

*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 22, 2023



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 22, 2023

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 2022 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 2023 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 23, 2022

The Reverend Patrick Perkins convened the meeting at 11:10 am. With a quorum present in the church, those viewing via Zoom have “voice” but no “vote.” The rector prayed “...Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory... Amen.”

A motion to waive the reading of the 2021 Annual Meeting minutes and accept as presented in the Annual Report, made by Michael Faust, seconded by Laura Caswell, passed.

Presentation of the Annual Reports:

Rector’s Report (The Rev.Perkins) - The rector commended the reading of his report on page seven of the Annual Report, the first and last paragraphs of which he included in his sermon during the 10:00 am service this morning. He thanked the community for their faithfulness during these difficult days. Mission Ministries have received continued support during this time. These days are unique, filled with hope and faith. The challenge continues as we all try to discern how to “marry the call of God” with the frenetic pace of the times in which we live. Vestry will be thinking and working on actionable ways we can live out our call.

Wardens’ Report (Bryan Diehl) - The full Wardens’ Report may be found on page nine of the Annual Report. Senior Warden Bryan Diehl highlighted the wardens’ plan to work toward the diocesan desire for commitments in support of Creation Care, and making it a priority at St. Francis in the coming year. He will be working with the diocese to determine ways to work collectively toward becoming more energy efficient and climate-conscious. A new Green Committee is being established at St. Francis and all who are interested in becoming a part of this initiative, or those with questions are invited to speak with him.

Deacon’s Report - The Rector commended the reading of The Rev. Deacon S. Jane Griebach’s report on page eight of the Annual Report and expressed his thanks for all she has done both for the parish of St. Francis as well as the Diocese of Western Massachusetts (where she is Archdeacon) and Province I (all of New England.) The rector’s words were met with applause from those present.

The reports of all church ministries may be found in the Annual Report.

Report of the Nominating Committee (The Rev. Perkins) - In December our vestry voted to reduce our vestry members from nine people, each serving three year terms, to six people serving three year terms. The number was increased from six to nine many years ago when the church added the Saturday night service. The vestry feels that six people better reflects our congregation at this time. We will have a ten person voting board, including the six vestry members, two wardens, treasurer, and clerk. Clergy does not have a vote. The canons of the church say that vestry must have either six, nine, or twelve members.

The slate of candidates for 2022:

One year terms: Senior Warden - Bryan Diehl, Junior Warden - Susan Bastardo, Treasurer - Ann Tripp,
Clerk - Dawn Rooke

Three-year vestry terms expiring in 2025: Mary Cook, Joy Head

Convention Delegates: Bryan Diehl, Dick Delorme, Dawn Rooke

Convention Delegate Alternates: Susan Bastardo, Beverly Giarusso

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

Report on the 2022 Plan for Mission and Ministry (The Rev. Perkins) - Highlights of the budget (found beginning on page 29 of the Annual Report,) approved by vestry at their January meeting, include: pledge income of \$260,000, down a bit from 2021 (mostly due to people moving away.) We are currently at \$250,000 but anticipate an additional \$10,000 mostly from those who are regular online givers but who do not always submit a formal pledge. Total income includes \$5,000 from our Fund for Mission and Ministry, set up a few years ago with a \$75,000 investment. It is now valued at about \$110,000. Any resources from this fund must be used for mission and ministry and not for operations and are capped at 3.5-4% annually. This first time use of funds from this account helps bring our Missions Ministries budget up to \$7,500. Expenses are mostly the same as in 2021, with the exception of an increase in our oil expenditure due to increased per gallon cost and a higher number of gallons, as well as removing the position of Youth Minister from the budget. Although our finances have changed, it does not mean we eliminate the things we do, we just have to find new ways of doing them. Youth Ministry will continue, though with the use of volunteers. Overall, expenses, which are budgeted “realistically” at \$290,000, and income, budgeted “conservatively” at \$271,000, leaves us with a deficit of about \$19,000. We currently have unrestricted funds close to \$200,000 which means this deficit is manageable for now. There were no questions about the budget.

Parishioner Tina Chen voiced concern over a line in the Finance Committee’s report “economies continue to be realized by the Rector’s voluntary benefit choices...” Are we placing an undue burden upon the rector? In response, the Rev. Perkins explained that St. Francis is contracted to pay the costs of health insurance for the rector. If paid through the diocese, those costs could be as high as \$25,000 per year. Instead, the Perkins’ family is covered under the insurance offered through Carol Perkins' employer, at a cost of \$7,000 per year, which the church reimburses, at a savings to the church of about \$18,000 per year.

There was no other business.

A motion to adjourn the meeting, made by Dick Delorme, seconded by David Lucas, passed. The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 am.

Respectfully submitted, Dawn Rooke, Clerk

From the Parish Register ~ January – December 2022

Baptisms – 2	Transfers out – 4
Marriages – 0	Transfers in – 8
Confirmations – 0	
Received – 0	
Burials – 6	

**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

"Those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude for the steadfast faithfulness of this community of St. Francis. These past three years have presented some unique and challenging circumstances to our community, our nation, and the world; and the community of St. Francis has faithfully continued to seek God's presence in each and every challenging moment. Beginning on Friday, March 13, 2020 ("a date which will live in infamy," as President Roosevelt famously said), the very idea of "normal operations of our church community" dramatically changed to a new paradigm of "spread the Gospel and care for God's people" in new and innovative ways. We were certainly learning as we lived through the early days of the pandemic, but the trust, generosity, and faithfulness of this community was ever-present. As you will read in many of the ministry reports within this Annual Report booklet - we experimented, we learned, we failed, we succeeded: and we were FAITHFUL! I thank you, and most importantly - God thanks you!

