

*Preach the Gospel at all times.  
If necessary, use words.  
-St. Francis of Assisi*

**The Annual Meeting of Saint Francis Episcopal Church  
Holden, Massachusetts**

**Sunday, January 23, 2022**



Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union;  
where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

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**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH OF  
ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**Sunday, January 23, 2022**

**AGENDA**

† The Annual Meeting Convened

† Opening Prayer

Almighty and ever living God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with us as we take counsel in Saint Francis, Holden, for the renewal and mission of your Church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(BCP 818 - #12)

† Reading and Adoption of the Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting

† Presentation of Annual Reports  
(1) Rector's Report  
(2) Wardens' Report  
(3) Other reports (by title)

† Report of the Nominating Committee

† Elections

† Report on the 2022 Budget for Mission and Ministry

† Other business

† Adjournment

† Dismissal:  
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## The ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH OF ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Sunday, January 24, 2021

The Reverend Patrick Perkins convened the meeting at 11:07 am via Zoom, with some participants in the parking lot listening on their radio. The rector prayed "Almighty and ever living God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with us as we take counsel in Saint Francis, Holden, for the renewal and mission of your Church... Amen."

A motion to waive the reading of the 2020 Annual Meeting minutes and accept as presented in the Annual Report, made by Linda Shelton, seconded by Kathleen Dixon, passed.

### **Presentation of the Annual Reports:**

**Rector's Report** (The Rev. Perkins) - The rector referenced a line from the book of Micah which is included in his report. "...what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.." This captures the heart of the St. Francis community. During these difficult times we continue to do the Lord's work. We do not get to pick the times we live in but we can re-think what God is asking. We have tried to help our mission partners through regular collections of food and other needed items. Helping Hands ministry continues to try and help meet the needs of neighbors. With the departure of Music Minister Kurt Staven, we are working to innovate our music ministry. We have experienced some difficult losses this year and continue to keep families and loved ones in our prayers. If anyone is in need please reach out to the rector for assistance.

**Wardens' Report** (Bryan Diehl) - The senior warden expressed his thanks to Rector Pat Perkins, as well as Deacon Jane Griesbach, members of the vestry and all who are involved in mission work. Everything has changed about the way we do church. Thanks to the rector for continuing to bring the Gospel into our lives. Thanks to the deacon for her involvement in everything!

The rector commented how good it was to see all the faces at this meeting. Our in-person worship plan has been approved by the diocese. We are just waiting for when the time is right.

(Susan Bastardo) - The junior warden echoed Bryan Diehl's thanks to all who have helped keep things going during the pandemic, and especially to the rector for his leadership.

**Mission Committee** (Kathy Diehl) - The longtime committee member explained that the committee has been meeting monthly via Zoom. There are monthly collections for our mission partners: Abby's House, Dismas Farm, Mustard Seed, Wachusett Food Pantry, and Walking Together. She asked that all who are able consider participating in these collections.

(Julie Russell) - The Mission Committee Chair appreciates the opportunity of Annual Meeting to be able to address so many members of the St. Francis community and get the word out. Hope for Housing Cards are now available to purchase. They may be ordered online through the St. Francis website. Purchasing these cards and donating to our mission partners is a great way to help out these organizations whose needs now are greater than ever. The wreath and pie fundraisers brought in \$1,500 which will support our feeding ministries (Mustard Seed and Dismas Farm.) We will hold a spring flower fundraiser to continue to raise funds to support these partners. Jars are available at the church for collecting spare change in support of "Change the Babies". This program helps support the Mampong Babies Home in Ghana. Our next donation collection for mission partners will be on February 13. Committee member Esteban Loustaunau announced that the spring Mission Movies will continue this spring, but will be virtual. Short TED-Talk videos will be presented via Zoom, the first Friday in March, April, May. Details will be announced at a later date. Kathleen O'Connor, mission liaison to Abby's House, shared that Abby's House has been thrilled with our continued support, St. Francis is a true mission partner.

**Helping Hands Ministry** (Bryan Diehl) - Though the ministry has had fewer projects this year, the group recently worked on its largest, most complex to date. At the request of the group from Immanuel Lutheran Church, and with funds donated by previous recipients of assistance, Helping Hands built a deck to accommodate a wheelchair lift for a thirteen year old boy in Rutland. This life-changing lift (purchased with money raised through a Go Fund Me campaign begun by Immanuel Lutheran Church) and deck allow this young man to enter and exit his home

without the obstacle of front steps. Please consider joining this group, often no skills are needed! Susan Bastardo added that this is the time to try and reach out to other church members you may have missed. Let them know they are cared for. Help us all stay connected. The rector commented that needs may have changed, please let us know if you are in need of help.

**Property Committee** (The Rev. Perkins) - The rector thanked Bryan Diehl, Steve Henning, Susan Bastardo, and Craig Stanovich for all their assistance in getting our livestream services up and running. Steve Henning mentioned that there are some projects ahead including windows in Fellowship Hall and lighting in the nave. Thanks to Bryan Diehl for crawling through the attic and running the internet cable into the sanctuary. The rector mentioned the tree work that has been done on the grounds and in the Memorial Garden, including the removal of the beech tree which was not salvageable, as well as cleaning up the trees along Rt. 31 (thanks to the senior warden and his son Bryan.)

The Rector commended the reading of all the reports in the Annual Report.

**Report of the Nominating Committee** (The Rev. Perkins) - Due to the difficulties of finding candidates for leadership positions during the pandemic, all leadership positions will be extended for one additional year. The slate of candidates for 2021 remains as it was in 2020:

Senior Warden - Bryan Diehl, Junior Warden - Susan Bastard, Treasurer - Ann Tripp, Clerk - Dawn Rooke

Three-year vestry terms expiring in 2024: Richard Dixon, Mary Jude Pigsley, Craig Stanovich

Two-year vestry terms expiring in 2023: Chad Grahah, Carrie Grinstead, Laura Caswell

One-year vestry terms expiring in 2022: Julie Russell, Barbara Henning, Caroline Schmidt

Convention Delegate: Bryan Diehl, Dick Delorme, Dawn Rooke

Convention Delegate Alternate: Susan Bastardo, Beverly Giarusso

A motion for the clerk to cast one ballot for the slate of candidates as presented, made by Kathleen Suchenski, seconded by Kathleen Dixon, passed unanimously.

**Report on the 2021 Plan for Mission and Ministry** (Chris Berglund) - The Finance Committee chair thanked committee members Dick Delorme, Ann Tripp, Roz Glanville, and Brian Gemborys for their assistance in preparing this budget. Thanks in part to the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) in which the diocese participated, eight weeks of payroll was covered. Additionally, because the church closed early in 2020, many expenses were down. 2020 pledge payments were met. The year ended with a surplus. The 2021 plan was presented to the vestry in November and December, and was accepted by the vestry at the January vestry meeting. For 2021, lower pledge payments are forecasted and there will be no PPP assistance with payroll. The diocesan assessment is down, all other expenses are budgeted to within \$2 of 2020 levels. Salary for both youth minister and music minister positions, though currently unfilled, are included. A moderate deficit of \$15,000 is forecasted. It is felt that we are well positioned to absorb this deficit. Once our environment normalizes, we hope to be able to expand our programs. The finance committee chair commended the Mission Committee for all it's hard work this year. The small budget of the committee does not come close to illustrating the work done for our mission partners. Nancy Pope was thanked for her continued work with the Mustard Seed, and John Nowak for his assistance in obtaining the food for the meals. Treasurer Ann Tripp mentioned that some much needed work was done at the rectory this year which had not been in the budget but were able to do due to the savings we saw, a COVID "silver lining." The rector added that the music and youth minister positions were fully budgeted for 2021 to reflect the commitment to these programs in normal times. Because these positions will not be staffed until we are able to resume normal operations, we will see some savings. The rector reminded all in attendance that the online Annual Meeting Report does not contain any of the financial reports, but is available on request.

