

Annual Report 2023

January 21, 2024

St. Mark's Episcopal Church Port Royal, South Carolina



Our Mission:

St. Mark's is an inclusive fellowship called by God,
through Christ, to love and serve the world.

www.stmarksc.org

Cover: Fr. Roy tells the “Gospel Story” to the children at the 4 p.m. service on Christmas Eve, 2023.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Port Royal
PO Box 761, Port Royal, SC 29935
843 379-1020
www.stmarksc.org

AGENDA
of the
Annual Parish Meeting
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
January 21, 2024

Opening Prayer
Review and Approval of the Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting
Rector's Remarks
Senior Warden's Remarks
Parish Governance Resolutions*
Introduction of the Candidates for Vestry
Vote for Vestry Members
Treasurer's Report and 2024 Budget
Vote to Accept Budget
Introduction of Proposed Convention Delegates
Vote to Approve Convention Delegates
Questions and Comments
Benediction & Adjournment

*Parish Governance Resolutions to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting:

Shall the proposed BYLAWS OF ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, INC. (as approved by the Chancellor of the Diocese on 11/21/23) be adopted to replace the Articles of Association (as approved January 20, 2019)?

Shall the Articles of Association (as approved January 11, 2015) be removed from the Articles of Incorporation on file with the Secretary of the State of South Carolina?

Shall the Articles of Incorporation on file with the Secretary of State of South Carolina be amended to include the proposed Additional Provisions as required by The Episcopal Church in South Carolina?

Rector

The Very Reverend Roy Tripp

Deacon

The Reverend Ken Kraft

Current Vestry

Cheri Thayer, Senior Warden

Jim Phelps, Junior Warden

Kathlyn Gray

Susan Grimes

Bob Hydorn

Nicole Passeggio

James Tetler

David Whitworth

Lewis Tabb, Treasurer

Cheryl Gaillard, Vestry Clerk

Staff

Julie Petroff, Parish Administrator

Carter Hoyt, Programs Associate

Karen Harmon, Music Director

Glenda Lee Nutting, Director of Christian Formation

Donna Altman, Bookkeeper

St. Mark's is a parish of the historic Diocese of South Carolina
(The Episcopal Church in South Carolina)
established in 1789. Our Bishop is
the Right Reverend Ruth Woodliff-Stanley.



Minutes
St. Mark's Episcopal Church Annual Meeting
January 22, 2023
10:00 AM

A program with meeting agenda and reports was provided to attendees and is attached.

Welcome: Sr. Warden Barney Forsythe called the meeting to order at 11:20 am.

Opening Prayer: St. Mark's Rector, the Rev. Roy Tripp opened the meeting with a prayer.

Review and Approval of the Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting

Barney called for a motion to approve the minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting. A motion was made and seconded. The Minutes were approved with no amendments.

Rector's Remarks:

Roy thanked the congregation for walking in faith with him. In addition to his written report, he stated that the establishment of a Christian Formation program has been challenging. No interest has been received from advertising for a director. Plans are to re-launch the effort in September.

Senior Warden's Remarks

Barney thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve for six years as Senior Warden. He thanked current and past Vestry members, Lewis Tabb, Donna Altman, and the parish staff. He highlighted a few items in his report. Review and update to our governance documents is being undertaken by Cheri Thayer and Nicole Passeggio. They are working with the Diocese to ensure our By-laws and Articles of Association are consistent with diocesan covenants. A draft By-laws document has been presented to the Diocese for review. After diocesan comments are incorporated, the By-laws will be presented to the congregation for review and approval. Barney also reported that a Facilities Needs Committee led by Don Altman is identifying future parish facilities' needs in the next five to 10 years.

Introduction of Candidates for the Vestry

In accordance with the Articles of Association, Barney asked for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, he moved that the nominations be closed. The motion was seconded and approved. He presented a motion to affirm David Whitworth to complete the Vestry term vacated by Trey Savits when moved from the area. The motion was seconded and approved by the congregation. Barney explained that we have five candidates to fill four open Vestry slots. The candidates are Bonnie Connolly, Bob Hydorn, Glenda Lee Nutting, Nicole Passeggio, and James Tettler. The congregation was given ballots and instructed to vote for four candidates. Outgoing Vestry members, Jim Rowe and Quitman Marshall counted the votes during the remainder of the meeting.