Faithfulness is often an underrated element of corporate life. Hebrews (Chapter 11) describes the meaning of faith far more eloquently than I could ever hope to; faith "is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." The author writes that many well-known people of God were "reckoned as righteous due to their faithfulness." I think the community of St. Francis is a righteous bunch of people too! The prophet Isaiah writes of the hope and promise of being God's people in the renewed and redeemed world of the future. I believe this promise is our promise! We continue to learn important lessons of what it means to be God's faithful people in a post-pandemic world. Again, as you will read in later reports: we are ending some of the stop-gap measures of the pandemic; we are keeping some new and innovative ways to welcome and minister to God's people in our community and beyond; and we remain committed to constant learning and open-minded ways of renewal that will help us to spread Christ's radical Gospel message of mercy, love, and grace. I am confident your St. Francis leadership is committed to continuing the ongoing process of renewal and innovation for our community: seeking ways to better communicate, developing strategies to expand participation in ministry, and discovering ways to strengthen our bonds of friendship. I am grateful for their hard work and excited for our future.

I want to thank the members of the vestry for their commitment during these past few years. Each member of the vestry committed to serve their elected term, and an additional year. This is no small commitment, especially during the challenging days of these past few years as they were simultaneously dealing with the challenges of their family and work lives. Much of the work of the vestry happens "behind the scenes" and in each person's "spare time," and I wanted to extend a great big THANK YOU. And a special thank you to our outgoing Warden, Bryan Diehl, and our "elected 6 weeks before the pandemic" Warden, Sue Bastardo. I appreciate everyone's generosity and dedication.

As we begin the year, 2023, together in ministry and in our common lives in Christ, I encourage each and every member of the St. Francis community to seek new ways to develop your relationship with God, in Christ. Joining our Sunday morning "Scripture Reflection" at 9:00am might be one small start, or perhaps saying Morning Prayer before breakfast each day, or maybe trying out a new ministry for a time...you will likely meet new people, share some new stories, and discover God in new ways. Regardless of what you choose to consider, I pray that this coming year will bless you and help you to hear God's invitation to a deeper relationship of love and grace.

And remember - 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 . . .

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” Philippians 4:6

We're all fairly good about praying to God for our wants and needs. How often do we say thank you for all the blessings already around us? A priest in El Salvador first brought this to my closer attention. Rev. Luis Serrano stood with Archbishop Oscar Romero. Together they were jailed, tortured, and ostracized, all because they believed in the rights of all people, including the poor. Serrano said “God already blesses us all real good . . . how often do we say thank you?”

We thank God for bringing us through the years of pandemic. We still need to be vigilant, but we can now worship and meet together. We thank God for the new parishioners who bring new gifts to St. Francis. I thank God for allowing me time to serve at St. Francis. I thank Pat for allowing me to preach. And I thank all the people for the good work being done at St. Francis.

The outreach feeding ministries here at St. Francis continue with gusto. Our Mission Partners; the Mustard Seed, Dismas Farm, Abby's House and our local food pantry are most grateful. How many times has St. Francis stocked the Mustard Seed's food pantry? I've lost count. They serve the increasing number of poor on a daily basis.

Once one stays in a place long enough we get to recognize whom the helpers are. We've got lots of them at St. Francis. This is how it should be and how it is. Parishioners volunteer in various ways – in various ministries. These people just go about their work - often without acknowledgement. Another term for this is diaconal ministry – a ministry of servanthood. I give thanks that I've been privileged to serve alongside many of these ministries.

My work for the diocese is going well – a few lumps and bumps here & there but that goes with anything worth doing. As Archdeacon, I try to keep track on the 13 ordained deacons in our diocese. Easier said than done. Deacon Crawl, last June, was a success. Every deacon went to a different parish to preach. I was at Holy Trinity, Southbridge, on Trinity Sunday. That was a bit daunting but all went well. Bishop Fisher has said we should do it again. It helps keep the deacons visible. We have 1 person soon to be ordained deacon, one person in her 2nd year of Deacon School and 3 people just entering.

God is good. And I am thankful.

Faithfully, S. Jane Griesbach

WARDENS' REPORT

2022 found us moving beyond the pandemic and blending old and new ways of bearing witness to the love of God at St. Francis. While some measures taken out of necessity during the pandemic were no longer needed, others remained as valuable means of prayer, formation, mission, and stewardship.

One wonderful example is the monthly feeding ministry food drives. While we have collected food for our mission partners for many years, the food drives that began during the pandemic were so well-received that we have continued them with consistent support from the members of our church. Our hope is that they will grow to include others in our community as well.

We are also pleased to offer our Facebook livestream as another way to invite those near and far to join in our worship. When we opened our doors for in-person worship services last spring, we continued to make our livestream available and will most likely do so for the foreseeable future.