**Other Business:** Memorial Garden Chair Kathleen O'Connor thanked Linda Rayworth for her service on the committee. She is stepping down and Caroline Schmidt has been appointed in her place. Committee members Beverly Giarusso and Michael Pope were thanked for their service.

The rector thanked Esteban Laustanau for his four years as the chair of the Mission Committee during which time St. Francis established our mission partnerships. He will continue to be a member of this committee.

Vestry member Carolyn Schmidt thanked everyone in attendance for making this Annual Meeting a priority.

There was no other business. Rector Pat Perkins closed the meeting at 12:05 pm

Deacon J. Griesbach prayed "...Walk in the way of love."

Respectfully submitted, Dawn Rooke, Clerk

**From the Parish Register ~ January – December 2021**

**Baptisms – 5**

**Transfers out – 6**

**Marriages – 0**

**Transfers in – 2**

**Confirmations – 0**

**Received – 0**

**Burials – 5**

**Saint Francis Episcopal Church  
Holden, Massachusetts  
In the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts**

**Mission Statement**

We seek to be instruments of God's peace, bearing witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ for all people.

**Vision Statement**

Living into the Baptismal Covenant, we strive to grow into the full stature of Christ. We are committed to common prayer, life-long Christian formation, mission to the world, and grateful stewardship as we live out Jesus' command to love God and our neighbor.

**Core Values**

1. Faith is a life-long journey; it is not certainty, but trust in God. We celebrate the fact that at any given time we are at different places in that journey.
2. As an Episcopal Church, we rejoice in the richness and diversity of the Anglican Communion. Our faith is rooted in Scripture, tradition, and reason.
3. We take Christian formation seriously for every generation, and especially by laying a strong foundation in church school and through our vital youth ministry program.
4. Francis of Assisi is said to have challenged his friends to "preach the gospel at all times; when necessary to use words." We are committed to mission and outreach as a visible witness to the world of our love for God, particularly in hands-on ways that strengthen relationships and transform lives.
5. We believe that our earth and all of life is a gift from a gracious and loving God: in response to God's many blessings we seek to become, with God's help, more faithful stewards of our time, talents, and treasure.

Revised and passed by Vestry, November 11, 2009

## RECTOR'S REPORT

*“Lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of Spirit in the bond of peace.”  
(Ephesians 4:1-3)*

I started my report last year by saying that I believe every year that passes has its own particular joys and sorrows, its own specific “character” of important events and moments, and that 2020 was a year unlike any other...well, I guess the year 2021 heard my words and tried its best to top 2020’s unique status! As the year 2021 began, I spent some time praying with a personal reflection question: *what did the first disciples of Jesus feel like in the upside-down days after Easter?* We read in the Gospel according to John, many of Jesus’ closest followers spent the days after Easter doing what they previously understood best - fishing. In turbulent times, the human heart often tries to find some sense of stability; a reliable “centering point” upon which to find rest, refreshment, and a safe harbor in the storm. The imagery of the disciples finding “safety” in their fishing boats made sense to me, but this year began with some tall and challenging waves to face and the fishing boat imagery was a bit scary! But we faced each wave together, and as the year progressed our collective imaginations and faithful presence were bearers of God’s grace and joy.

As a community, our corporate worship feeds our souls and provides us with the blessings of God’s presence in our midst. This vital part of our community was restored in March, just two weeks before the celebration of Holy Week and Easter. We opened our doors with an abundance of caution, with thoughtfulness, and with the best interests of our worshiping community in mind. We offered multiple and various manners in which to participate: worship space, Memorial Garden, or online. I am grateful for the minds and hearts of our leaders who were constantly aware that each person in our community has different needs and concerns: our worship options stretched the limits of what it means to “gather together” and be one. As the weeks went by, we improved upon our gathering protocols and we welcomed more people into our spaces. And we were blessed to end the year with a joyous celebration of the Feast of the Nativity...sheep, goats, and all the folks of Bethlehem included!

I also want to thank the faithful and tireless efforts of our Mission Ministries team, and Julie Russell, the Chair of that great team. Our community’s efforts to maintain our strong connections to our Mission Partners and provide uninterrupted support throughout these difficult days is truly an inspiring witness to Christ’s love in the world! We have received thank-you upon thank-you for the grace upon grace of these efforts; and I thank you all as well!

As I have often said, *God is up to something, for the church (world) is changing and we cannot help but be changed with this movement.* I strongly believe we, as God’s children, are being called to a very particular moment in the life of Christ’s community. Every New Year, we let the bells ring to mark the moment when the calendar changes; we let the bells ring to be sure we don’t miss the moment for new hope and new life; we let the bells ring to be sure we are awake to hear Christ’s calling to which we have been called! I am very proud to be part of this community and our efforts to open our hearts to the Spirit of God, to engage in what God is up to in this place and beyond through Renewal Works and other reflections of where God is calling, and through the faithful commitment of our leaders. And now, I pray that this coming year will bless each and everyone one of you with the ability to hear the bells ring, and to know that the Spirit of God is upon you and calling you to action:

What you do everyday matters to God, and it matters to the work of the body of Christ!

Faithfully in Christ,  
Patrick Perkins

## DEACON'S REPORT

*A note from the Deacon . . .*

We've all come through another difficult year. The virus continues to mutate and affect us in many ways and our neighbors around the world. St. Francis has persevered with flexibility and steadfastness. Wearing masks for our worship is annoying, but at least we're together and inside our building. Groups are meeting together while wearing masks, maintaining distance and abiding on the side of caution.

The Mission Ministries group hasn't lost a step in this pandemic. We've had to do things differently but we carried on. In addition to the donation days once a month to help our mission partners with needed items, we still provide monthly meals to the Mustard Seed and Dismas Farm. I can't thank all the people involved in these ministries enough! Help is always needed so speak with Julie Russell if interested. We work in teams so you'll only be called on to do anything a few times each year. All of these mission partners let us know how thankful they are. Julie is doing a terrific job as chair and everyone on the team works hard. Longtime member Kathy Diehl stepped down after years of faithful service. She'll still help with special projects – like making 50 apple pies! At the same time Mary Ann Barbato, a relatively new parishioner, stepped up to the plate. Nicole McGurin has also joined the team. We thank Karen Ramsey who stepped down from coordinator of Dismas dinners after many years of faithful service. God is good. The two fund raising (pies & Christmas greens) were successful and help us continue the feeding ministries.

The year has brought some changes to my diaconate. The bishop appointed me Archdeacon for the diocese. I had no real idea of what this entailed and said yes. I trusted God to see me through. I oversee the deacon community (we are now 13 deacons with 3 in formation) of our diocese, assist with their transitions into new assignments, arrange an annual retreat, and host bi-monthly zoom meetings for us all to stay in touch. All those pesky organizational type things also take up some of my time.

I've been a co-facilitator at the Province 1 School for Deacons for the past 6 years. It's been a rewarding experience and a lot of good work. I try to read all the books assigned to the students, participate in monthly online teaching, attend quarterly weekend gatherings (on zoom for the past year) and critique written assignments. The 3 people from our diocese enrolled in the 2-year program are all from the Berkshire area. That is an answer to prayer, as we had no deacons in that part of the diocese. After prayer and discussion with the bishop I stepped down from this role at the beginning of this year. I need to be more present with my sister and niece in NJ to help them navigate health challenges. That's where my focus needs to be at this time.

