



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
OF SAINT MARY

43 Foreside Road · Falmouth, Maine 04105 · 207-781-3366 · www.smary.org · smary@smary.org

REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Sunday 28 January 2024

2023 Parish Activity Report



Photo by Peter Guyton on Christmas Eve 2017

The Reverend Nathan Wilson Ferrell, Rector
The Reverend Matthew Simpson, Deacon

Table of Contents

2024 Annual Meeting Agenda	page 3
2023 Annual Meeting Minutes	page 4-5
Voter Qualifications	page 5
Slate of Nominations for 2024	page 5
Biographies for 2024 Vestry & Treasurer Nominees	page 6-7
Financial Reports from the Budget and Finance Committee	
2023 Statement of Financial Position - Balance Sheet	page 7
3-year Actuals with Operating Budget 2023 and 2024	page 8
2023 Change in Funds Balances	page 9
2023 Summary of Invested Funds	page 9
Budget Comments	page 10-11
Rector Report	page 12
Deacon Report	page 13
Wardens Reports	page 14
Committee, Guild, & Ministry Reports	page 14-29
How we CELEBRATE	
Acolytes	page 15
Altar Flower Guild	page 15
Altar Guild	page 16
Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, and Euch. Visitors	page 16
Kneeler Guild	page 15
Music Ministry	page 15-17
Ushers	page 18
How we HONOR	
CARE Team	page 19
Churchyard Committee	page 19
Adult Formation	page 20
Formation Hour on Sundays	page 20
Be Still on Sunday	page 20
Be Still/Centering Prayer on Monday Evenings	page 21
Compass of Compassion	page 21
Merton Group	page 21
Quiet Mornings	page 21
Wisdom Seekers	page 22
Youth Programs	
Guiding RAY	page 22-23
Youth Service Corps – see Deacon Report	
Hospitality	page 23
Coffee Hour	page 24
Memorial Reception	page 24
Prayer Partners	page 25
Prayer Shawls	page 25
How we SERVE:	
Altar Flower Delivery	page 25
Blood Drives	page 26
Buildings and Grounds	page 26-27
Meal Train/ Casserole Ministry	page 27
Office Angels	page 27
Outreach	page 27-28
Souper Supper	page 29
Helping Hands at Home	page 29
Stewardship: Annual Giving	page 29
Stewardship: Planned Giving	page 29
Fundraisers	page 30
2023 Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of Maine	page 31
Clergy, Staff & 2024 Vestry	page 31
Our Parish during 2023	page 32

The Episcopal Church of Saint Mary

Annual Meeting of the Parish

Sunday 28 January 2024

OUR MISSION: At The Episcopal Church of Saint Mary, we are building authentic, vibrant, Christ-centered community as we ...

- ❖ **CELEBRATE** the goodness of God and the gift of life,
- ❖ **HONOR** the presence of Christ in one another, and
- ❖ **SERVE** the world in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Schedule for Sunday 28 January 2024

- 9:15 AM One Choral Eucharist
10:30 Brunch
10:45 Parish Business Meeting
11 approx. Foundation 135 Presentation

Annual Meeting Agenda

Report on Quorum and Call to Order	Janet Bowne
Approval of 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes	Janet Bowne
Report of Nominating Committee + Wardens, Vestry members, Diocesan Convention delegates	Tom LaPlante
Election of the Slate	Janet Bowne
Election of new Nominating Committee	Janet Bowne
Bylaws Amendment	Nathan Ferrell
Review of 2023 Finances and 2024 Budget	Peter Guyton
Acknowledgments and Thanks	Steve Conley
Necrology: remembering our faithful departed	Nathan Ferrell
Foundation 135 Presentation	
Adjournment, Blessing, and Dismissal	Nathan Ferrell

The Episcopal Church of Saint Mary

Annual Meeting Minutes: Sunday 29 January 2023

10:57 am. Welcome from Janet Bowne, Senior Warden

Steve Conley, Junior Warden, declared a Quorum.

The minutes from the Annual Meeting from January 2022 were presented. Len Taylor made a motion to approve them. Stan Eaton seconded. The motion carried. Thank you to Jan Mordarski for taking the minutes for the Annual Meeting. Thank you to the people who prepared the delicious food enjoyed by all today.

Nomination Committee Report reported by Darren Clark

Darren presented the following nominees on behalf of the Nominating committee (Darren Clark, Rick Hirschman, Tommy Pettingill, Marian McCue, and Nadine Timberlake.)