During the pandemic, we recognized the need to grow our systems for communicating within and beyond our community. Over the past year, ministry heads and vestry liaisons collaborated on Little Portion articles highlighting ministry opportunities and events. These articles promoted stewardship of time and talent by sharing examples of how participation blesses our lives and strengthens our relationships with God and one another. It is our hope that many parishioners will accept the invitation to make deeper connections within our church community by joining a ministry in the coming year.

A great joy of 2022 was the return of some of the programs and events that were sorely missed during the pandemic. In the spring, we were able to offer a children's Eucharist Instruction program for the first time in years. The fall saw the return of fellowship gatherings such as the Church Picnic, Coffee Hour, and Oktoberfest. The Crop Walk returned to its format of walking and gathering together after a two-year hiatus. We blessed lots of our well-loved pets at the Feast of St. Francis in October. The Scripture Reflection group resumed its in-person gathering between the 8:00 and 10:00 services on Sunday mornings. The Bell Choir started ringing together again under the new direction of Erik Gladwin. Several parishioners participated in an in-person training for the use of the AED device, and talked about the possibility of developing a new "Health and Wellness" ministry at St. Francis. Finally, we updated our parish directory and joyfully added some new members.

In the coming year, we hope to renew our youth group and engage the support and participation of teens and their families. A group has met to discuss new ways to meet the spiritual needs of these valued members of our community.

In 2023, we also plan to address some important property concerns. We are actively pursuing options to take care of the windows and lighting in Fellowship Hall, and the lighting in the Nave.

At the start of this new year, we are immensely grateful for every member of this community. Thank you for sharing your time, treasure, and talents at St. Francis. May God's Holy Spirit continue to unite and empower us to be faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord, responding to the needs of the world with compassion and love.

Respectfully submitted,
Bryan Diehl, Senior Warden
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: 22 students/14 families

January to June ('21-'22 school year)

- For the second half of the school year, church school continued to be offered in 2 age groups.
- Our lessons focused on the presentation of Jesus, the baptism and temptation of Jesus, the Prodigal Son, the raising of Lazarus, post-resurrection appearances, the Acts of the Apostles, and the prophet Daniel.
- This spring, we made a donation to the Living Gift Market for Heifer International.
- June 12th: Year-end party and "Peace Dove" banner

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

- Church School continues to be offered during the 10:00 AM service.
- Families are still able to register in person or virtually.
- This year's teacher and assistants as follows: Preschool, Kindergarten, First grade: Matt Surabian and Alison Milan (A), Jena DelCid and Amanda Vitko (A), Second grade-Fifth grade: Lisa Cherrier and Adeline Cherrier (A), and Kelly Manchester and Meghan Manchester (A).
- Our lessons for the first part of the year focused on Genesis (Creation to Abraham), Zacchaeus, and Advent (John the Baptist). At our Advent Celebration, the children made luminaries that lit our front walk on Christmas Eve.
- The children participated in one mission/outreach project so far during this school year. In November, we sponsored a food-drive for the Wachusett Food Pantry.

Eucharist Instruction

The Eucharist Instruction program is primarily a home-program designed for students between the ages of 8-10. This spring five students participated in the program. After completing the study, the children were recognized at the 10:00 AM service on Sunday, May 15th.

This fall, we have focused on our church calendar and how that impacts the stories we tell, the topics we discuss, and what we do outside of church. What season are we in? What do the different "colors" of church mean? What was happening in our church lessons to prepare us for certain "special" celebrations or seasons such as Christmas or Easter? What is the "heart" of the story or lessons that we are learning that we can bring into our lives outside of church school.

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

Adult Education offerings during the year, 2022, remained limited due to precautions of the pandemic and individual's desires to gather in groups. Due to these circumstances, the only regular education offering for adults during the year was the Sunday morning Scripture Reflection series.

Our Sunday Scripture Reflection series was offered weekly on Sunday mornings, 9:00 a.m., between the worship services. From January until June (Father's Day weekend), the gathering was offered both in-person (library) and via Zoom. The hybrid meeting format allowed those who were not comfortable gathering, or unable to physically be present at the church, an opportunity to regularly participate with the group. The group did not meet during the summer months (Father's Day weekend until Labor Day weekend). The group started meeting again after Labor Day weekend, however, the meeting format was changed from its hybrid format to an "in-person only" format. The change in format was done to simplify meeting preparation and to allow more people the opportunity to lead the group (a limited number of people were familiar with the technology requirements of the hybrid format). As we begin the year, 2023, an evaluation of additional adult education offerings will be done to assess the needs of the community.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick Perkins

Youth Ministry

Youth Ministry has been dormant since shortly after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the months following the pandemic shutdown (March - June 2020), a few Zoom gatherings were scheduled for Youth Group gatherings. However, very small numbers of young adults participated in those gatherings and future Zoom meetings were canceled. Throughout 2021 and 2022, the Youth Group did not meet. In the Fall, 2022, a small group of people met with young adults to obtain feedback regarding ideas for the development of a new Youth Ministry program. At the end of 2022, Joy Head and Patrick Perkins have formed a group to design and develop ideas for a new Youth Ministry program that we hope will begin to become active, with a fuller schedule planned for the program year beginning after Labor Day, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick Perkins

WORSHIP MINISTRIES

Acolytes

The acolyte ministry has remained dormant since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Discussions have been held to review the Acolyte Ministry and obtain feedback from the community regarding changes to the service of acolytes. One of the significant changes we are hoping to implement is the practice that the ministry is open to people of all ages. We hope this change will help members to see this ministry as a valuable worship ministry for everyone to consider.