A goal this year has been to give deacons more visibility. This has been fairly successful. We have a deacon on every diocesan commission and committee except for the Standing Committee. Deacons are present at worship services and the diocesan convention held at the Cathedral. We've written papers and participated in national online events. On June 12 we'll have a "deacon crawl" sending deacons into parishes that have never had a deacon. We'll preach, answer questions, and pray God calls up another person to hear the call to enter deacon formation.

*Faithfully, The Rev. Deacon S. Jane Griesbach*

## WARDENS' REPORT

2021 proved to us all that we can and will always find a way to do the things we are called to do here at St Francis. We are blessed to have so many dedicated parishioners amongst us!

The planning that the vestry completed in 2020 allowed us to come together for in person worship this spring. Alleluia!! We have made ongoing adjustments to how we gather, in accordance with guidance available to us and through applying due caution to ensure everyone's safety. Indoor, outdoor and online service options continue to be available to meet our worship needs.

We welcomed Elizabeth Keusch as our music minister this fall and are so pleased to hear her playing our organ so beautifully. The new Clavinova piano is another welcome addition enhancing our music programs. It replaced our previous piano that needed many expensive repairs rendering it obsolete.

Christmas welcomed the return of our pageants. This was another step to feeling "normal" again. Some things continued to occur only virtually when we attended the Diocese of Western Massachusetts Diocesan Convention. Sadly, the upcoming convention will again be virtual only. This is done out of an abundance of caution as it is a very large group.

2022 brings planning for new initiatives and changes to how we do things at St Francis. We have restructured our vestry by reducing the number of members that rotate off and onto vestry from three each year to two and reducing the number of vestry members from nine to six. The decision is driven by a reduction in the number of active church members. This change is in keeping with diocesan standards.

Creation Care is central to our Christian lives. As such we are looking at green initiatives to undertake here at St Francis. We consume in excess of 5,000 gallons of heating oil each year and see that as an opportunity to explore alternatives. Further, the lighting in the sanctuary and throughout the parish has the potential to be much more energy efficient. We are investigating alternatives for these things and will be petitioning the diocese for assistance. We will keep you all apprised of progress and opportunities to join us in implementing these things.

The large windows in fellowship hall are in desperate need of repair and maintenance. We have secured a bid for this work and hope to get another so we can proceed with finally getting this work done. It is maintenance work that really can't be deferred any longer. In a time of difficult budgets and our stewardship campaigns, please know that we are trying to care for our building and to do so in ways that are sustainable and consistent with our Creation Care goals.

Lastly, we are working to assemble a communications committee to help in sharing the good news of everything that we have going on at St Francis. There is so much good that we do in the community and we need to improve in how we share that good news.

As we go into 2022 to do the work God has given us to do, we pray for safety, strength to persevere, and compassion and love for all of our neighbors. Thank you to Pat, Jane and the vestry for their steady leadership through a most trying year. And thank you to all of you for being a part of this wonderful community.

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan Diehl, Senior Warden and Susan Bastardo, Junior Warden

## CHRISTIAN FORMATION

### **Church School**

The Church School program includes Christian Formation for children who are in preschool through fifth grade.

Current enrollment: 28 students/15 families

January to June ('20-'21 school year)

- In-person church school continued to be suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Weekly emails are sent to families and include a read aloud story, a video explaining the story or lesson, family discussion ideas and questions, and various ideas activities for families to try with their children. The emails are self-directed as to provide information for families to explore at their convenience. All activities need very minimal supplies and preparation.
- Our lessons for the second part of the year focused on Jonah, Jesus's healing miracles and parables, as well as Jesus's "I AM" statements.
- Virtual Church School wrapped up during the weekend celebrating Pentecost. We hosted another Drive Thru pick-up with a family activity for Pentecost. The Drive Thru was held during the regular Food Drive for May in an effort to encourage our young learners to participate in another mission project through a donation.
- We were unable to hold our annual Banner Party celebration.

September – December ('20 -'21 school year)

- Church School was able to return in person! Registration was available in church, but we also continued to have virtual option for families to register.
- This year's teacher and assistants as follows: Matt Surabian and Alison Milan (A), Zophia Cherrier and Amanda Vitko (A), Lisa Cherrier and Adeline Cherrier (A), and Kelly Manchester and Meghan Manchester (A).
- We started the church school year using a "one room schoolhouse" format. We gathered together for a full church school lesson with "stations" designed for the different age groups.
- In October, we were able to split into 2 age groups for church school lessons. PS/K/1st grade meet in an upstairs classroom, and Grades 2/3/4/5 meet at St Clare house. We have had a wonderful turnout of children and it is so uplifting to have our young groups back in church!
- Our lessons for the first part of the year focused on the First Testament stories of Samuel, Naomi and Ruth, David, and Solomon. At our Advent Celebration, the children made Jesse Tree ornaments.
- The children participated in two mission/outreach projects so far during this school year. In November we sponsored a food-drive for the Wachusett Food Pantry. In December, we purchased Christmas gifts for two children.

### Eucharist Instruction

The Eucharist Instruction program was also suspended this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program is primarily a home-program designed for students between the ages of 8-10. We are exploring the possibility of continuing the program this Spring.

**Many thanks to all who support this program as teachers, assistants, volunteers, or parents who show their appreciation in so many ways!**

**Amy Mellors  
Church School Coordinator**

## **Adult Education Offerings**

The Adult Education Offerings continue to be severely impacted by the precautions of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the year, we were limited to meeting on Zoom for all programs. Due to this restriction, the only education offering that was held during the year was our ongoing Scripture Reflection series.

Our Sunday Morning Scripture Reflection is an adult Scripture study and reflection program that is part of the *Feasting on the Word* curriculum and it follows the Sunday lectionary readings for our worship. Our weekly gathering continued to meet on Zoom, even after we opened our buildings for worship in March 2021, in an effort to include all those who wanted to attend but may not have wanted to be present in the building. Our attendance varied throughout the year and throughout various seasons, but we often had approximately 10-12 participants. We have continued our program in 2022 and will continue to meet via Zoom until further notice.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Perkins

## **WORSHIP MINISTRIES**

### **Acolytes**

Due to the pandemic, the acolyte ministry was suspended for 2021. I look forward to working with people again once we are able to restart the ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Caswell

### **Altar Guild**

The Altar Guild is an enjoyable and rewarding ministry. Members work behind the scenes to prepare for weekly services and decorate the church for the Christmas and Easter seasons. We are always looking for new members and invite both male and female members of the congregation to join us. The time commitment is just a couple of hours, once a month, working as part of a team.

We welcome, and would love to have additional members. If you think you might be interested talk to one of our current members. Work with a team for a week and see what is involved. It might be a way for you to get involved and make an offering of your time and talent to St. Francis.

As with all ministries there have been challenges during the past year. Fortunately we have a group of dedicated members that were ready to meet the challenges and return to service once in person worship resumed. Many thanks to our current members: Roz Glanville, Barbara Henning, Dave Lucas, Lucy Nowak, Sharlene O'Connor, Carol Perkins, Mike Reno, Julie Russell, Carolyn Schmidt, Marje Sullivan, Marge Tremblay and Kim Whamond, for their ongoing commitment to the work of the Altar Guild.

Thanks also to Doug and Linda Rayworth for once again hanging the wreaths for Christmas.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Giarusso

## **Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Lay Readers**

Greetings,

Thank you to a flexible and committed group of parishioners, we have 1 reader at every service and our Holden Nursing Home visits resumed this fall. Due to Covid guidelines the chalice is not being offered at services, therefore we do not need our Lay Eucharistic Ministers at this time.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Linda Shelton

### **Music**

The Music Ministry at St. Francis is composed of a medley of musical groups:

- The Saturday Music Team meets every Saturday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. to practice the music for the 5:00 p.m. service under the direction of MaryAnn Dipinto, on voice and guitar, Nancy Rogers on voice and guitar, and Steve Bullock, on piano.
- The Sunday Choir meets every Sunday morning at 8:45 a.m. to rehearse the music selections for the 10:00 a.m. service, under the direction of the Minister of Music.
- The Festive Choir performs on Christmas Eve and Easter morning and is open to all singers, including family and friends visiting for the holidays, per covid protocol.