Treasurer's Report & 2023 Budget

Treasurer Lewis Tabb reported that St. Mark's increased revenue and controlled expenses in 2022 resulted in a substantial operating surplus. The Vestry approved the transfer half of the surplus into the General Endowment and the balance into the St. Mark's savings account. A printed copy of the 2023 Budget was provided to attendees. The 2023 Budget reflects a five percent increase in revenue over 2022 due to an increase in pledges for 2023.

Vote to Approve 2023 Budget

On behalf of the Vestry, Barney presented a motion to accept the 2023 Budget. The motion was seconded. The 2023 Budget was approved unanimously by the congregation.

Introduction of Proposed Convention Delegates:

Barney announced the proposed nominees and alternates for the Annual Diocesan Convention. Proposed Delegates are Susan Balkite, Kit Bruce, Jim Nehf, and Jim Turk. Proposed alternates are Beth

Campbell, Cheri Thayer, Lisa Westbrook and Jim White.

Vote to Approve Convention Delegates

No nominations were made from the floor. On behalf of the Vestry, Barney presented a motion to approve the slate. The nominees were approved unanimously by the congregation.

Questions and Comments

Westly Byrne thanked Barney for his leadership as Senior Warden and welcomed Cheri Thayer as the next Senior Warden.

Julie Petroff asked people to sign up for the flower guild and liturgical ministries.

Carter Hoyt expressed the need for additional sacristans and acolytes.

Rob Cahill thanked all those who work in the nursery.

Alison Davidow commented on the Sacred Ground program and Bishop Ruth's support. Kathlyn Gray described plans for a Sacred Ground program at St. Mark's.

Roy thanked Liz Devoir for her support of his ministry and gave gifts to departing Vestry members.

Vote to Approve Vestry Members

After the votes were tabulated, Barney announced the top four candidates were Bob Hydorn, Glenda Lee Nutting, Nicole Passeggio, and James Tettler. Barney presented a motion to approve the slate. The nominees were approved unanimously. Barney thanked Bonnie Connolly for her willingness to serve and the contributions she continues to make to St. Mark's.

Benediction and Adjournment

Fr. Roy closed with a prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Wilson, Vestry Clerk

Rector's Report

Submitted by the Very Rev. Roy Tripp

Looking back over the past year, 2023 was a time of continued growth at St. Mark's. Our Sunday attendance returned to pre-pandemic levels and in certain cases surpassed those numbers.

Numbers are not the only indication of congregational health and vitality. The overall sense of spirit and joy, the desire to invite others to "come and see," and the commitment to support ministries in our community, region and the world, are stronger indications of a healthy faith community. At St. Mark's we embody all of those characteristics.

In 2023 we renewed our commitment to life-long Christian formation. Glenda Lee Nutting joined our staff to coordinate the reintroduction of our Children's Sunday school program. She will also receive training in Stephen Ministries, a program for adult pastoral care. Adult offerings include two new sessions of Sacred Ground, as well as a 4-part series for this year, presented by Tom Miller on Church history and theology. These classes will be in addition to our seasonal adult ed series and a Confirmation class to be coordinated with Bishop Ruth's visit (dates to be determined).

Over and over again, visitors to St. Mark's say that they've rarely been in a church congregation that likes to sing as we do. Our Music Director, Karen Harmon, has done a wonderful job increasing the voices in our choir. The music ministry at St. Mark's adds a rich depth to our worship.

This past summer, St. Mark's introduced a single Sunday service schedule during June, July and August. This proved very popular as members from the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services got to see each other. We will continue a similar schedule this year.

The many ministries at St. Mark's happen due to the efforts of our dedicated staff, the members of our Vestry, and the dozens of volunteers who come together during the week and, of course, on Sundays.

These ministries are detailed within the pages of this report. Many thanks to all.

This year will bring a time of challenges, continued spiritual growth, as well as transition to new chapters in our ministries. I rejoice and give thanks to the abundant blessings God has bestowed on St. Mark's.

Thank you for making St. Mark's the special place it is.

Peace,
Roy+

Deacon's Report **Submitted by the Rev. Ken Kraft**

The year 2023 witnessed the return of normal operations for my participation in the prison ministries in both S.C. and Federal jurisdictions. Ridgeland Correctional Institute in S.C. opened for business in April with the Kairos Prison Ministries International RCI team entertaining 42 inmates. The ladies of St. Marks provided a HUGE number of baked cookies; others provided 50 feet of prayer chain and many hand-written letters of encouragement. My part came as trainer for the drivers for the delivery of food and materials into the prison, and as lead cook of the approximately 700 meals prepared off-site.