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.

We have a group of dedicated members that serve faithfully throughout the year. 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

Thank you to a wonderful group of dedicated individuals who read at each service and distribute the Eucharist to Holden Nursing Home residents every Sunday. This year we welcomed 2 new readers to our group!

Due to Covid restrictions, the chalice with wine was not offered this past year, but soon will be back for Lent. Our Lay Eucharistic Ministers will be returning to the services.

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 to practice the music for the 5:00 service under the direction of MaryAnn Dipinto, on voice and guitar, Nancy Rodgers on voice and guitar, and Steve Bullock, on piano.
- The Sunday Choir meets every Sunday morning at 8:45 to rehearse the music selections for the 10:00a service, under the direction .
- The Festive Choir performs on Christmas Eve and Easter morning and is open to all singers, including family and friends visiting for the holidays.
- The St. Francis Bell Choir, after about a two-and-a-half-year hiatus, resumed rehearsals under the leadership of Erik Gladwin. The group rehearses weekly on Wednesday evenings and performs at services around Christmas and Easter. They performed for the first time in three years to the date recently. The congregation was thrilled to hear the beautiful bells again! Membership to the bell choir is open to all.

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 played by violinist Zophia 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. 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

Ushers 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

The positive efforts of the Saint Francis community and the continuing commitment of our dedicated clergy and lay leadership team during these times truly defines our mission in the world in which we live. The efforts and energies of all members of our community to generate and operate ministry programs that match the financial and "hands-on" commitments of our community are second to none.

The 2022 year-end Operating Statement demonstrates some revenue challenges resulting from the leftover symptoms of COVID and the departure of substantial historic pledge families due to retirement and relocation. Our 2022 reported pledge income totaled \$248,787.57 was about \$11,212 less than budget. However, just under \$7,200 in advance pledges were included in 2021 Revenue, prohibiting their inclusion in 2022 income. The Vestry also chose not to access \$5,000 from the Mission and Ministry account as budgeted, leaving that fund untouched. If we were to include those prior year advance pledges, St. Francis achieved 98% of the Pledge goal.

Operating expenses totaled \$274,574 in 2022; a 9.3% increase over 2021. This was to be expected as the world emerged from a more “locked-down” environment to a world where we started to return to “in person” worship and community engagement. Ramping up for some property maintenance projects postponed planned budgeted expenditures in 2022, resulting in some reduced 2022 expenses. Hence, Operating Expenses came in at \$16,000 under budget. Again, economies continue to be realized by the Rector’s voluntary benefit choices. 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 deficit of \$18,591.82 for the period.

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 \$328,570. This does not include the \$110,164.38 (which includes Valuation Adjustments through December 2022) in the Mission and Ministry Fund. No plan to access any portion of this fund was contemplated for revenue needs in 2023. The plan for 2023 provides a revenue forecast that consistent with 2022. The expense forecast has been substantially impacted by inflation; most notably in utility cost increases across the board for all properties. While our leadership diligently “locked –in” an aggressive oil commitment, our oil budget increases by almost \$9,000 or 64%. While 2022 brought some continued uncertainty into the lives of the members of the St. Francis community, some positives also emerged. Pledge commitments seem to starting to trend positive which is truly a blessing. That said, our plan tries to account for these “potentially level” revenues with a very “real” expense budget.

Our 2023 Budget is projecting a deficit of \$46,246.24. 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 \$266,150 or 1.84% less than our 2022 budgeted revenue. The expense plan calls for \$312,396.24 in budgeted expenses; a \$21,742 increase over 2022’s budgeted expenses. Utility increases account for almost half of the increased budget. The budget for property care expense also increased by over 13%.

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 2023.

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 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 86 pledges for 2023 totaling more than \$255,000. Our average pledge is up to \$2,971 in 2023 from \$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 garden adjacent to our worship space again provided beauty and solace, a place to sit, pray and gather, as it bloomed and changed during the seasons. 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 furniture. The renovation expanded and simplified the available burial areas, which are all the areas covered by vinca.

The garden is available to all who wish to sit, meditate, pray, and gather. Even as we opened the worship space, several folks chose to sit outside in the garden during services, and a portable speaker allowed them to hear and participate in the service, and communion was brought to them. In September we again gathered for our annual Parish Picnic, which had been in abeyance during the pandemic. As is our custom, in honor of St. Francis Day, 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.

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 Carolyn Schmidt. The vestry liaison this year was Mary Cook.

Please speak with any of the members if you would like further information regarding burials, would like to volunteer for assisting with garden maintenance, or are interested in learning about serving in this ministry. There is a brochure regarding the garden available in the Narthex, which we would gladly send to you upon request. Please speak with Fr. Pat if you are interested in learning more about the burial aspects of the garden.

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, and a paid weeder hired

to work an average of two hours per week. The beautiful potted flowers were planted by Lisa Marks of In Bloom Florist. The garden benefitted from the fall cleanup project.