The choirs perform during the school year and take recess for the summer. All the musical groups are open to new members as well as new ideas for anthems and preludes. I encourage you to share your musical talents with the congregation. If you have an instrument that you want to play or a song that you want to sing, please let me know and we would be thrilled to add your gifts to the worship service. For example, on Christmas Eve we were blessed with Christmas Carols by the violin and cello String Duet of Zophia and Adeline Cherrier.

We will be engaging our organ technician Stefan Meier, to advise on the needed repairs for our historic Hook and Hastings pipe organ. We will begin work on a larger overhaul of the instrument in the summer recess.

The last couple of years have presented us with great and ever-changing challenges. Having come to you months into a global pandemic, I am very impressed with how St. Francis has adapted and kept right on track with worship and community support. Many changes and modifications have been made on a temporary basis in our music groups. For example, we keep the distribution and handling of music and hymnals to a minimum; we are careful to take protective measures such as limiting rehearsal time, being masked at all times and maintaining safe distance from one another, etcetera.

It's an honor and joy for me to serve as your Minister of Music. I look forward to a new year of music and fellowship with you all!

Respectfully submitted,  
Beth Keusch, Minister of Music

## **Ushers**

As we began to gather for indoor worship in 2021, the ushers checked in members for contact tracing and assisted everyone with social distancing so that we could be together as safely as possible. Although we are no longer formally checking in our members, ushers do play an important role in welcoming our members as well as inviting others to worship with us.

Ushers are assigned to the Saturday evening service, 10:00 AM Sunday service and additional holiday services. As ushers, we welcome guests and parishioners to Saint Francis, provide them with the bulletin for the service, assist them with any special needs, take a count of those attending the service, handle the collection of the offerings and provide general straightening up after the service, including distributing Newcomer Cards in the pews.

In our shared mission to create a sense of ownership for all members of Saint Francis, this ministry is critical to the continued vitality and growth of our faith community. We invite everyone to the usher ministry. If you are interested or just want to learn a little more about what is involved, please talk to me or any of the ushers. We would love to have you!

Craig Stanovich, Usher Coordinator

## **COMMUNITY LIFE**

### **Finance**

2021 continued to provide COVID challenges to the Saint Francis community. The unwavering commitment of our dedicated clergy and lay leadership team during these times has refined our course of spiritual development. The efforts and energies of all members of our community generate and operate ministry programs that match the financial and “hands-on” commitments of our community.

Our 2021 reported pledge income totaled \$283,549.14 and actually slightly exceeded our 2021 budget of \$280,000. Our total operating revenue for 2021 was \$296,596 (including \$7,169 in advance pledges for 2022) which was approximately \$42,767 less than 2020 revenues. It should be noted that 2020 revenue included some \$30,502 in one-time Federal CARES Act funding through the Diocesan led Paycheck Protection Program.

Operating expenses totaled \$251,178.28 in 2021 or \$55,383 less than budget. All expense components of operations contributed to the decrease in operating expenses essentially as a result of the continued COVID-19 protocols. Again, economies continue to be realized by the Rector’s voluntary benefit choices and savings realized from not hiring a Youth Minister again in 2021. With the exception of some elevated utility costs and office expenses, most expense categories came in below budget. When combined with the committed giving of the members of our community, St. Francis finished the 2021 year with a net surplus for the period of \$45,418.

In addition to the monetary Mission contributions shown directly on our operating statement, the community continued to benefit from the many physical and spiritual contributions of our parishioners as well as additional the financial support of community programs running through the funds committed and donated directly to our mission partners.

Our current balance sheet is healthy with total cash at \$328,885. This does not include the \$119,257 (including Valuation Adjustments through September 2021) in the Mission and Ministry Fund. It should be noted that \$5,000 of this fund will be directed toward revenue needs in 2022.

The plan for 2022 provides a revenue forecast that varies slightly from 2021 due to a lower (7.14%) Pledge estimate consistent with commitments at the time the plan was prepared. The expense forecast continues to be scrutinized and is budgeted overall at the same level of 2021 with some variances in the sub-categories. The lay staff position of Youth Minister has been eliminated from this year’s budget. The 2021 calendar year again brought considerable uncertainty into the lives of the members of the St. Francis community. Additionally, some significant contributors relocating out of the area also contributed to the decrease in the commitments for 2022. Our plan tries to account

for decreased revenues through a very “real” expense budget. As demonstrated in the Utilities line item in 2021, the sustainability of this expense level will be challenged as we continue to grow. Additionally, in 2022, budgeted revenues included a transfer of \$5,000 from our Mission and Ministry Fund to assist in offsetting the forecast operating deficit in 2022.

Our 2022 Budget has a projected deficit of \$19,504. This includes a transfer from our Mission and Ministry asset account of \$5,000. We are relying on a \$260,000 Pledge budget with slightly less than that confirmed at the time of this report and some anticipated pledges yet to respond. Hence, budgeted revenues total \$271,150 (which includes the \$5,000 transfer from Mission and Ministry) or 6.87% less than our 2021 budgeted revenue. The expense plan calls for \$290,654 in budgeted expenses.

Given our current cash position and the prayers that our growing parish will continue to respond spiritually and financially to the needs of our community, the Finance Committee feels that St. Francis can absorb this deficit in 2022.

Thanks to the support and guidance of Clergy, Lay Leadership, Staff and all the Ministers at St. Francis.

The Finance Committee

Richard Delorme

Roz Glanville

Ann Tripp (Treasurer)

Chris Berglund

### **Stewardship**

*“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”*

2 Corinthians 9:7-8

We are profoundly grateful for everyone’s generosity in supporting and participating in our mission of bearing witness to Christ’s love in the world. It is a remarkable testament to our continued Stewardship that so many have continued to make their pledge payments during these unusually challenging times.

Stewardship of our time, talents and treasure is a ministry that is foundational to our faith and to the work of God’s mission. Although an important part of Stewardship is inviting financial pledges from St. Francis members at the end of the church year, Stewardship at St. Francis is a year-round ministry.

One of the many goals of Stewardship is to educate - we again sent a letter to all members of St. Francis in October, explaining a pledge and the importance of pledging to St. Francis.

As of this writing, St. Francis has received 92 pledges for 2022 totaling more than \$240,000. Our average pledge is \$2,615 for 2022, with 36 able to increase their pledge from last year. We also hope to receive additional pledges as we follow up with those who may still wish to pledge, but have not yet done so.

Craig Stanovich – Chair, Stewardship

## Memorial Garden

\*The 2019 Annual Report was mistakenly published again in 2020, so the correct 2020 report is included here.

### Memorial Garden Annual Report 2020

Our parish is fortunate to have a beautiful garden space adjacent to the worship space. The primary purpose of the garden is to serve as a sacred burial space for the cremains of those who wish to be interred there. The original garden was founded by parishioners in 1984 with the mission of providing a simple, economical burial space. In 2006 a significant renovation was undertaken by the parish to create the current beautiful garden with stone walls, paved accessible pathways and teak benches. The areas covered by the vinca groundcover comprise the burial space. The renovation expanded and simplified the available burial areas.