Our next Kairos event at Ridgeland occurred in August with slightly less participation but even more cookies, and as equally successful as the April Kairos. The early event timing necessitated by the prison's Correctional Officer (CO) availability meant St. Marks and other churches' "Snow Birds" had not returned and volunteers were in great demand as a result. The CO shortage is still a critical problem.

Meanwhile, the Estill Federal Correctional Institute reopened in May 2023 for the Southern Deanery, Bible study "Changing Hearts and Minds." We started with the study of the book *More Than a Carpenter*, which was well-received by a small group. We followed up with a study of Ami Levine's commentary on the Gospel of Mark, recently used in Father Roy's adult study. Our group has grown by 50 percent and we are encouraged by the possibility of a contingent of female inmates possibly arriving soon this year. We will need some female volunteers to help as a result. Both males and females can serve at Estill even now.

Thank you for all the support this last year.

Blessings,
Deacon Ken+

Senior Warden's Report **Submitted by Cheri Thayer**

Stepping into leadership at St. Mark's is a truly joyful experience and I thank you all for the care and support that has been extended to me. As you will see from the various ministry reports, the commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive fellowship goes much deeper than the famous warm welcome that brings us into the fold. Many of our ministries continue to operate as successfully as they have in the past and others have evolved and flourished.

- Inspiring worship is at the heart of what we do well at St. Mark's. A beautiful new banner crafted by Debbie Phelps and Cheryl Gaillard proclaims the loud Alleluia of the Easter season! In our spirit of welcoming all, two pews near the piano were shortened to more comfortably accommodate wheelchairs.
- Our dedicated staff was increased to add Glenda Lee Nutting as a part-time Christian Formation director with primary responsibilities for children's programs and a future Stephen Ministry.
- The Outreach and Mission Team under the leadership of Barbara Anderson and Gale Swann seriously embraces their responsibility by prayerfully and conscientiously distributing the 10 percent allocation granted to them in our budget.
- The Women of Grace, started in 2022 with Bonnie Connolly's vision, evolved and flourished with

a defined mission and expanded leadership from Sally Domby, Susan Grimes, Alice Hydorn and Jo Phelps.

- The pastoral care team adopted a more descriptive title as the Congregational Care Team and under the leadership of Sally Domby and Mary Smith seeks to serve the needs of St. Mark's parishioners through prayer and service.
- Parish Life events continue to provide opportunities for fellowship and celebration – Coffee Hour, Parish Picnics, the Annual Oyster Roast, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, Foyer Groups, Blessing of the Animals, Advent Wreath Making, Newcomers Reception. Each one of these activities depends on the service of many faithful volunteers.

Our Stewardship campaign moved to November this year with the theme “A Season of Giving” and members sharing stories of their involvement at St. Mark's and reflections on our various ministries. We are thankful for everyone who gives their time, talent, and treasure to support our mission. We have plans for enhancements in our stewardship focus to include a Ministry Fair in 2024. Please make plans to attend to learn more about the people and activities that make St. Mark's the amazing community that it is. And if you'd like to help, reach out to Cheryl Gaillard.

Looking to the future, St. Mark's needs a permanent home for our ministries and administrative staff. In 2023, Don Altman led the initial Facilities Planning Team through to a conclusion that the St. Mark's “green” at the corner of Paris Avenue and 11th Street is the most viable option for future expansion. He will be leading a second Facilities Planning Team in 2024 to continue the planning effort with conceptual drawings. Multi-purpose space for a parish hall, education, administration and other ministries has been identified and will be used to develop a phased approach for future building. Look for more to follow on this exciting next chapter for St. Mark's.

A key priority of the Vestry over the past several years has been to review and update our Parish governance documents. We are voting on new bylaws that recognize the maturity of the parish St. Mark's has become and position us well as we continue our journey. An electronic storage system was adopted for secure recordkeeping and improved transparency with the Parish. Key governance documents including new bylaws and other policies adopted by the Vestry, including Facilities Usage Policy, Fund-raiser Policy, and the Endowment will be available on our website.

