations and Building Use were \$3,000 and \$2,000 stronger than budgeted. Sale of Gravelots was a bright spot at \$13,000 more than budget. Most other income categories were also either on budget or slightly stronger.

EXPENSES:

The only item of significance from an over-budget standpoint was Insurance, coming in approx. \$5,000 higher than expected. This related primarily to increased premiums in general, and an increase in Worker's Compensation Insurance due to our having a full-time Sexton.

As planned and reported at last year's annual meeting, \$84,000 was spent on major buildings and grounds maintenance/repair initiatives. The good news is that Personnel expense came in approx. \$80,000 less than budgeted - essentially negating the greatly needed repairs expenditures! (This resulted from our keeping Christian Formation position in the budget for 2020, but not filling the position.)

ENDOWMENT:

The financial markets were finished very strong after a very difficult first quarter. This was reflected in our endowment performance, which ended the year up approximately 10%. Endowment draws were exactly on budget at \$250,500, representing an approximately 7.0% draw for the year.

The Investment Committee met quarterly with the investment manager (Van Liew Capital) to review strategy, holdings and performance. There were no changes to the portfolio allocation, which continues to have an equity target between 60-70%. We continue to hold approximately 1 year of future draws in a conservative bond fund, which ensures that we would not need to liquidate investments into the teeth of a downturn should one occur.

LOOKING FORWARD - 2021 AND BEYOND:

These financial results in the face of an extraordinarily challenging COVID year is an incredible testament to the strength of our community.

My goal as Treasurer has been to get us within reach of our ideal annual endowment draw in the 5.5% range. Our 2021 budget shows that goal is indeed within reach, and I look forward to seeing that goal met in the near future.

It has been one of the great honors and pleasures of my life to serve in the Treasurer's capacity over the past 4 years. I am grateful for my successor Dave Brierley's willingness to take the reigns - Dave is very well qualified and truly dedicated to our community - and I look forward to assisting him in the background with anything he needs to ensure a smooth and successful transition.

Respectfully yours,

Christopher Bartlett CPA, CFP, Treasurer

Proposed 2021 Budget

ST. MARY'S CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING TREASURER'S REPORT (Preliminary, 1/31/2021) GENERAL AND RESTRICTED FUNDS

<u>INCOME STATEMENTS</u>	<u>Budget</u>		<u>Budget</u>		<u>Actual</u>		<u>Actual</u>	
	<u>2021</u>		<u>2020</u>		<u>2020</u>		<u>2019</u>	
Income:								
Pledges	\$265,000	50%	\$265,000	45%	256,346.98	43%	\$280,277	45%
Loose Offerings	8,000	2%	10,000	2%	9,952	2%	9,631	2%
Donations	5,000	1%	5,000	1%	8,348	1%	14,876	2%
Investment Income & Draw	198,438	37%	258,524	44%	260,789	43%	247,289	40%
Buildings & Land Use	44,800	8%	35,000	6%	57,517	10%	42,903	7%
Fundraising/Thrift/Other	9,000	2%	16,000	3%	9,278	2%	26,352	4%
		0%		0%		0%		0%
Total Income	<u>530,238</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>589,524</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>602,231</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>621,328</u>	<u>100%</u>
Expenditures:								
Personnel(ex. Sexton)	294,200	55%	277,200	47%	273,898	46%	267,464	44%
Apportionment	83,838	16%	86,874	15%	86,874	15%	85,866	14%
Grounds(incl. Sexton)	10,000	2%	94,250	16%	6,847	1%	85,274	14%
Buildings & Utilities	91,500	17%	80,000	14%	169,203	29%	96,296	16%
Office	37,100	7%	40,100	7%	47,110	8%	57,113	9%
Outreach	4,500	1%	4,500	1%	602	0%	1,762	0%
Stewardship, Christian								
Formation, Music, Worship	9,100	2%	6,600	1%	4,952	1%	10,300	2%
Total Expenditures	<u>\$530,238</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>\$589,524</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>\$589,486</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>\$604,075</u>	<u>100%</u>
Net Operating Excess,(Deficit)	<u>-</u>		<u>-</u>		<u>12,745</u>		<u>17,253</u>	

Remaining Balance - Historic Church Restoration Fund:

\$ 105,390 \$ 196,208

<u>BALANCE SHEETS</u>	<u>12/31/2020</u>	<u>12/31/2019</u>
Assets:		
Cash in Bank	\$ 206,832	\$ 40,607
Investments - Endowment	4,374,687	3,831,363
Cash - Oliphant Proceeds	0	446,381
Diocesan Investment Trust	256,929	239,640
HC Restoration Fund	80,728	196,208
Other Assets	11,693	
Total Assets	<u>\$ 4,930,869</u>	<u>\$ 4,754,199</u>
Liabilities:		
Restricted Funds Deferred to Next Year	\$0	\$0
Other Liabilities	12,530	6,363
PPP Loan	66,125	0
Fund Balances:		
Fund Balance	4,852,214	4,747,836
Total Liab's & Fund Balance	<u>\$ 4,930,869</u>	<u>\$ 4,754,199</u>