Like so much else, our use of the garden changed this year due to the pandemic. The garden was and is still available for burials to take place. As an outdoor venue, it remains available for sitting and meditation. As is our custom on St. Francis Day, at the virtual service, we prayed by name for each person who is at rest in the garden. The names of those persons are on the plaque in the back of the worship space next to the door leading to the garden, which you may view when we return to inside use of the building.

The lay members of the Memorial Garden Committee are appointed from year to year by the Vestry, and with the Rector, are entrusted with the care and maintenance of the garden. The committee this year consisted of Rev. Patrick Perkins, Beverly Giarusso, Kathleen O'Connor, Michael Pope and Linda Rayworth. Linda Rayworth will be stepping down this year, and we thank her for her ongoing valuable insight and participation in this ministry for many years. The vestry liaison this year was Craig Stanovich.

Please speak with any of the members if you would like further information regarding burials, or would like to volunteer for assisting with garden maintenance. There is a brochure regarding the garden which we would be glad to send to you upon request.

The maintenance of the garden is ongoing throughout the year, but most especially during the warmer months. This year the initial spring cleanup, pruning, disease prevention and irrigation closure was handled by Busy Bee Nursery. The ongoing lawn care and edging was handled by Tyler Maki and weeding by committee members, Carolyn Schmidt and Kim Bourgeois. The beautiful potted flowers were planted by Lisa Marks of In Bloom Florist. The garden was part of the fall cleanup project.

Our parish property chair, Steve Henning, collaborated with the Memorial Garden Committee to assess current needs and to arrange for needed tree work and maintenance. A major project of removing two large deteriorating trees and trimming some others was handled by Trees Unlimited. An additional major project was the removal of lower limbs from the trees along Rt. 31, handled on a volunteer basis by Bryan Diehl and his son, Bryan, as well as Matt Russell, Richard Russell and Kayla Seymour. We are very grateful to them, as well as to Julie Russell for personally renting a shredder for this project. We had new plaques made by Michael Pope (M. Pope & Co. Fine Jewelers) for each piece of the teak garden furniture.

The garden expenses are funded by burial fees, donations and the Taylor Fund, created by a bequest of former parishioner, Martha Taylor, for the perpetual care of the garden. We were honored to have three burials in the garden during 2020: Catherine ("Kay") Geoffroy; David Whamond; and, Audrey Zook. May perpetual light shine upon them.

Respectfully submitted, Kathleen O'Connor

## **Memorial Garden Annual Report 2021**

Our beautiful garden space continued to be a source of solace during this year of continued challenges. The garden space gained a new purpose as adjunct worship space when we opened the church for in person services. Those who did not wish to come inside, could enjoy the service from the garden. A portable, good quality speaker was placed in the garden so that those outside could hear the service very well. Fr. Pat brought communion to those who wished to receive outside.

There were no large projects in the garden this year, but the ordinary maintenance by the same team continued to keep it looking lovely throughout the year. Please refer to the 2020 report above for details regarding the purpose, administration and maintenance of the garden. The teak furniture was scrubbed, new memorial plaques were furnished by M. Pope & Co. and installed by Michael and Melissa Pope, the table was repaired by Steve Henning to last a little longer. A beautiful rubbed bronze portable Memorial Garden sign was purchased to guide visitors to the garden from the parking lot.

The appointed committee serving this year consisted of Rev. Patrick Perkins, Beverly Giarusso, Kathleen O'Connor, Michael Pope and Carolyn Schmidt. The vestry liaison was Laura Caswell.

We were honored to have the burial of David R. Geoffroy this year. May perpetual light shine upon him.

Respectfully submitted, Kathleen O'Connor

### **Newcomer Ministry**

The newcomer ministry organizes occasional fellowship events upon request of the parish staff. There is no formal committee membership or meeting time. Events are planned on an as needed basis by calling upon available parishioners to assist with supporting event activities. As Covid 19 restrictions continued throughout the 2021 calendar year, there were no fellowship events hosted.

Respectfully submitted, Melanie Amaral

### **Prayer Shawl Ministry**

We are now in the 16th year of this active ministry. We meet the third Monday each month year round. Some members knit at home and drop off beautiful knit or crocheted shawls in the Narthex when done. We welcome everyone to join our ministry and make shawls to comfort those in need. Some directions for basic patterns are in our shawl stand in the Narthex. This year we made 24 shawl. Our meeting hours are 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. on the third Monday every month. Thank you to all who knit and crochet.

## Senior Ministry

The ongoing Covid pandemic continued to affect the monthly Daytime Fellowship gatherings which have become a major opportunity for Seniors at St. Francis to come together.

1. Zoom meetings which were begun in 2020 once per month became twice per month in April. Problems continued to be noted regarding those who could receive, or check, e-mail notices, or who could access Zoom app. This approach, however, was determined to be the best alternative for gatherings.
2. Zoom continued until July, when we began in person meetings at first outside and then in Fellowship Hall in September.

Activities during 2021:

1. Zoom gatherings as noted. Topics focused on general sharing of impact of Covid, etc. on keeping in contact with, supporting one another, and continuing maintenance of AED, Little Free Library.
2. In person gatherings began: September and October focused on new participants joining the Ministry and reorganizing together.
3. November: sharing personal experiences "Trials and Tribulations of Moving On" (leaving life time home, downsizing, etc.)
4. December: Visit to Tower Hill Botanic Garden Light Display. Supported by Ministry budget and several donations: 25 attended
5. Ongoing:
  - a. Little Free Library: installed in front; thank you to Steve Henning and Mark Russell. Library appears to be popular. Barbara Pezzini and Deacon Jane have been overseeing this project.
  - b. Automatic Defibrillator (AED): installation complete. Thank you to Steve Henning for the installation process. Program for teaching use, etc. disrupted by Covid issues but will begin again in 2022. Preparation will begin with ushers.
  - c. Interaction and sharing with participants

We have been determined to continue as a Ministry, regardless of the limits placed by the pandemic. There remains the potential that we may have to return to Zoom to continue our interactions.

Thank you to all who participate in this ministry and support our activities, especially Arch Deacon Jane, Fr. Pat and our Vestry.

Marge Tremblay, Coordinator

## Property

Chair: Steve Henning; Members: Pat Perkins, Doug Rayworth, Chad Graham, Bryan Diehl, Maryann DiPinto  
Additional members are needed!

The following items were undertaken and/or considered. Priorities needed to be determined. Stewardship of our buildings and grounds is an ongoing responsibility.

### Special projects

- 1) Upgraded to permanently mounted Video Camera installed by Moscatelli, *Small Town Sound and Photo* along with dedicated electrical outlet.
- 2) Desktop computer was purchased to replace laptop that was used for streaming weekly services.
- 3) Broken wall mounted fan in Nave was removed and replaced.
- 4) Senior Ministry purchased an outdoor book lending library. It was assembled and installed next to front walkway. Thanks to Mark Russell for help in the installation of the mounting post.
- 5) All emergency lighting and emergency exit sign backup batteries were checked and replaced where needed.
- 6) Rectory garage support structure was replaced/reinforced with new posts and support joists by DCI Home Solutions.
- 7) Fall outside cleanup was conducted on Dec4 – many thanks to all who participated in this endeavor.
- 8) Rectory boiler was repaired by Harrington Oil.

### Deferred/temporary maintenance

- 1) An attempt was made to replace light bulbs over the altar – we are still working on getting this accomplished
- 2) Light bulbs in the lighted cross on the front of the church needed replacing – we will be looking into replacing the fluorescent lighting with LED lighting.

### Year Ahead Plans

- 1) The lighting in the nave, narthex, and Fellowship Hall need to be updated.
- 2) Interior painting is needed.
- 3) The windows in Fellowship hall need attention.