Susan Grimes and David Whitworth are completing their service on the Vestry. We are thankful for their faithful service and will miss their unique perspectives. At the same time, we welcome the energy and vibrance of new leaders sharing their own special gifts. Cheryl Gaillard accepted a call to serve as our new Vestry Clerk. We are blessed that Lewis Tabb and Donna Altman continue their faithful stewardship of our financial resources. Please keep the vestry and all of our leaders in your prayers as we endeavor to faithfully carry out the mission entrusted to us.

We are looking forward to an exciting and full year in 2024 as Father Roy continues to leave his mark on our Parish and most importantly, on our hearts. We intend to cherish his final year of ministry and honor him by strengthening our commitment to St. Mark's and our mission to be an inclusive fellowship called by God, through Christ, to love and serve the world.

Junior Warden's Report

Submitted by Jim Phelps

The year 2023 was a busy one for the church and grounds with activities that included weekly worship services and meetings in the church and center. In addition, St. Mark's opened its doors to community events such as a Port Royal Historical Society lecture series, weekly gathering for conversation with local officials and community members, piano concert by the USCB Chamber Music artistic director and a music recital for aspiring musicians.

A big “Thank You” to Dave Strange and George Utter for their leadership in keeping the church, center

and grounds in pristine condition and functioning smoothly. Many thanks to crew member Sam Cooper, Teege Culp, Charlie Jones, Susie Kearney, Rick Kroncke, Debbie/Jim Phelps, Lewis Tabb, Tom Tull, Jim Turk, Dave and George for their efforts throughout the year in making us proud of our worship home. As always, we are looking for new volunteers to help in these efforts. No experience required. Please reach out to Dave, George or Jim for more information.

Thank you for your support that allows me to serve on your vestry as Junior Warden.

Treasurer's Report **Submitted by Lewis Tabb**

Thankfully, 2023 was a much more normal year than the past several. As we were fully back to a regular schedule, operations were on a regular basis and our revenue and expenses were stable and in line with historical patterns. In person attendance slipped a bit from prior years, which is a common occurrence across churches throughout the country. We continue to be blessed by the faithful support of our members and visitors. As you can see from the financial report for 2023, non-pledge revenue was significantly above budget and, although pledge revenue was below budget, total operating revenue exceeded budget. It is likely that the shortfall in pledge revenue was aggravated by mail delays and issues around the holidays, and most will come in early in 2024.

Operating expenses remain well controlled and within budget even with Karen Harmon's absence for the first half of the year and the addition of Glenda Lee Nutting. These were known before the year began so they were in the budget. The judicious management of our resources by our staff and members is reflected in the operating surplus we were able to run for the year. The vestry will vote on the allocation of this surplus and it will be reported at the meeting.

There is one exceptional item that is not reflected in the 2023 financial statements. As you know, we went through some litigation with the owner of the pink house at Paris Av. and 11th St. over the use of the vacant lot during construction and renovation of the sanctuary. We were aided in our defense by the diocese's counsel and achieved a successful outcome. However, counsel's expenses were \$6160. Despite our requesting a bill so that we could expense the fees in 2023, we did not receive a bill until January. Consequently, our actual operating surplus for the year was only \$26,000, not the \$32,000 indicated by the financial statements. This will come up again in the 2024 budget discussion.

The pledge campaign for 2024 was low key. The results were mixed, but overall, the amount pledged increased by 5 percent. We have 10 new pledge units for the year and the average pledge increased by 17 percent; however, the total number of pledges decreased by 10 percent. For 2023, we budgeted an addition to staff in mid-year which occurred. The pledges received thus far for 2024 provide the resources to continue at the new staff level and add some programs, which are reflected in the budget. I am hopeful that additional pledges will come in during the year that will allow us to continue to increase our programs and offerings to the congregation and community. The budget reflects an operating loss of \$5800. However, as explained above, this includes the \$6160 in attorney's fees. The budgeted result from actual operations in 2024 is a slight gain of \$200, essentially a break even.

Our financial condition continues strong. We have rebuilt our reserves to the level before we acquired and renovated and expanded the sanctuary, and we have no debt. The stewardship of Roy, the staff and the vestry makes my job much easier than it could be. We also have been fortunate to have members who contribute above their pledge amounts, thus allowing us to expand our Outreach & Mission, provide flexibility in using the rector's discretionary fund, and provide for enhanced music opportunities.

Again, these are just numbers. The real strength of St. Mark's is our congregation that supports our mission and ministries, not just financially but with their time and talents. Thank you all for your continuing support. It enhances my job satisfaction and enjoyment. I must also recognize Donna Altman for all she does on a daily basis in managing the books and paying the bills.