	<u>PLEDGE HISTORY</u>			
	<u>Pledged</u>	<u>Received</u>		
	<u>\$</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>%</u>
2021	\$251,334	110		
2020	\$259,834	120	256,347	99%
2019	\$265,050	123	280,277	106%
2018	\$218,112	113	231,980	106%
2017	232,138	126	\$242,329	104%
2016	220,372	125	218,124	99%
2015	227,156	133	220,381	97%
2014	197,921	134	202,510	102%
2013	240,221	153	226,479	94%
2012	249,374	160	238,555	96%
2011	237,700	158	239,196	101%



Restricted Funds

RESTRICTED FUNDS

<u>INCOME AND EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Donations / Income:		
Altar Guild	\$0	\$0
Churchyard & Grounds	20,341	-
Community Garden	-	-
New Signage	-	-
New Boiler	-	-
Grounds & Parking Lots	-	-
Historic Church	73,587	300,344
New Parish House	33,302	-
Other	5,100	1,615
Sale of Oliphant Lane Land	-	446,381
Tuck Fund	42,000	34,000
Capital Repairs	15,997	-
Prior Year Restricted Gifts Released		
Historic Church	100,000	
Parish House		
	<u>290,326</u>	<u>782,340</u>
Expenditures:		
Churchyard & Grounds	14,191	-
Community Garden	-	-
New Boiler	-	-
Gibbs House	-	-
Grounds & Parking Lots	-	-
Historic Church	173,516	474,165
New Parish House	-	-
Other	5,360	2,690
Stained Glass Windows	-	-
Tuck Scholarship Awards	42,000	34,000
Prior Year Restricted Gifts Expended		
Historic Church		
Parish House		
	<u>235,068</u>	<u>510,855</u>
NET RESTRICTED INCOME LESS EXPENDITURES	<u><u>\$55,259</u></u>	<u><u>\$271,485</u></u>



Finance Commission

Meeting **quarterly**, the Finance Commission continued to analyze details of all income and expense accounts to understand amounts recorded. It also continued to maintain a liability account for restricted gifts that were received in prior years but had yet to be expended. The Commission also monitored the movement of cash from restricted gifts for renovation of the historic church (i.e., the flow from an interest bearing account to checking to payments to vendors). Because of the health of the 2020 budget, the Finance Commission meetings were concise and very easy to attend.

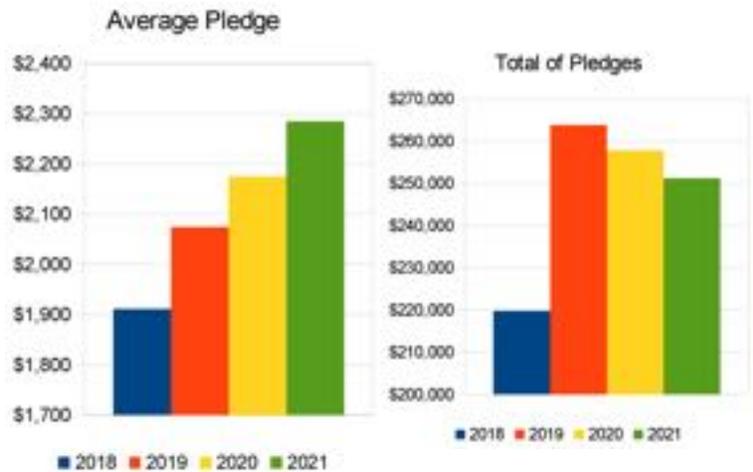
Contributor: Bill Hall

Stewardship

St. Mary's had a successful pledge campaign this year, with 110 families submitting pledges for a total of \$251,334. Of those pledges, 36 were an increase from last year's pledge and 11 were from people that are either new to the parish or had not made a pledge commitment in the past.

The total amount pledged has declined again; however, a number of families have not sent in a pledge card yet, and **the average pledge continues to increase.**

Contributor: David Brierley



Sarah Gibbs Trust

The Sarah Gibbs Trustees are responsible for the oversight of St. Mary's grounds. Established by the Sarah Gibbs Trust in 1843, this group ensures that the property that Sarah Gibbs gave to "establish an Episcopal Church" is used to meet her wishes. The Trustees can either be independent or Vestry Trustees. The independent Trustees are self-nominating for up to seven 3-year terms. The Vestry Trustees are elected by the Vestry for the duration of their Vestry term to serve on the Trust. The Bishop of Rhode Island is an ex-officio member of the Trust

In January New England Grass Fed renewed its lease to farm the hayfield in 2020.