**Suggestions/needs – please convey any concerns to the Property Committee**

## MINISTRY TO THE WORLD

### Mission and Outreach

#### **“EVERY GENEROUS ACT OF GIVING IS A PERFECT GIFT OF GOD’S GRACE.”**

There is no other way to begin this report, other than by whole heartedly thanking each and every member of this Congregation for your generosity throughout this difficult year. As a ministry, we have focused on helping the homeless find comfort and food through donations to our Mission Partners, Mustard Seed, Abby’s House and Dismas Farm, as well as, other organizations such as Walking Together and the Wachusett Food Pantry. Due to COVID, the need has been great. With your help, we have answered God’s call to accompany the lonely and feed the hungry.

The St. Francis Mission Ministries provides parishioners with opportunities to serve and respond to the needs of our community and the world with compassion and love. As a group, our objective is to use the resources at our disposal to:

- Foster partnerships with local service organizations to provide projects and services in which parishioners can participate.
- Support local, national, and worldwide charities and service organizations that correspond with our call to serve.

This year our activities and opportunities to serve continued to be impacted by the COVID pandemic and although restrictions were slowly lifted, food scarcity and homelessness remained dire problems. Through the hard work of Nancy and Peter Pope, and the Mustard Seed Committee, cold meals were served at the Mustard Seed until warm meals could be safely prepared and served. Food Drive donations and \$700 in parish funds were donated to help stock their Food Pantry, which was the only source of food for neighborhood residents. Abby’s House remained closed to outside meal preparation. With the help of our donation of \$1000 from the Feeding Ministries’ Fund, Abby’s stocked a Food Pantry to be used by the residents in preparation of their own meals. St. Francis continued to help stock that pantry and assist residents in other ways with our donations from our monthly Food Drives. The same was true for Dismas Farm.

The following is a list of the opportunities to serve that were offered and responded to by St. Francis parishioners:

1. **St. Francis Food Drive:** Beginning in early April of 2020, Mission Ministries has sponsored close to 30 bimonthly or monthly Food drives which included not only donations of food, cleaning supplies and personal hygiene products but blankets, hats and gloves, and back packs. Many parishioners made monetary donations. In March, 175 Food Ministry bags donated by M. Pope & Co. were picked up or delivered to the homes of every parishioner, letting all know that we were available to help those in need and encouraging those who were able, to help as they could. An additional 50 bags were purchased by Mission Ministries and distributed to neighbors of St. Francis and frequenters at the Mustard Seed Food Pantry to help carry their food.
2. **Dept of Children and Families:** Parishioners adopted 40 children between the ages of 2 to 16 and purchased Christmas gifts off of their wish lists providing these children, who otherwise receive nothing, with a magical Christmas.
3. **Dunkin Gift Cards:** Parishioners donated \$300 in gift cards. 40 - \$5 cards were donated to Abby’s and 10 - \$10 cards to Dismas as Christmas gifts.

4. **Wreath and Pie Fundraiser:** With the help of former ministry member, Kathy Diehl and the Sheltons, the ministry baked 58 pies, selling 53 of them and donating the leftovers to Veterans, Inc. in Worcester. These pies in conjunction with the Wreath and cookie and candy sale raised \$2300 for our Feeding Ministries account.
5. **Special Collections:** \$1625 was donated during Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas for distribution to our Mission Partners, the food pantry and other diocesan organizations.
6. **Hope for Housing Cards** were sold to help the Worcester homeless or those about to become homeless with rent payments, security deposits and utility bills. Cards were also purchased and donated to Abby's House and Mustard Seed benefitting two organizations with one donation.
7. **Mampong Babies Orphanage in Ghana:** \$1000 in loose change was donated.
8. **Holden Crop Hunger Walk:** \$900 was raised to help local Food pantries.

By listening to God's call to help one another and strengthen our relationship with our Mission partners donations were given from the Mission Budget as follows:

- 1) \$1000 to Abby's House for their Springtacular Fundraising Campaign.
- 2) \$1000 to Mustard Seed to help sponsor a summer camp for neighborhood children.
- 3) \$500 in Walmart gift cards as a Christmas gift to the residents of Dismas Farm.
- 4) \$1000 in gift cards from TJ Maxx and Walmart as Christmas gifts to the resident of Abby's House.
- 5) \$1000 in Big Y Hope for Housing Cards as Christmas gifts for Mustard Seed clients living out of their Food Pantry and some of their volunteers.
- 6) \$500 to Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) to help Haiti
- 7) \$500 to ERD to help Louisiana after the hurricane.
- 8) \$500 to ERD to help Kentucky after the tornado.
- 9) \$500 to Episcopal Migration Ministries to help with relocation of Afghan refugees
- 10) \$500 to Ascentria to help with relocation of Afghan refugees in Worcester.

We were able to hold our 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Film Series this year. The presentations were virtual with the theme, "Let's Talk About Hope...". The focus was on facing the future together without fear. A new format was utilized, presenting 20-minute Ted Talks instead of short films. Discussion followed. We will be utilizing this format again in 2022.

It is important to mention the work of the **St. Claire Quilters**. While this group is separate from the Mission Ministries, their donation of handmade quilts to the residents of Abby's House over the past three years reinforces and strengthens our relationship with this Mission Partner. It is this group that provided a second memory quilt. This continues the tradition of preserving the names of residents, staff, volunteers, board members and donors who have passed away. Kathleen O'Connor has signed the name of our dear departed Rev. Karen Safstrom, who facilitated the relationship between Mission Ministries, the St. Claire Quilters and Abby's House. In addition, this year the quilters donated eight quilts to a family relocating from Afghanistan and several quilts to the foster children from DCF.

In addition to thanking all of you for your generosity there are many individuals who have worked very hard this year to accomplish God's work. It is impossible to name everyone, however, we must give special mention to our mission partner liaisons, Kathleen O'Connor, Nancy Pope, Karen Ramsey and Rev. Jane Griesbach for keeping us informed as to the needs of our Mission Partners. We are also very thankful to non-members, Carolyn Schmidt, liaison to the Wachusett Food Pantry and Bev Giarusso for their assistance at each and every Food Drive. We are extremely grateful to all who helped in any way. I, personally, would be remiss if I did not thank the members of this Ministry for their dedication and the sacrifice of their time and talents to further the work of this ministry.

Finally, we are always looking for new members to join our group. If you have an interest in supporting our local, national or international charities and/or service organizations, or would like to help us to develop fund raising opportunities in the coming year, we welcome your input and assistance. You control the degree of your participation. Anyone interested in joining Mission Ministries should contact any of the its members: Rev. Jane Griesbach, Barbara Henning, Karen Kappes, Esteban Loustaunau, Mary Jude Pigsley, Julie Russell, Marge Tremblay, Mary Ann Barbato and our newest member, Nicole McGurin.

Respectfully submitted by:

Julie Russell for the Mission Ministries

### **Mustard Seed**

In March 2021 the Mustard Seed again began serving a hot meal to guests inside the Mustard Seed House. Thankfully the St. Francis Mustard Seed teams began preparing its hot meals. As always we thankfully maintained a core team of bakers that provided deserts throughout the pandemic.

Serving became much more personal when the health department required only four guests at a table and each guest was required to eat at a table. Several shifts of seating were needed to accommodate the number of guests.

The Mustard Seed will have been serving the community for 50 years in 2022. A celebration of the community was held with a summer block party. We had a cookout, games and sports for the children, face painting, and an ice-cream truck. It was a huge success.

The neighborhood children were invited to attend a summer camp held at the Mustard Seed. The teachers were Holy Cross students. A program to assist the children with English and math was in place. They enjoyed art, music and sports. St. Francis donated through the Mission Committee and parishioners to provide supplies and snacks for the camp.