Budgetary details are included on a separate handout.

Endowment and Investment Fund of St. Mark's

Submitted by Jim Phelps and Kathleen Palinski

2023 marked the first full year for the endowment whose mission is to assist St. Mark's with fulfilling its long-term mission. The year also included the planned transition of members with Kathleen Palinski being named Chairperson of the committee that also includes Marilyn Smith, Leigh Stone, James Tetler and Larry White as secretary. Jim Phelps stepped down as chairperson but remains involved as non-voting vestry liaison. Rector Roy Tripp, Treasurer Lewis Tabb and Senior Warden Cheri Thayer are also included on the committee as non-voting members.

Challenging financial markets and a goal of preserving the endowment's financial foundation necessitated the recommendation to continue the curtailment of reviewing grant applications for the first half of 2023. This recommendation was fully supported by the vestry. With stability in the financial markets the committee voted to open its doors to accepting grant applications in the second half of 2023 and into 2024.

There were two applications submitted and unanimously supported by the committee and recommended to the vestry. The first application was to fund carpentry costs associated with shortening two pews in the front of the church for wheelchair accessibility. The second was to fund the cost of handbells for use by the choir during services. Fortunately for the endowment, the combined costs of approximately \$2,800 were unexpectedly funded from other sources.

The endowment investment fund in 2023 has rebounded after a rocky start that began with a January 1, 2023 balance of \$173,592.95 to a December 31, 2023 balance of \$246,216.89. An additional \$2,989.06 was in the checking account for a grand total of \$249,204.95. The increased balance includes contributions of \$48,539.51 and investment gains of \$24,083.43 (approximately 10.8 percent).

Thank you for your support of this worthy cause that will benefit current and future generations. Recently it became possible for donations to the endowment to be made online through the St. Mark's website. Additional information on the endowment can be found by visiting the "Giving" tab on the website.

Music and Choir Report

Submitted by Karen Harmon, Director of Music

The Music Program for the first six months of 2023 was led by Susan Sorensen while the Director of Music was on a six-month leave of absence. Susan capably fulfilled all the duties of Director of Music, including choir development and service pianist. Susan was also responsible for securing an annual subscription to the St. James Music Press to allow St. Mark's to access quality music for use in small liturgical churches. St. Mark's is appreciative of Susan's service and commitment to the Music Program for the first half of 2023.

One of my goals while on leave of absence was to restructure the choral presence in our worship. Traditionally, two small, separate choirs sang at the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services. In October a new choir service schedule was initiated. The plan combined the two small choirs into one large choir to sing twice a month—at 9 a.m. on the first Sunday and 11 a.m. on the third Sunday. This choral schedule will be reassessed in February 2024.

Choir members participated in a three-hour Fall Choral Workshop on September 9 focused on music literacy skills, vocal technique, and introduction of new repertoire. The second annual Service of Advent Lessons and Carols was presented during the 11 a.m. service on December 10. Christmas Eve services were enhanced by guest musicians—violin, cello, woodwinds and voice. These special services were enthusiastically received by the congregation.

The St. Mark's Choir has increased in membership, enthusiasm and choral sound. Solo singers have emerged from within the choir. Many thanks to our choristers for your love of music in worship and your dedication. Suggestions and comments from the congregation are always appreciated and positively impact music at St. Mark's.

Nominees for Vestry

Jane Frederick—Jane was born in Tennessee and raised Methodist. She and Michael were married in the Episcopal Church in 1983. They were confirmed as Episcopalians in 1984 at Christ Church, Alexandria, Virginia, where Jane was active in the Mothers and Others program.

After moving to Beaufort in 1989, they joined St. Helena's Episcopal Church. Jane served on the vestry, as Junior Warden, taught Sunday School, was EYC counselor, directed the Nativity Pageant and was a lay reader and Eucharistic Minister. Jane and Michael moved to St. Mark's when it was still a house church, where she has served as a lector and on the rector search committee.

Jane was the 2020 President of The American Institute of Architects (AIA). She is a principal at Frederick + Frederick Architects, which received AIA South Carolina's 2017 Firm Award and Southern Living magazine's Best Renovation of 2009. The firm specializes in sustainable custom residences and has earned more than 20 state and local design awards. Jane received AIA South Carolina's highest award, The Medal of Distinction, in 2023.