Senior Warden: Janet Bowne (two-year term)

Junior Warden: Steve Conley (fulfilling Aaron Splint's remaining one-year term)

Treasurer: Peter Guyton (two-year term)

Two Year term: Darren Clark (fulfilling Steve Conley's remaining term)

Three Year term: Kathy Galen, Patrick Murray, Ben Russell (terms expire in January 2026)

Convention Delegates: Lucy Ellis, Jessica LaPlante, Bonny Rodden, Nadine Timberlake with Tim Shannon as alternate.

Pat Peard moved to accept the slate and Ed Ainsworth seconded. The motion carried.

Election of Nominating Committee 2024: Father Nathan presented the need for a nominating committee for new vestry members for 2024. These will be Tom LaPlante, Pat Peard and Rudy Israel.

Stan Eaton moved to accept, and Jim Stoddard seconded. All approved.

Budget/Financial Review presented by Ben Parks-Stamm, treasurer.

2022 ended with an operating deficit of \$34,363. Income from pledges, loose offerings and decreased use of the Parish House combined with many increased expenses created the deficit.

We will work throughout the year to add revenue and cut expenses.

The treasurer and Vestry have been considering self-managing the endowment funds through an investment company as the Trustees of the Diocese have not been able to provide complete and timely information about said endowment funds. A decision regarding the funds will be made in the near future.

Ben offered special thanks to

—Beth Shaw, Parish Administrator, for her efficient and frugal management of the budget

—The Sparkles Team for fund raising more than \$16,000

—The Buildings and Grounds Committee for putting in so many volunteer hours keeping the Church, the Parish Hall, the Rectory and the Grounds in excellent condition.

Steve Conley thanked all for coming to the 2023 Annual Meeting and gave special thanks to many people who have helped provide leadership and help during the past two difficult years.

Necrology: We remembered our faithful departed in prayer led by Father Nathan. Those named were Robert Cheney, Tom Donaldson, John Fournier, Alice Harding, Pat Kinkade, Dawn Peterson, Hannah L. Russell, Aaron Splint, Lincoln F. Stelk, Kathryn Street, Jane Record Frick, Stephen Smithwick, and Thomas H. Troeger.

VISION Discussion led by Kerry Bennett

We discussed the future of the music program in the wake of Bruce Fithian's retirement. We recognize that we have a strong musical tradition here at Saint Mary's. Our goal is to build on that reputation. Kerry led a discussion on what the assembled parishioners valued and hoped for in the years to come.

1. Having choir in front is a nice change, but it was pointed out that if that happens very often, we need a better piano. Some expressed the feeling that they like the sound of the organ and voices behind.
2. We enjoy evening contemplative Evensong and hope that can continue.
3. We voiced much appreciation of Bruce and his knowledge as well as talent.
4. There was a suggestion that some quiet opening music for the 8:00 service would be a good addition.

5. There was the some suggestion that more contemporary music might be more engaging to younger people. One of the younger people said she liked the traditional music and that is one of the things that brought her to Saint Mary's. Perhaps a combination or once a month.
6. There was mentioned to consider that the Psalms be sometimes spoken and not always chanted.
7. Kathleen Scott (who has stepped in to be our music director) suggested that this important discussion of music traditions should be continued.

We also recognized the importance of offering a solid and welcoming children's program. Kerry led a discussion on how that program might look in the future, especially as we are distanced from the COVID pandemic.

Guiding RAY: Meg Hurdman has volunteered to lead until June. Discussions followed:

1. Discussion of needs for infants to 18-year-olds
2. Consider other uses for downstairs space, ie pre/after school or special youth groups.
3. Apparent detriment with no summer program.
4. Involve children more with actual service—help with readings or have children's sermons.
5. At one time there was "Sunday School" after school during week
6. Reinstitute Family Chapel
7. Important to have handouts to take home and learn little songs.
8. Involve youth in community service projects.
9. Youth Group for Middlers and Seniors needed.
10. Youth Choir
11. Involve parents in kids' programs.

We will continue the discussion about the music program on Sunday February 5 and about Youth Programs on Sunday February 19. Both discussions will be held at the 9:15 coffee hour.

12:10 Alice Brock made a motion for adjournment which was seconded by Ed Ainsworth. The motion carried.

Submitted by: Jan Mordarski, Clerk

Voter Qualifications

According to the Constitution and Bylaws of Saint Mary's, membership in the parish and voting privileges at the annual parish meeting are defined as:

"Any person age fifteen years or older, who has attended and supported the Church for six months and accepts its Constitution, shall be considered a voting member of the Parish. Members who have not attended or supported the Church for a year may cease to be a voting member of the Parish."