UMass Memorial Medical Center provided a Covid vaccination site for the guests and neighborhood residents. A second clinic was provided during the summer block party. A team of three doctors and two nurse practitioners volunteered to administer the vaccines, answer questions and encourage guests to be vaccinated.

The Mustard Seed food pantry is an integrated part of the feeding ministry. St. Francis collects monthly donations of the requested food items for weekly distribution. They also supply blankets, gloves, and hygiene items. The winter months remain the most difficult. At Christmas time, sweatshirts are given to all the clients as well as a Christmas stocking for families. This year they contained a handmade Christmas pillow case created by St. Francis quilters.

This year the food pantry was used to support an Afghan family of nine that has settled in Worcester. St. Francis parishioners donated grocery gift cards that assisted the family over the first months of their arrival in Worcester. The St. Francis quilters provided nine beautiful quilts for their beds.

The food pantry now serves twenty five families and fifteen individuals. This helps to keep all of these people cooking and eating at home. They would best be described as the “working poor”. No one is ever refused help. There are many emergency situations throughout the winter months. St. Francis is a constant reliable resource for the Mustard Seed Food Pantry.

The 2022 Mustard Seed Jubilee has become a plan to attempt to “end hunger” in the Worcester area. Research throughout the eleven agencies in Worcester that address hunger, note that hunger is not only in Worcester, it is in schools everywhere, among children, families and seniors.

The plan, which is continually evolving, has allowed the Mustard Seed Jubilee board to meet with local agencies and to attend a congressional hearing presented by Congressman Jim McGovern. The Mustard Seed invited local hospital

leaders. As a direct result, UMass Memorial Health Care has taken immediate action to mirror a program at Boston City Hospital that begins with families of newborns in poverty. Families get prescriptions to shop in a hospital run grocery store. They are given classes in cooking and nutrition. English classes, employment assistance, coaching for parenting and homework help. They teach parents to support one another.

Their research shows that a child not learning at grade level by the second grade will not ever catch up and most often does not even graduate from high school, leaving little option for employment that can support them.

A local summit on hunger will be held later in 2022 to address the many issues that food insecurity develops. In America alone, there are 38 million people who are “food insecure”, and 11 million of them are children.

We remain grateful for the St. Francis Mission Team, the shoppers, cooks, bakers and servers who support this amazing ministry. We are thankful for all our team members.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nancy L Pope

### **Dismas Farm**

Dismas Farm is a place for formerly incarcerated men to live while preparing to re-enter society. It is situated on a beautiful hilltop in Oakham. It is a working farm and the men do all the chores and live in a big farmhouse. There are large fields for growing vegetables and many farm animals as well (goats, sheep, chickens and two adorable mini horses).

During the year 2021 we continued to provide dinner at Dismas Farm once a month. The pandemic brought new rules. We did not go inside the farmhouse to eat with the men. We brought the dinner (entrée, sides, dessert, juice) and they met us outside to bring the food in. Our containers, pots and bowls, are always returned to us squeaky clean. There are four teams who volunteer throughout the year. We thank Nicole, Catherine, Phyllis, Dave, Chris, Sally, Peggy and I who make up the teams. I’m sure there are other helpers that I haven’t listed. Sorry and thank you too! We also thank Karen Ramsey who stepped down as coordinator at the end of 2021. If you wish to join a team, let me know! It’s easy as you’ll only serve 3 -4 times per year or sign up as a “sub” when needed.

The men especially appreciated the gift cards to Walmart and Dunkin’ as Christmas presents. They love us at St. Francis, Holden!

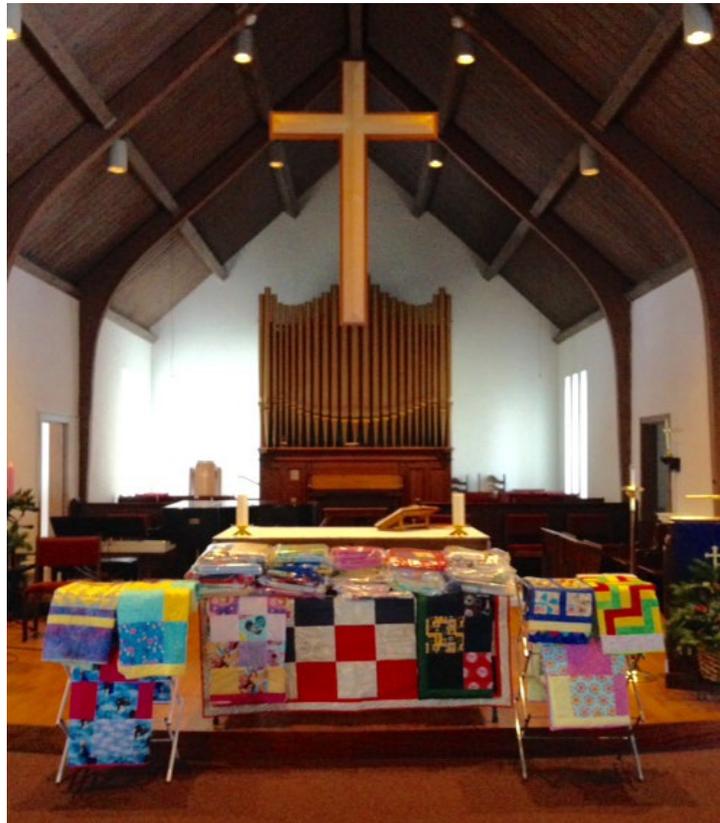
Respectfully submitted: S. Jane Griesbach

## Quilting at St. Frances, St. Clare Quilters

The St. Clare Quilters began working together in mid-2017 and includes beginners to far more experienced quilters. The group designs and makes small quilts for donation. The quilt designs are simple, cotton and flannel, intended for warmth and comfort. This effort is essentially self-funded. The group is extremely grateful for and welcomes donations of fabric.

After communicating by email and meeting informally in the parking lot on donation days due to the Covid pandemic, the quilters continued working on quilts with the goal of a donation before the end of the 2021. The group had one in-person with masks meeting in Fellowship Hall in late August. On November 21, 35 quilts were blessed. Those quilts were immediately sent out into the Worcester area community: twenty-two to Abby's House shelter, eight to an Afghan refugee family and five to foster children for Christmas through Worcester County DCF (Department of Children and Families). Members of the group also made pillowcases for distribution with Christmas gifts to families in the Mustard Seed neighborhood.

The St. Clare quilters are Amy Chisholm, Betty Clark, Sue Delorme, Bev Giarusso, Roz Glanville, Barbara Henning, Julie Russell, and Barbara Stover.



## Helping Hands Ministry

The Helping Hands Ministry completed its ninth year of serving our neighbors in the community. COVID 19 has limited the amount of work we took on this year, though we hope to be more available in 2022. The Holden Senior Center continues to be a conduit to finding those in our community that need assistance. Our mission is to serve those who are unable to keep up with tasks around the house or have insufficient means to cope on their own.