Jane has served AIA in many roles, including as South Atlantic regional representative on the Strategic Council, at-large director on the national Board of Directors, chair of the AIA Small Firm Round Table, president of AIA South Carolina, and a member of the National Architectural Accrediting Board and accreditation teams. She has also chaired numerous local planning boards and currently serves on the Beaufort County Zoning Board of Appeals. Jane is a fellow of the Aspen Global Leadership Network.

Tom Tull—I was born in Washington, DC, and raised in San Francisco. I attended Saint Veronica's Catholic church with my family where I was an altar server starting at the age of 12. I moved to Georgia in the late eighties, where I attended St. Matthew's Catholic Church for over 20 years. It is where I met my wife Lori and was married. I served as an usher and a Eucharistic minister along with being a member of the Knights of Columbus. Lori and I volunteered with St. Vincent de Paul providing assistance to those in need.

In 2012 we moved to the Charleston area and attended St. Benedict Church in Mt. Pleasant. I served there as the lead usher and Eucharistic Minister. In 2017 Lori and I decided we wanted to find a new place to worship on our spiritual journey. After attending a service at Grace Church Cathedral, we knew then this was our new church. We met with Dean Michael Wright and soon after became members. We were both received into the Episcopal church in 2018. I served as an usher and Lori served as a lector, and both of us became involved in the many other ministries Grace had to offer. During COVID, Grace lost a long-time member who served as head usher. I was approached by the Dean and asked if I would take on this role. I accepted and served until recently.

Lori and I came to visit Beaufort in 2021 and attended a Sunday service at St. Mark's. A year later we moved to Lady's Island and became members of the church. I currently serve as usher coordinator and Lori serves as a lector. We participated in the first Sacred Ground Program, as well as the last two Walk for Water events. In our time here at St. Mark's, we are proud and honored to have you as our church family and will continue to serve where we are needed.

Jim Turk—Patricia and I have been members of St. Mark's for at least 12 years and love its Episcopal doctrine, theology, worship, outreach and welcoming character. These are our defining characteristics that bond us as a congregation and inspire us to serve others.

By way of educational background, my undergraduate degree is in landscape architecture from the School of Design at NC State; I also have an MBA from Wake Forest University.

Professionally I worked in land planning and real estate development for 10 years and changed careers becoming a commercial bank manager at Wachovia for 20+ years, followed by a six-year stint as head of Human Resources for the bank's Florida operations.

Forty years ago I became an Episcopalian when Patricia and I were engaged. We've worshipped as a family at numerous parishes, usually where Patricia was a priest on staff, and through that experience understand that churches must evolve. With Father Roy's planned retirement in a year or so, St. Mark's finds itself at a critical moment filled with both uncertainty and promise. I modestly believe my years as an Episcopalian and background in finance, HR and leadership would be helpful to the parish.

Recently we became full-time residents of Beaufort. As a result, I now have the time and desire to serve the parish as a vestry member. Presently I am privileged to serve on the Outreach and Mission committee and to sing in the choir.

Looking ahead, relying on God's guidance, I will happily contribute time, talent and treasure to St. Mark's wellbeing.

Nominees for Annual Diocesan Convention

Delegates

Read Clarke ~ Ramona Fantini ~ Rick Kroncke ~ Mary Smith

Alternate Delegates

Alice Hydorn ~ Nicole Passeggio ~ Lisa Westbrook ~ Mark Whitehouse

MINISTRY REPORTS

Mission and Outreach

Submitted by Barbara Anderson, Co-chair

Your O&M team had another successful year issuing 29 grants. Your generosity and that of the Vestry made this possible. The Vestry in past years has allotted 10 percent of the budget to O&M. The list of disbursements is at the end of this report.

We met eight months via zoom and the other months via email. The following organizations enlightened us with very informative presentations. They are Thumbs Up, Legal Volunteers of the Low Country, Habitat for Humanity, and Children of the Light Ministries in Haiti.

The Lion's Roar published two editions. These were well received and we hope gives you more insight into some of the organizations you support. Residents of the Oaks at Salem, choir members, and O&M team members joined in sing-a-longs three times making joyful noises and meeting new friends.

Throughout the year, residents of four assisted living facilities and CAPA received personal greeting cards for Valentine's Day, birthdays, autumn and Christmas. Thanks for your donations and notes.

Your monthly donations of food to St. Francis Center and Help are always gratefully received.