Slate of Nominations for the Year 2024

Our parish needs to elect Wardens, Treasurer, fill positions on the Vestry, and to elect delegates to Diocesan Convention. We are grateful for the following parish members who have agreed to serve in the following ways, if elected by the parish at this meeting:

Vestry:

Senior Warden: Steve Conley (*fulfilling Janet Bowne's remaining one year term*)

Junior Warden: Tom LaPlante

Three-year terms: Melissa Kane, Valerie Kyros, and Pat Peard (*terms expire in January of 2027*)

Convention Delegates: Four in 2024, based upon our 2022 Average Sunday Attendance.

Nominations for Convention Delegates are: Bonny Rodden, MaryAnn McLean, Lynne Shepherd, and Nadine Timberlake, with Fred Webber as Alternate.

Respectfully submitted,

The Nominating Committee: Tom LaPlante, Rudy Israel and Pat Peard

Candidate Biographies

Steve Conley, Senior Warden

Steve Conley has lived in Falmouth for 23 years and was formerly a communicant of Holy Martyr's in Falmouth. In 2011, he met Michele Duvall who has attended S. Mary's for over 14 years with her daughters Kayla and Amber. Steve began attending S. Mary's with them shortly after they met, and he received confirmation into the Episcopal Church by Bishop Thomas in 2019. Steve and Michele were married by Bishop Brown at Saint Mary's on January 9, 2022.

Steve has a degree in Economics from the University of Maine and has worked in the health insurance industry for 30 years. He has worked for the last 17 years with Harvard Pilgrim healthcare as an account manager and new business sales representative for large groups. Steve is the proud father to 3 sons, Patrick, Ryan and Griffin and lucky stepfather to Kayla and Amber. In his spare time, Steve enjoys running and has completed over 40 marathons and ultra marathons, including the last 14 consecutive Boston Marathons.



Tom LaPlante, Junior Warden

Tom is a life-long Mainer, growing up in Auburn. He was raised Catholic and was received into the Episcopal Church in 2003 when his oldest two sons were confirmed. Tom has filled many leadership roles at Saint Mary's and can be counted on to assist on Sunday mornings.

Tom is an IT Manager at LL Bean and has worked there for nearly 27 years. Outside of work, he loves to golf, travel, and hang out with his dog, Penny. He lives in Falmouth with his wife Jessica; they have three grown sons.



Melissa Kane, Vestry Member

Melissa has been a member of the Church of S. Mary the Virgin for almost thirty years. She and her husband, Jim Kane, raised their three children (Jamie, Michael, and Jennifer) at S. Mary's, and it was a big part of their lives. Melissa was raised in the Congregational Church, and Jim was raised a Catholic; together they found their religious and spiritual home at S. Mary's. Melissa previously served on the Vestry and has been a part of many different guilds and committees over the years, including altar flowers, hospitality, religious education, kneelers, and kitchen redesign.

Melissa looks forward to joining the Vestry and re-engaging in the life of the parish. Outside of S. Mary's, Melissa retired from CIEE (Council on International Educational Exchange) two years ago; and she finds great joy in gardening, cooking, floral arranging and spending time with family, especially the most recent addition, her first grandchild, Everly. Melissa currently volunteers at the Flower Box at Maine Medical Center and S. Elizabeth's Essentials Pantry and participates in S. Mary's Garden Club.



Valerie Kyros, Vestry Member

Valerie is a long-time member of Saint Mary's since moving to Maine in 1996. She's been an active member, helping to found of our annual Sparkles fair. She is currently a member of the Kneeler Guild.

Valerie grew up in the Washington, DC area and is a graduate of Mount Vernon College with a BA in Business Management. She has owned several businesses in Maine, including an interior design business, a retail store in downtown Portland, and a bed and breakfast in Falmouth. She is the mother of two grown children and has one grandchild: all live locally in the Portland area.

Valerie is currently a member of The Maine Golf Development Committee, raising money for the First Tee of Maine and their learning center in Freeport. She is a former board member of The Children's Museum of Maine. She has an active history with fundraising events with both organizations. She is an avid golfer and loves to needlepoint, cook & bake, and entertain friends.