Our parish property chair, Steve Henning, collaborated with the Memorial Garden Committee to assess current needs and to arrange for any needed maintenance. 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.

Respectfully submitted, Kathleen O'Connor

Fellowship Ministry

The Fellowship Ministry at St. Francis encompasses both hospitality and newcomer events. In March 2022, due to the continuing ordeal of COVID 19, our annual Shrove Tuesday jambalaya/pancake dinner was served to-go rather than the sit-down dinner we are usually able to enjoy with our church community. Despite this change, nearly 50 people were still able to bring home a delicious dinner lovingly prepared by the loyal Shrove Tuesday dinner crew! In September, for the first time since 2019, we held our annual picnic in the Memorial Garden. It was a beautiful day and a wonderful "Welcome Back" from summer vacations. Oktoberfest made its return for the first time in three years and was a well-attended, lively event, complete with German foods and beer specially brewed by the St. Francis brewmeisters! Coffee hour after the Sunday 10 am service has also returned, though we are not yet able to provide hosts every Sunday. Additionally, we were happy to welcome six new families to our congregation in 2022..

Respectfully submitted,
Dawn Rooke, committee member

Prayer Shawl Ministry

2022 was the 17th year of this active ministry. The group meets year-round, on the third Monday of the month, 10:00 am-12:00 noon. Some participants knit at home and drop off beautifully knit or crocheted shawls on the shawl stand in the narthex. This year 29 shawls were completed. Shawls are blessed on the 4th Sunday of the month. All are welcome to take part in this ministry that supports, as the blessing says, both hard times and times of joy. Yarn, knitting needles and instructions are available. Thank you to all who knit and crochet to support this ministry.

Senior Ministry

During this year, Senior Ministry continued to focus on Daytime Fellowship gatherings, once per month, on the second Thursday. The primary purpose of this Ministry remained on offering seniors at St. Francis (but open to any interested parish members, and guests), the opportunity to come together, enjoy coffee and light refreshments, and share points of discussion with one another. As well, occasional focused gatherings and journeys outside the church were planned.

During 2022, outside activities held:

- May: Visited St. Matthew's Episcopal in Worcester: viewed beautiful Tiffany-stained glass windows and listened to a review of the outstanding architecture.
- June: had lunch together at Val's restaurant in Holden

- October: Outdoor trip to New England Tower Hill to view Butterfly display and have lunch together in cafeteria.

Other activities:

- November: presentation by several members addressing “How can we help one another?”: Sharing of, and examination of resources available (e.g. Senior Centers which have many activities offered and support available). Also discussed, SNAP for Seniors, heating cost assistance, and some resources for end-of-life care.
- December: Conducted Advent Luncheon with Noonday Prayer: new activity open to all, and without charge to attendees. Appeared to be well received and will be reviewed for future repeat.
- Little Free Library: located on front lawn of church: this activity began during the pandemic and continues to offer free reading materials to St. Francis members, as well as the community. It is used quite often and is supported by book donations from the parish.
- AED (automated external defibrillator) project: Initially, this project was established by, and maintained by this Ministry. During 2022, the framework for setting up, and developing the teaching framework, was completed (delayed by the pandemic). The AED was permanently relocated to Fellowship Hall, a team of over 15 parish members volunteered (a number of whom have teaching this important response in their background); a program is now in place for learning, guidance and maintenance of the device. 20 parish members participated in the learning and are now ready to react to Cardiac emergencies. Under discussion, removing this project from the responsibility of the Senior Ministry to oversight yet to be determined.

Thank you to all who have participated in any component of this ministry. It is definitely a group activity!

Marge Tremblay, Coordinator

Property

Chair: Steve Henning; Members: Pat Perkins, Bryan Diehl

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) Book lending library was repaired after noticing side walls were developing cracks.
- 2) Fall outside cleanup was conducted on November 19 – many thanks to all who participated in this endeavor.
- 3) Church boiler was repaired by Brideau Energy on 3 separate occasions – motor for oil pump was found to be faulty and was replaced
- 4) Heating oil contract for the 2022/2023 heating season with Brideau Energy
- 5) Sacristy sink faucet was repaired by Beaudonin Plumbing.
- 6) Light bulb in in the outside cross was replaced David Currie.
- 7) New American flag was installed along with new clips for both flags
- 8) The light for the flag pole was replaced as well as a defective light sensor that controls the flag light and driveway entrance lights.

Deferred/temporary maintenance

Year Ahead Plans

- 1) We are at a critical point with the lighting in the nave. There is an immediate need to formulate a new lighting design and obtain cost for implementing the installation of the new lighting.

2) The upper windows in Fellowship Hall need replacing or refurbishing

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

MINISTRY TO THE WORLD

MISSION MINISTRIES

“WE ARE GIVERS, BEARING WITNESS TO CHRIST’S LOVE.”

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, Laundry Love and the Wachusett Food Pantry. 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 outreach efforts continued to be impacted by the COVID pandemic. Although great strides have been made by this country toward a return to a “new normalcy”, other economic factors have made food scarcity and homelessness even more dire than last year.