St. Mark's reaches out:

- Sock it to 'Em for many happy and warm feet for Shanklin kids and clients of St. Francis
- Family Promise food cards
- Towels for migrant workers at St. Francis Center
- Mother's Day collection of cleaning supplies and paper goods to Hopeful Horizons
- Father's Day collection of personal products for teens and paper products for CAPA
- Walk for Water—you donated, walked and carried buckets of water
- You baked 20 dozen cookies for Kairos and made financial donations

- You donated to St. Francis for air conditioners in July
 - For Family Promise the chefs prepared four meals for approximately 52 moms and kids
- We are grateful to Father Roy, the vestry and to you for your prayers and ongoing support as we serve God and the world. We will continue to be good stewards of the funds allotted to us.

Team members serving with much enthusiasm are Barbara Anderson, Gale Swann, Judy Utter, Anne Errington, Carol and David Whitworth, Alice Hydorn, Jim Turk, Jerry Sonnabend and Jim Rowe. Ex officio: Father Roy, Deacon Ken, Nicole Passeggio, vestry liaison, and Cheri Thayer, Sr. Warden.

Grants Issued in 2023

Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD)	\$ 4542.00
Heroes on Horseback	2000.00
Disabilities of Beaufort County	1500.00
Zaricki School, Tanzania	2000.00
HELP	1000.00
Hopeful Horizons	2500.00
Episcopal Relief and Development, Turkey & Syria.....	1000.00
Children of the Light Mountain Ministries, Haiti.....	1000.00
The Complete Student, microscopes1.....	500.00
St. Francis Center.....	2000.00
Karios.....	1000.00
Church of the Heavenly Rest, Estill, HVAC repairs	1200.00
AMIkids, woodworking equipment.....	2000.00
Good Neighbor Free Medical Clinic.....	1500.00
HELP, matching grant, includes brick in garden with engraving.....	500.00
St. Francis Center, window units that provide heat and A/C.....	1000.00
ERD, Maui fire relief	1000.00
Thumbs Up.....	1500.00
Under One Roof.....	2500.00
Habitat for Humanity	2500.00
Lowcountry Legal Volunteers	2000.00
Port Royal Elementary School, funds for students to purchase books	1900.00
American Friends of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem	2500.00
CAPA, gift cards for teens	750.00
Estill Correctional Facility, books for Bible study	200.00
Retreat of Beaufort (former Bay View NH) activity/supplies	300.00
St. Francis Center, remaining budget	128.00
Family Promise	2800.00

Christian Formation

Submitted by James Tetler, Vestry Liaison, and Glenda Lee Nutting, Director

James Tetler—In August 2023, we welcomed Glenda Lee Nutting as Director of Christian Formation, and she has reestablished our Sunday School program. Nursery care continues to be provided during the 11 a.m. service by Ms. Linda Goodman, our paid childcare provider, and a rotating group of volunteers.

The parish enrolled in Stephen Ministry and the first class for training Stephen Ministers is anticipated to begin in late March. Our first group to participate in Sacred Ground finished the program in May, and several members became facilitators. The second two groups began the program in November.

Glenda Lee Nutting—This past year has been a growing time for the Christian Formation Program. After becoming director in August, I met with a number of people who had been involved with Sunday School in the past. I was able to get information about what worked and what didn't.

I also explored a number of curriculum options, finally settling on *Hearts Alive*. This has proven to be a great curriculum for our first Sunday school class of lower elementary students. We meet each Sunday at 11 a.m. in the Center. Our lessons, which follow the lectionary, bring the Word of God alive through age appropriate games, arts and crafts, and storytelling. As our program grows, we hope to add special events that will continue to include our children in the life of St. Marks.

Congregational Care

Submitted by Sally Domby and Mary Smith

The Pastoral Care Team has been renamed the Congregational Care Team. Vestry Liaison: Kathlyn Gray. Co-Leaders: Sally Domby and Mary Smith. Gale Swann and Rector Roy Tripp.

Congregational Care is vital to our entire congregation. It is anticipated that there will be a greater need for these volunteer services as our congregation grows. The importance of keeping our congregation informed of available services is an ongoing priority.

Prayer Ministry: Two types of prayer requests are available: 1) a confidential list whereby the Rector and a small number of individuals pray privately; and 2) a public list that is published in the Sunday order of service. Contact: Paula Guerry.

Meal Train: Meals are provided by volunteers to those in need due to health problems or other issues. The meal train uses the Meal Train website to organize meal support requests. Contact Person: Judy Utter.