Patricia Peard, Vestry Member

Pat is a retired attorney who practiced at Bernstein Shur in Portland for thirty years. She was a litigator and was Practice Group Leader for the Labor and Employment Group and founded and chaired the Education Law Practice. Her clients included the University of Maine System, the University of New England, Bates College, College of the Atlantic and the Maine College of Art. She also represented thirteen private secondary schools and the Maine Association of Independent Schools. She was also fortunate to have represented the Episcopal Bishop, Chilton Knudsen, in a lawsuit for the Church. Finally, she was honored to serve on the firm's Board of Directors for 20 years.

Another important part of her life in Maine was using her legal skills in court cases and in leadership in referenda campaigns to help secure equal rights for LGBTQ+ individuals and families of Maine. She continues to pursue these issues in retirement.

She grew up in Baltimore, Maryland and was baptized and confirmed in the Presbyterian Church. She was received in the Episcopal Church by Bishop Brown at Saint Mary's in November 2019.

She and her wife, Alice Brock, have lived in the Portland area since 1983.



Saint Mary's Financial Reports *(unaudited)*

Saint Mary's 2023 Balance Sheet *(unaudited)*

	12/31/2020	12/31/2021	12/31/2022	12/31/2023	12/31/2022
ASSETS					
Current Assets					
Checking/Savings					
Bank of America - Operating Account					
General Fund	97,964.21	97,000.71	94,135.55	63,301.41	94,135.55
Souper Supper Fund	232.79	1,132.37	1,297.28	2,503.92	1,297.28
Alter Flower Fund	3,191.99	2,698.93	2,623.46	1,443.92	2,623.46
Kneeler Fund	2,342.69	2,342.69	3,292.69	100.00	3,292.69
Churchyard Fund		580.00	6,515.00	850.00	6,515.00
Capital Projects Fund	11,507.57	9,179.82	6,174.93	19,887.50	6,174.93
Memorial Reception Fund	508.85	508.85	508.85	508.85	508.85
Long Creek Youth Ctr Fund	737.75	737.75	737.75	737.75	737.75
Outreach Fund	3,069.21	2,069.21	2,180.63	2,180.63	2,180.63
Sabbatical Fund			2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
Music	1,790.00	1,790.00	-	-	-
Royal School of church Music	2,400.29	2,400.29	2,400.29		2,400.29
Furniture Fund	550.43	550.43	550.43		550.43
Vestments Fund	1,513.54	1,108.65	1,108.65	1,533.07	1,108.65
In Her Presence					
Garden Redesign	-	(286.00)	-	-	-
Total Bank of America Operating Account	125,809.32	121,813.70	124,025.51	95,547.05	124,025.51
Charles Schwab	-	2,684.07	-	-	-
BoA-Restricted Funds					
BoA - S. Mary's Discretionary	5,162.48	2,645.46	4,528.15	3,206.80	4,528.15
Cash and Cash Equivalents	130,971.80	127,143.23	128,553.66	98,753.85	128,553.66
Accounts Receivable					
Accounts Receivable	-	-	-	-	-
Total Current Assets	130,971.80	127,143.23	128,553.66	98,753.85	128,553.66
Other Assets					
S Mary Long-term Investment Account				2,057,819.84	
S Mary Short-term Investment Account				92,156.95	
JM Brown Memorial Fund	513,353.04	580,753.11	580,753.11	-	580,753.11
Music & Organ Fund					
Mellic G. Estes Fund	17,794.35	20,138.64	20,138.64		20,138.64
Sabbatical Fund	9,213.86	13,033.29	13,033.29		13,033.29
Churchyard Fund	88,073.78	101,713.43	101,713.43		101,713.43
CEW Worship Fund	496,946.92	561,981.69	561,981.69		561,981.69
Buildings & Grounds Endowment	512,494.94	580,131.14	580,131.14		580,131.14
Programs Endowment	259,605.29	292,612.01	292,612.01		292,612.01
Total Other Assets	1,897,482.18	2,150,363.31	2,150,363.31	2,149,976.79	2,150,363.31
TOTAL ASSETS	2,028,453.98	2,277,506.54	2,278,916.97	2,248,730.64	2,278,916.97
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS					
Liabilities					
Current Liabilities					
Accrued Interest - NSB Loan				384.38	2,400.25
Deferred Income - Other	47,150.00	300.00	2,400.25		
Norway Savings Bank LCC loan					
Pledge Prepayment	46,950.06	25,493.73	57,188.68	64,753.26	57,188.68
Total Current Liabilities	94,100.06	25,793.73	59,588.93	65,137.64	59,588.93
Total Liabilities	94,100.06	25,793.73	59,588.93	65,137.64	59,588.93
Net Assets					
Opening Balance Net Assets	503,411.28	503,411.28	503,411.28	503,411.28	503,411.28
Retained Earnings	1,309,777.71	1,430,942.67	1,748,301.53	1,715,916.76	1,748,301.53
Net Income	121,164.93	317,358.66	(32,384.77)	(35,735.04)	(32,384.77)
Total Net Assets	1,934,353.92	2,251,712.61	2,219,328.04	2,183,593.00	2,219,328.04
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	2,028,453.98	2,277,506.54	2,278,916.97	2,248,730.64	2,278,916.97