Mark 12:30-31

"'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

All that wish to join us in our call to serve in God's name and to love our neighbors as ourselves are welcome. While some projects are larger construction/carpentry jobs requiring tools and the abilities to use them, there is always tasks for all that wish to join in. Projects can be as simple as moving furniture or climbing a step ladder or stool to replace light bulbs in ceiling fixtures. Yard work is a very common request too. Join us in serving in God's name. If you or someone you know needs a hand, please contact Bryan Diehl: [Diehl4@charter.net](mailto:Diehl4@charter.net)



## 2022 Leadership Nominations

(Elected to serve one year term unless otherwise noted)

<u>SENIOR WARDEN</u>	Bryan Diehl
<u>JUNIOR WARDEN</u>	Susan Bastardo
<u>CLERK</u>	Dawn Rooke
<u>TREASURER</u>	Ann Tripp
<u>VESTRY:</u> Three-year terms	Mary Cook and Joy Head (terms expire 2025)
<u>DIOCESAN CONVENTION DELEGATES:</u>	Dick Delorme, Bryan Diehl, Dawn Rooke
<u>DIOCESAN CONVENTION ALTERNATES:</u>	Susan Bastardo and Bev Giarusso

### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

#### Vestry:

Term expires 2024:	Richard Dixon, Craig Stanovich and Mary Jude Pigsley
Term expires 2023:	Laura Caswell
Retiring:	Julie Russell, Barbara Henning and Carolyn Schmidt
Resignations:	Chad Graham and Carrie Grinstead

#### Memorial Garden: Appointed

Bev Giarusso, Michael Pope, Carolyn Schmidt, Kathleen O'Connor

#### COMMITTEES

Finance.....	Chris Berglund
Mission Ministries.....	Julie Russell
Newcomers.....	Melanie Amaral
Property.....	Steve Henning
Stewardship.....	Craig Stanovich
Memorial Garden.....	Kathleen O'Connor
Atlar Guild.....	Bev Giarusso
Ushers.....	Craig Stanovich
Readers/LEMs.....	Linda Shelton
Acolytes.....	Laura Caswell

#### CHAIRPERSONS

**Vestry Officers:** *The following list of names will be presented to be elected to terms as defined in the note on page 25.*

**Senior Warden: Bryan Diehl**

Bryan and his family (Kathy, Bryan Jr., and David), moved to Holden in 1998 and found St. Francis Church in 2001. Kathy has been very involved in Mission Committee and their sons both attended and then taught in the Sunday School. Bryan has served twice before on the Vestry and has completed two years of his current term. He served as the Chair of the Property Committee for 9 years, sang in the choir for several years and is the Project Coordinator and founder of the Men's Service Ministry. His calling to begin the Men's Ministry came following a mission trip to El Salvador. He also served on the Search Committee when the congregation was seeking a new rector in 2014. Bryan is honored and humbled to be considered to serve the church as one of its Wardens.

**Junior Warden: Susan Bastardo**

Susan grew up in Seekonk MA and was raised in the Roman Catholic church. She and her family (husband Michael, son Joe, daughter Jena) started attending St. Francis when they moved to Holden in 1990. Soon after joining she volunteered to be a Sunday School teacher. She was received into the Episcopal church in 1992, and in 1994 she was hired as the Church School Coordinator. She served in that position for twenty-five years. During that time, she completed the four-year Education for Ministry program and served as a mentor for several confirmands. Her involvement in these ministries provided experiences and led to relationships that have helped deepen her faith and strengthen her connection to the St. Francis community. She is looking forward to the opportunity to serve in a new way as Junior Warden. She currently works as a speech/language pathologist in the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

**Clerk: Dawn Rooke**

Dawn and her husband Brian have lived in Holden since 1990 and have attended St. Francis since 1991. They feel blessed to have been able to raise their three children in this wonderful church that places such a strong emphasis on supporting, nurturing and honoring its youth. During her years at St. Francis, she has been involved with the Newcomer/Fellowship Committee, Dismas Farm Ministry, and served four years on the vestry. She is currently serving as a convention delegate and has been the clerk of the vestry since 2006. She looks forward to continuing to serve the St. Francis parish.

**Treasurer: Ann Tripp**

Ann Tripp and her family have been a part of the St Francis community since they moved to Rutland about 30 years ago. She was a Sunday school teacher for about 10 years while her children were active in the program and for several years after. Ann has also been on the Finance Committee and Stewardship Committee. Ann and her family are best known for bringing Ali the donkey to Palm Saturday and several sheep and goats to the Christmas pageant every year. Ann's day job is President of Opus Investment Management and Chief Investment Officer for The Hanover Insurance Group, Inc. ("THG"), the parent company of Opus, as well as the company's operating subsidiaries where she has oversight of the portfolios managed by Opus or third-party managers for affiliated and non-affiliated accounts. She also serves on boards and sub-committees of area non-profit organizations, including Fallon Community Health Plan and the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts.

**Vestry:**

*The following list of names presented to serve three-year terms:*

**Mary Cook**

Mary Cook has been attending St. Francis since 1999 and was received into the church in 2001, where her three daughters attended church school and youth group. St. Francis has been a comforting home of faith, strength and comfort to her over the past 22 years. Mary has been a Registered Nurse for 30 years working in maternal, newborn and pediatric healthcare and currently working in the NICU. She was commissioned as a Parish Nurse in December, 2002, and began her three year ministry at St. Francis, which included (but was not limited to) providing as a health resource for parishioners, blood pressure clinics, blood drives and wrote monthly "What the Health" newsletters for The Little Portion about current health issues and concerns. Mary is also part of the LEV and LEM ministries. She has completed Year Two of the EfM program and is now looking forward to serving the St. Francis community through the Vestry.

Mary and her husband, Steven, reside in Holden and attend the Saturday evening service. Together, they share six children and 5 grandchildren.

**Joy Head**

Joy has been a member of Saint Francis for almost ten years. Joy is a native of Worcester and was raised Catholic. In 2012, she and her family moved to Holden and began attending St. Francis. For several years, she taught church school and enjoyed being part of the religious education program. Her children, Aila and Thomson were baptized at St. Francis. Joy is an elementary school teacher in Southborough and has been at the same school for over twenty years. She was honored to be asked to be part of the vestry and is looking forward to taking on a new role at St. Francis.

**Diocesan Convention:** *The following list of names will be presented to serve 1 year terms*

**Dick Delorme**

My wife and I have been members of St. Francis for 25 years. I was Junior Warden and then Senior Warden during Rich's first four years at St. Francis. I then served as Treasurer for four years. I participated in the election of Doug Fisher as our Bishop. The ministry-oriented culture and spiritual aliveness of St. Francis are what make me want to continue serving in my current capacity. I also want to participate in guiding the diocese in the direction that Bishop Fisher wants to take us.

**Bryan Diehl: see bio above**

**Dawn Rooke: see bio above**

**Diocesan Convention Alternates:** *The following list of names will be presented to serve 1 year terms*

**Susan Bastardo:** see bio above

**Bev Giarusso**

Bev is a lifelong Episcopalian and has been a member of St. Francis since the days when services were held in the yellow house. During her years at St. Francis she has taught Sunday school, shopped for Mustard Seed, worked annually on the church fair, served on the vestry, served as warden and helped a group of teenagers build the labyrinth in the back yard of St. Clare House. Currently she is co-director of the Altar Guild, is involved in the nursing home ministry, works with the quilters, and ushers at the Saturday service. She is now retired after 35 years as a Middle School math teacher in the Worcester Public Schools. Bev lives in West Boylston with her husband Vincent – also a WPS retiree. Their family includes a son Richard, daughter in law Allison and grandson Adrian.

**Basic Responsibilities of the Vestry**

The responsibility of the Vestry, like that of the governing body of any organization, is to:

- †Help define and articulate the mission of the congregation;
- †Support the mission by word and deed;
- †Select the rector;
- †Ensure effective organization and planning;
- †Ensure adequate resources in leadership and in financial stewardship;
- †Manage resources effectively;
- †Determine that appropriate programs, policies, and procedures have been developed and are followed;
- †Assess its own performance

The success of a congregation is not measured in terms of numbers of members or size of the endowment, but rather in the degree to which it is working toward the fulfillment of the mission of the Church.

*(From "What Is A Vestry/" Publication of Cornerstone, Episcopal Church Foundation)*

2021 Financial Information - Page Intentionally Left Blank. For financial information, please contact the church office.