Greeting Card Team: Cards are sent to parishioners for birthdays and get well/thinking of you wishes as well as holiday cards to nursing homes. Contact: Gale Swann.

Flower Delivery: Distribution of altar flowers to people who are ill, grieving, shut-in or having birthdays or anniversaries. Contact: Mary Bryan.

Transportation Team: The Congregational Care co-team leaders have worked hard with the Diocese Administration in 2023 to begin the process of forming a Transportation Team to help congregants with transportation needs such as appointments and attending worship services and church activities. The process is well underway and looking forward to the formation of an active team in the new year.

Parish Life

Submitted by Susan Grimes and Bob Hydorn

St Mark's Parish Life Events included:

- Advent Wreath Making
- Oyster Roast in the Park
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
- Palm Sunday Cross Making
- Easter Vigil Reception
- Bishop's Reception
- Coffee Hour after the 9 a.m. Sunday service
- Blessing of the Animals
- Women of Grace third Tuesday of the month lunch
- Pentecost and fall picnics on the green
- Foyer Group Kick-off Dinner
- Newcomers' Reception

All events have been well-attended by St Mark's members and were made possible by a group of dedicated volunteers. We are thankful for these events that help us to grow in faith and strengthen our bonds of fellowship with each other.

Worship

Submitted by Carter Hoyt, Programs Associate

The year 2023 saw the introduction of some beautiful new adornments to enhance our worship experience. Debbie Phelps and Cheryl Gaillard handcrafted a lovely Easter banner, and Chris Nietert produced and donated white ceramic votive holders which, with the votives, enlightened the church windows during our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.

I want to thank all of the volunteers who faithfully give of their time to make our worship happen in such magnificent fashion—our VPODs (Vestry Person on Duty), ushers, sacristans, acolytes, lectors, eucharistic ministers, choir members, communion bread and love loaf bakers, the linens and flower teams, and the grounds committee. We really could not do it without all of you. PLEASE NOTE, however, that we are in desperate need of additional acolytes and sacristans. There is nothing magical or difficult about anything those folks do, but we really can't offer a minimum of 2 Sunday services without more folks. Shadowing and one-on-one training are available for anyone interested and a detailed step-by-step manual guides the way. So, what's stopping you??

Finally, we are very excited about the relationship we have developed with Port Royal Elementary School. Assistance provided in 2023 included opening day school supplies, sweatshirts for children who get cold in school and don't have anything to bring from home, coffee shop gift cards for teachers, and an on-going collection of toiletry items. Some of our members have also volunteered to read to students, and the Women of Grace and several others provided Christmas presents. The Outreach & Mission team made a grant of \$1900 so that each student could take home a free book from the school's book fair. We look forward to continuing and building on this partnership in 2024.

Administration & Communications

Submitted by Julie Petroff, Parish Administrator

The Parish Register: The Rector officiated at two baptisms in 2023 (Poppy Caroline Tabb and Warner Lewis Tabb IV, twin grandchildren of Margaret and Lewis Tabb) two marriages of non-St. Mark's members, and one funeral (James M. Crower, who died on Oct. 29). There were no confirmations in 2023. Six people formally transferred by letter from their previous Episcopal churches, and no one transferred out. (*Note:* If you are a confirmed Episcopalian and wish to transfer from your previous church, please contact the office and we will take care of the paperwork for you.)

Communications: Our primary method of communicating with parishioners and others is through our weekly e-newsletter "Red Lion Weekly." Approximately 70 percent of the 473 subscribers open it on a regular basis. A number of subscribers live out of the area. Occasional e-newsletters from the Rector and Deacon Ken Kraft, as well as a quarterly e-newsletter "The Lion's Roar" from the Outreach and Mission Committee help advise people of our many programs and activities. You can subscribe to all of these at once on St. Mark's webpage.

We continue to livestream the 9 a.m. service on Sundays and an average of 25 people tune in, a few from out-of-state. St. Mark's also maintains a regular presence on Facebook by sharing news and pictures, as well as the Sunday service video.

Carter Hoyt is in charge of our webpage, another important source of information, and keeps our mailing list and pictorial directory up-to-date.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
PO Box 761 ~ Port Royal, SC 29935
The Rt. Reverend Ruth Woodliff-Stanley, Bishop
The Very Reverend Roy Tripp, Rector
The Reverend Kenneth Kraft, Deacon
843 379-1020 **www.stmarksc.org**