Summary of Activity & Budget *(unaudited)*

Operating Account	Actual 2022	Budget 2023	Actual 2023	Budget 2024
Revenue				
General Support				
General Pledges	244,067.64	290,000.00	278,033.60	290,000.00
Non-Pledge Payments	16,256.00	8,500.00	21,994.49	20,000.00
Loose Offerings	7,899.50	7,500.00	17,627.28	16,000.00
Prior Year Pledges	2,062.00	1,500.00	420.00	1,500.00
Special Offerings	3,064.64	2,500.00	3,200.00	2,500.00
Unrestricted Gifts	17,760.00	2,000.00	18,523.32	3,750.00
Use of Parish House	13,558.51	12,000.00	12,130.77	14,000.00
Use of Worship Space	4,603.30	3,000.00	6,800.25	8,000.00
General Fundraisers	16,458.87	18,000.00	24,821.98	24,750.00
Dedicated Revenues				
Altar Flowers	1,805.00	1,000.00	1,148.97	1,250.00
Capital Projects	21,549.00	1,000.00	3,075.58	1,000.00
Churchyard	5,935.00		2,700.00	2,500.00
Kneelers	950.00		300.00	
Dedicated Revenue - Other			424.42	
Outreach				
Souper Supper	2,880.00	3,000.00	4,079.80	2,500.00
Funds Received for Transmittal to Other Organizations	2,118.00		10,818.54	
Other Outreach Revenue	2,411.42		-	
Total Outreach	<u>7,409.42</u>	<u>3,000.00</u>	<u>14,898.34</u>	<u>2,500.00</u>
Dedicated Revenues	37,648.42	5,000.00	22,547.31	7,250.00
Other Operating Revenues	-	-	9.82	-
Total General Support	363,378.88	350,000.00	406,108.82	387,750.00
Income Distributions from Invested Funds	78,562.69	72,500.00	99,579.93	82,000.00
Suspense Clearing Accounts				
Suspense - Wedding and Funerals	-			
Suspense - Garden Redesign	-			
Suspense-Contributions to Restricted Funds/Investments	-			
Suspense - Other	-	-	-	-
Total Revenues	441,941.57	422,500.00	505,688.75	469,750.00
Expenses				
Diocesan Assessment	54,186.00	60,550.00	60,550.08	56,143.00
Personnel Expenses	240,848.50	235,960.99	244,290.83	284,888.65
Buildings and Grounds				
Maintenance	32,866.64	32,000.00	37,324.72	29,000.00
Fuel	18,385.72	30,517.27	20,450.92	29,553.57
Electricity	6,400.53	8,843.83	7,257.48	8,335.15
Water & Sewer	5,411.27	5,595.00	5,786.64	5,775.00
Telephone	5,726.67	6,100.00	6,155.77	6,113.33
Waste Removal	586.12	1,000.00	945.33	1,000.00
Professional Cleaning	5,948.11	7,700.00	7,488.30	7,700.00
Property/Worker's Comp Ins	19,324.00	19,925.00	20,141.00	22,728.00
Taxes	6,606.15	7,700.00	7,768.32	7,996.06
Buildings and Grounds	<u>101,255.21</u>	<u>119,381.10</u>	<u>113,318.48</u>	<u>118,201.11</u>
Other Operating Expense				
Office Supplies and & Repairs	7,440.87	8,707.20	6,276.78	8,707.20
Postage	566.00	800.00	742.13	800.00
Advertising	16.13	100.00	11.87	100.00
Vestry/Diocesan Expenses	614.75	250.00	368.25	250.00
Professional Fees	388.00	624.00	440.00	432.00
Printed Materials			360.00	
Miscellaneous Expense	915.79	500.00	517.30	500.00
Other Operating Expense - Other	-	-	-	600.00
Other Operating Expense	<u>9,941.54</u>	<u>10,981.20</u>	<u>8,716.33</u>	<u>11,389.20</u>
Program Expense				
Worship Expense	4,086.07	5,400.00	6,961.61	6,400.00
Christian Formation	2,885.56	3,920.00	4,757.11	5,900.00
Hospitality	1,539.45	1,600.00	2,712.82	2,250.00
Music	11,457.25	11,850.00	10,914.39	11,850.00
Outreach	20,859.09	7,000.00	19,353.89	10,000.00
Special Programs/Events	1,838.46	750.00	1,251.15	1,000.00
Program Expense	<u>42,665.88</u>	<u>30,520.00</u>	<u>45,950.97</u>	<u>37,400.00</u>
Major Improvements and Capital Expenditures	25,903.89	1,000.00	30,722.09	4,000.00
Other Expenses	(286.00)	-	-	-
Total Expenses	474,515.02	458,393.29	503,548.78	512,021.96
Change in Operating Account before Principal Distributions	(32,573.45)	(35,893.29)	2,139.97	(42,271.96)