The Trustees approved the vestry's request to build a worship shell on the lawn of St. Mary's. The shell was to enhance outdoor worship during the COVID pandemic as well as provide a space for other outdoor events in the future.

Jeff Belden accepted reappointment by the independent trustees for a three-year term as an independent trustee when his current term expires March 1, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Belden, Chair (ind. 2023)
Chris Winslow, Vice Chair (vestry 2021)
V. James Vanicek (ind. 2021)

Chris Bartlett, Treasurer (vestry 2020)
Fay Gosling, Secretary (ind. 2022)
Paul Westrom, (vestry 2019)

The Rt. Rev. W. Nicholas Knisely, Bishop, *ex-officio*

Property Commission

The Property Commission oversaw the strategic maintenance of St. Mary's property as well as took care of unplanned needs.

Work was done on our three other buildings besides the Historic Church.

Extensive exterior work was done on Gibbs House. We replaced the Gibbs House roof, rotten trim boards, siding, and repainted the Gibbs House exterior and trim.

The Rectory also received lots of attention. As with any project, the replacing of the front door of the Rectory, while planned, led to repair of flooring and trim because the front door had been leaking. The interior received new paint and

repairs in places that had been impacted by roof leaks. The hot water heater in the rectory was also replaced.

The Parish House also had repairs) as well. The steps on the front and back of the Parish House and loose stones on the wall in the courtyard were repaired. We replaced a failed heat pump and replaced a damage sprinkler pipe in this building.. As a future cost-savings measure, the Parish House was re-lamped with LED lighting.

The grounds received attention as well. The primary focus of the work there was removal of trees around the property that were dead, dying, or a hazard to our buildings if they fell. We repaired and expanded the fence around the playground (with the Sea Rose School).

Paul Westrom, Junior Warden

Historic Church Renewal and Funding

St. Mary's restoration of the Historic Church is a three-phase project that has been ongoing **since 2017**. Even in 2020, we made progress on the restoration.

In January, we completed the second phase of restoring the Historic Church by replacing copper gutters and downspouts. Restoring the 175-year-old roof cost \$608,705 and was funded by the generosity of St. Mary's members, friends, and grants.

With the restoration of the roof, crosses, and gutters, the HRCT NewPort Architecture turned their attention to the interior of the church, the third and final phase of our project. The HRCT conducted several studies to find out what the interior looked like at different periods in its history as well as the condition of the walls and floors. We are looking at carpets and color schemes, lighting packages, electrical upgrades, and restoring the mosaic floor in the narthex. Using the information we glean from these studies, we will decide to what extent we will restore the interior.

The historic church is now on the Rhode Island Register of Historic Places. We are also applying for designation as a National Historic Building.

Looking forward, we will continue to restore our church building as well as fund raise for this historic project.

We will be asking for your support as well as continuing to apply for grants.

Thank you to the members of St. Mary's who are overseeing and fundraising for this project. Thank you to the members of the Historic Church Restoration Team : Alex Allardt, Dave Ferkinhoff, Don Berrett, Jon Juhase, Matt Spohn, Hugh Hall, and Harry Gustafson. A thank-you also goes to the members of the Restoration Fundraising Team: Peter Collins, Marlo Pratt, Hugh Hall, Sue Hall, Judy Hall, Alex Allardt, with a special thank you to our grant writer, Dave Ferkinhoff!

The work of this generation will continue in 2021 as we turn our attention to the interior.

Your brother in Christ,
Paul Westrom, Junior Warden



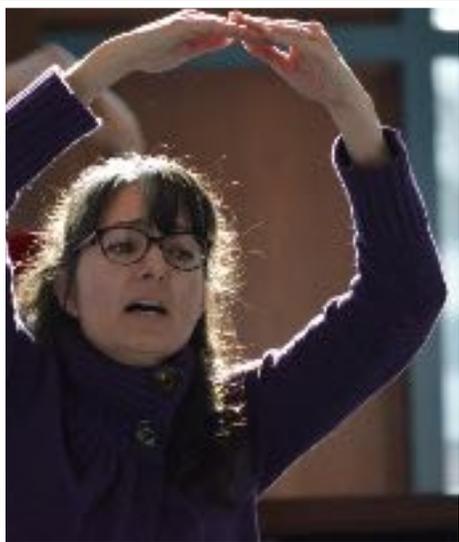


Photo Credits for the Annual Report:
Gretchen Alaniz, Ray Edler, Murry
Edwards, Elise LaParle Garcia, Laura
Palmer