Our Mission Partner, the Mustard Seed (MS), was particularly hard hit. Nancy Pope, and her committee, were able to resume service of monthly hot meals, live and in person. The cost of providing those meals, however, increased by \$1000,00 per year to \$5200. More significantly, problems arose with keeping the shelves at the MS food pantry stocked. That pantry provides food to area families each week. It is a supermarket for those families. The pantry went from supplying weekly food to 15 to 20 families in Nov. of 2021 to 55 families and 15 individuals by June of 2022. Mission Ministries adopted a policy of helping where the need was greatest. In 2022, St. Francis fully stocked those shelves, on a number of occasions, with donations from our Food Drive, Mission Budget and cash or Hope for Housing Cards donated by generous parishioners. Michael Boover from the MS Board of Directors, is amazed at the generosity of St. Francis and described our parish as “quite the collaboration.”

The following opportunities to serve that were offered and responded to by St. Francis parishioners:

- **St. Francis Food Drive:** We continued our monthly Food Drives, collecting large amounts of Food for the MS, Abby’s House, Dismas Farm, the Wachusett Food Pantry and Walking Together. Rev. Meredyth Ward retired in June at which time Walking Together was dissolved. Laundry Love was then added as a donation beneficiary.

- **Heifer Living Gift Market:** On Palm Sunday, donations were collected for the Heifer Project International. The event included a live animal, coffee hour and the making of Resurrection Gardens with the Church School. We have been asked to make this an annual event.
- **Ukrainian War Refugees:** a special collection was undertaken to help refugees displaced by the War in Ukraine.
- **Special Collections:** Donations during our annual special collections at Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas were distributed to the Mustard Seed, the Wachusett Food Pantry and Episcopal Relief and Development for Ukraine and the Middle East.
- **Hope for Housing Cards** were sold to help the Worcester homeless or those about to become homeless. Cards were also purchased and donated to Abby's House, Mustard Seed and DCF, benefitting two organizations with one donation.
- **Mampong Babies Orphanage in Ghana:** \$1000 in loose change was donated.
- **Holden Crop Hunger Walk:** The Walk was back to being live this year. Overall, a record \$22,000 was raised with 14 parishioners walking in the walk or on their own. The Mustard Seed was added as a recipient of local funds with international funds benefitting the Ukraine.
- **Mini Holiday Fair and Pie and Wreath Sale:** With the help of the St. Clare Quilters, a few parishioners and friends and a committee consisting of Nancy Pope, Beth Ann Carrigan, Barbara Henning, Julie Russell, Tina Chen and Alison Milan, we sold baked goods and homemade sewn items to raise money for the Feeding Ministries' account. This account is not a budgeted account. It is independent from the Mission budget and financed by fundraising events. It is this account that enables us to provide meals for Mustard Seed and, if needed, Dismas Farm. Through these three events, we raised the funds needed to provide a year of meals. We are fully aware that this fair in conjunction with the sale of pies and wreaths at the same time was a lot to ask of this congregation. Ever mindful of not asking for too much, we will be re-evaluating these efforts for next year.
- **DCF Wonderfund Collection:** Gift cards were collected as Christmas gifts for teenage foster children. DCF was overwhelmed with the amount of our donation.

By listening to God's call to help one another and strengthen our relationship with our Mission partners donations were given from the \$7500 in our Mission Budget as follows:

- \$2000 to Abby's House for their Spring Fundraising Campaign and Christmas gifts for residents
- \$2250 to Mustard Seed for their summer camp, stock pantry shelves and Christmas gifts to residents.
- \$500 to Dismas for Christmas gift to the residents.
- \$100 to Nu-Day Syria to help provide warm clothing for refugees.
- \$1500 to Episcopal Relief and Development for Ukrainian refugees and disaster relief in Kentucky and Florida.
- \$325 to Dept of Children and Families – Christmas gifts cards for foster children.
- \$500 for relocation of Afghan refugees
- \$300 for Ted Talk honorariums to discussion leaders

We were able to hold our 7th Annual Spring Film Series this year. During COVID, we experimented with a TED talk, as opposed to, film format for this annual event. After two years of TED Talks, we have decided that this format is preferable to films. This will be the format moving forward. In 2022, our series was entitled, "**Nourishing the Soul with Humor and Compassion**". The purpose of the series was to make us laugh while giving us advice on how to live and serve in an ever-changing world. The third session was live, preceded by a Pizza Party. We plan to repeat this fellowship opportunity in 2023.

In addition to thanking all of you for your generosity there are many individuals who have worked very hard this year to accomplish all that is outlined herein. At the risk of leaving someone out, we will not name names. We must, however, give special mention to our mission partner and service organization liaisons, Kathleen O'Connor, Nancy Pope, Rev. Jane Griesbach and Carolyn Schmidt, the St. Clare Quilters and Mini Fair Committee. **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 sacrifice of their time and talents. Those individuals are Mary Ann Barbato, Anita Collins, Barbara Henning, Jane Griesbach, Karen Kappes, Esteban Loustaunau, Nicole McGurin, Mary Jude Pigsley and Marge Tremblay.

Finally, we are always looking for new members to join our group. Anyone interested in joining Mission Ministries should contact myself or a Ministry member.

Respectfully submitted by:

Julie Russell, Mission Ministries Chairperson

Mustard Seed

The Mustard Seed celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2022. St. Francis helped to plan and execute events that included a volunteer dinner celebration at which Father Pat served as Chaplin. Featured speakers included a Mustard Seed client-volunteer, Jennie Bastine, who told her story of growing up with food insecurity. Jean McMurray, director of the Worcester County Food Bank spoke about the need to end hunger and how the needs of the community have grown.

In July a block party was held for the guests and neighbors of the Mustard Seed. It was an amazing joy filled event with a small petting zoo for the children who have never seen live farm animals. Volunteers from St. Francis grilled burgers and hot dogs, served lunches and organized games and sports to play. It was a wonderful experience to enjoy time with the Mustard Seed community.

St. Francis donated \$1000 to the Mustard Seed for its second year of summer camp. The camp provides educational support for the children from the neighborhood who do not have the opportunity to leave the streets of Worcester. Camp was extended two weeks from 2021, with two meals being served each day. Volunteer teachers came from Clark University and Holy Cross College. Plans are in the works to expand the camp for 2023.

While planning for these events the Mustard Seed Jubilee Board began to discuss the question, "Why is the Mustard Seed still needed after 50 years?"

Taking action to end hunger in Worcester became the goal. A "Summit on Hunger" was held after months of connecting with the 15 Worcester social service agencies that deal with hunger issues. Connections were made with UMASS Memorial Hospital, the Regional Environmental Council, the Worcester County Food Bank, Bread for the World, Friendly House and Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester.

There was a study on the state of food security in Worcester and it was found that 8.6% of the population is food insecure. The Mustard Seed food pantry in 2021-2022 more than doubled. They are now serving 90 families and individuals.

In August 2022 the Summit on Food Insecurity & Hunger was held at AME Belmont Zion Church. Attendees included Rev. Canon Rich Simpson, Rev. Jane Greisbach, Congressman Jim McGovern, Julie Russell and religious leaders representing many different faiths who are already invested in the issue of food insecurity and food sovereignty.

Words can not adequately express the gratitude for the dedication that St. Francis has shown to the Mustard Seed throughout another tough year. The assistance of the Mission Committee has been instrumental as they continue to collect food monthly, which is vital to sustaining the Mustard Seed food pantry.

Many thanks to our committed bakers who baked for the Mustard seed. A huge thanks to all involved; Beth Carrigan, Laura Caswell, Tina Chen, Barbara Henning, Alison Milan, Catherine Nash, Lucy Nowak, Kathleen O'Connor and Tom Ritacco.

We also have many bakers who quietly leave goodies as the spirit moves them, cooks who produce a well balanced hot meal and shoppers who never fail to hunt down the best prices for all the ingredients.

The serving team has doubled in size allowing for food service and serving the guests in a much more personal way, connecting with them by name and sharing in fellowship during dinner. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve this community.

“If you cannot feed a hundred people, then feed just one.”

-Mother Teresa

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy L Pope

Dismas Farm

Dismas farm, situated on a hilltop in Oakham, is a beautiful place on many levels. Up to 13 formerly incarcerated men, petition the courts for a placement at the farm before re-entering society as a whole. It's a working farm. Once there, the men do all the chores. Some of the harvest is sold at local farmers markets. The vegetables are also sold at the Oakham site. Chickens, sheep, goats, sometimes pigs, and two adorable mini horses round out the working inhabitants of the farm. Different churches and organizations bring a complete dinner during week nights. St. Francis is responsible for dinner once per month. Throughout the pandemic we cooked and delivered the meal. Now, once again, we sit down inside to eat with the men. Conversation is always lively. And the men do all the dishes!

While it is always dangerous to name names, for fear of leaving someone out, those presently involved are: Nicole McGurin and her boys, Catherine Nash, Phyllis Pomerleau, Chris Berkquist, Jane Griesbach, Peggy Prynosi, David Chenevert and Sally Holden. We work in teams so we're only called upon a few times each year. The folks in Mission Ministries give Walmart gift cards at Christmas to each of the men in residence. Also, a parishioner supplied gift cards to Dunkin' Donuts. The men were so thankful!

If you wish to become involved in this ministry, just ask Jane and she'll put you on a team.

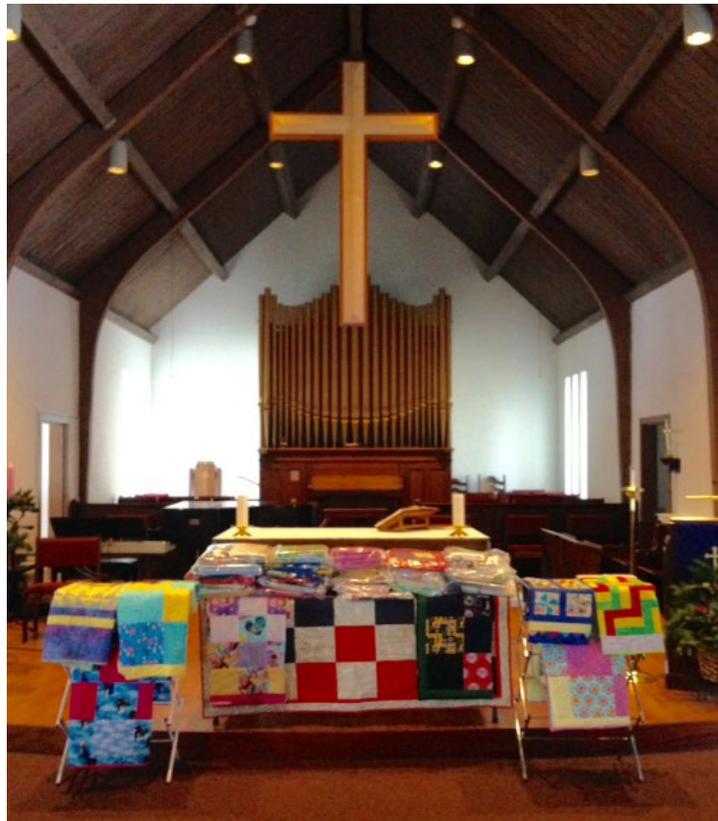
Faithfully, S. Jane Griesbach

Quilting at St. Frances, St. Clare Quilters

The St. Clare Quilters, who began working together in mid-2017, includes beginners to far more experienced quilters. The group designs and makes small quilts for donation. To date, the group has donated approximately 165 quilts. The quilt designs are simple, cotton and flannel, intended for warmth and comfort. The group is extremely grateful for generous fabric and batting donations and our personal stashes of fabric which have made this effort possible. Currently the fabric stash is low thus fabric donations will be appreciated.

During 2022 the group again met in person. The group's mission of donating quilts continues, for Abby's House or others who might need them. In November 2022, 27 quilts were blessed and delivered to Abby's House. The group also worked in connection with the Mission Ministries Committee to provide hand crafted items for the mini holiday fair (Dec. 2022) in support of the St. Francis feeding ministries.

The St. Clare quilters are Amy Chisholm, Betty Clark, Sue Delorme, Susan Dresley, Bev Giarusso, Roz Glanville, Barbara Henning and Julie Russell. Newcomers, both to quilting and this group, are welcomed and encouraged!



2023 Leadership Nominations

(Elected to serve one year term unless otherwise noted)

<u>SENIOR WARDEN</u>	Susan Bastardo
<u>JUNIOR WARDEN</u>	Craig Stanovich
<u>CLERK</u>	Dawn Rooke
<u>TREASURER</u>	Ann Tripp
<u>VESTRY:</u> Three-year terms	Tina Chen and Matt Surabian (terms expire 2026)
<u>DIOCESAN CONVENTION DELEGATES:</u>	Dick Delorme, Susan Bastardo, Dawn Rooke
<u>DIOCESAN CONVENTION ALTERNATES:</u>	Craig Stanovich and Bev Giarusso

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Vestry:

Term expires 2024:	Richard Dixon and Mary Jude Pigsley
Term expires 2025:	Mary Cook and Joy Head
Retiring:	Laura Caswell and Bryan Diehl

Memorial Garden: Appointed
Bev Giarusso, Michael Pope, Carolyn Schmidt, Kathleen O'Connor

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

Vestry Officers: *The following list of names will be presented to be elected to terms as defined in the note on page 24.*

Senior 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.

Junior Warden: Craig Stanovich

Jennifer and I have been members of St. Francis since 2000. I was received at St. Francis into the Episcopal Church in 2004. Both of our children, Chelsea and Nicholas, have participated in Church School as well as both being confirmed at St. Francis. After previously serving on the Vestry, and also serving as both Junior and Senior Warden, I have had the privilege of chairing Stewardship for the last several years. In addition, in conjunction with our Rector, I was honored to lead an outstanding RenewalWorks mission team – focusing on the importance of spiritual growth at St. Francis. I have also been a member of the Vestry since 2020 and have served as the Usher Coordinator for the last decade. As an Usher Coordinator, it has been my pleasure to greet St. Francis members at the 10:00 AM service as well as welcome visitors. I am honored to again be nominated for the Junior Warden as the faith community of St. Francis is a vital part of my life. My hope is to continue to welcome and invite folks into participating in our ministries so that they, too, can experience the blessings that have been bestowed on me at St. Francis.

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:

Tina Chen

Christina (Tina) Chen found a church home at St. Francis after being formed by her experiences in the Congregational Church (UCC) and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Tina was received in 2013. She is grateful for the worship and mission opportunities offered by the warm and welcoming members of this community. She has served as an usher, lector and lay eucharistic minister, reader for Morning Prayer at the Holden Nursing Home, and baker for the Mustard Seed meals. Since retiring from Holy Cross in the summer of 2022 she has become more involved, coordinating the bake sale for the recent Holiday Mini-Fair, serving guests at Mustard Seed, knitting prayer shawls, and ringing with the Bell Choir. With her husband, Hugh McElaney, she lives in Princeton.

Matt Surabian

When he's not helping grill at the church picnic or teaching Sunday school for our littlest parishioners, Matt is probably working outside on his small West Boylston homestead with his wife Taryn, son Oscar, and daughter Saoirse. Work experience wise, Matt is co-founder of a technology consulting agency that helps large organizations with automation. He has previously served in vestry at Christ Episcopal church in Medway where he helped organize community fundraisers and enable the use of credit card payments for church events and annual giving.

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.

Susan Bastardo: see bio above

Dawn Rooke: see bio above

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

Craig Stanovich: 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)

2022 Financial Information - Page Intentionally Left Blank. For financial information, please contact the church office.