Saint Mary's 2023 Change in Funds Balances *(unaudited)*

Fund Name	Balance 1/1/2023	Revenue/ Contributions	Investment Income Net of Expenses	Expense/ Distributions	Gains/(Losses)	Transfers	Balance 12/31/2023
Operating Account							
General Fund	34,546.62	483,556.04	-	(485,952.99)	9.82	(33,995.72)	(1,836.23)
Designated Funds							
Souper Supper	1,297.28	4,079.80		(2,873.16)			2,503.92
Altar Flowers	2,623.46	1,148.97		(2,328.51)			1,443.92
Kneelers	3,292.69	300.00		-		(3,492.69)	100.00
Churchyard	6,515.00	2,700.00				(8,365.00)	850.00
Capital Projects	6,174.93	3,075.58		(1,575.58)		12,212.57	19,887.50
Memorial Receptions	508.85	-					508.85
Long Creek Youth Center	737.75	-		-			737.75
In Her Presence	-			-			-
Outreach	2,180.63	-					2,180.63
Sabbatical	2,500.00					-	2,500.00
Music	-						-
Royal School of Church Music	2,400.29					(2,400.29)	-
Furniture	550.43					(550.43)	-
Vestments	1,108.65					424.42	1,533.07
Funds Received for Transmittal		10,818.54		(10,818.54)			-
Worship		-					-
Garden Redesign	-	-					-
Other Dedicated Funds							-
Total Designated Funds	29,889.96	22,122.89	-	(17,595.79)	-	(2,171.42)	32,245.64
Total Operating Account	64,436.58	505,678.93	-	(503,548.78)	9.82	(36,167.14)	30,409.41
Discretionary Fund	4,528.15	1,000.00		(2,321.35)			3,206.80
Legacy Capital Campaign	-	-		-			-
Total All Cash Funds	68,964.73	506,678.93	-	(505,870.13)	9.82	(36,167.14)	33,616.21
Investment Funds	2,150,363.31	-	27,171.45	(115,924.80)	-	13,812.92	2,149,976.79
Total All Funds	2,219,328.04	506,678.93	27,171.45	(621,794.93)	-	13,803.10	2,183,593.00

Saint Mary's 2023 Summary of Invested Funds *(unaudited)*

	1/1/2023	Contributions	of Expenses	Transfers	Distributions	(Loss)	12/31/2023
Long-term Investments		-	26,894.11	2,035,827.89	(97,446.89)	92,544.73	2,057,819.84
Short-term Investments		-	277.34	91,802.14	-	77.47	92,156.95
Unrestricted Investments							
J.M. Brown Fund	580,753.11	-	-	(550,508.79)		(30,244.32)	(0.00)
Unrestricted - Sub-total	580,753.11	-	-	(550,508.79)	-	(30,244.32)	(0.00)
Temporarily Restricted Investments							
Music & Organ Fund	-	-	-	(13,388.70)	-	13,388.70	-
Seminary/Sabbatical Fund	13,033.29	-	-	(12,861.63)	-	(171.66)	-
Churchyard Fund	101,713.43	-	-	(95,061.14)	-	(6,652.29)	-
Temporarily Restricted -Sub-total	114,746.72	-	-	(107,922.77)	-	(6,823.95)	-
Permanently Restricted Investments							
Millie G Estes Fund	20,138.64	-	-	-	(18,477.91)	(1,660.73)	-
CEW Worship Fund	561,981.69	-	-	(526,478.87)	-	(35,502.82)	-
Buildings & Grounds Endowment	580,131.14	-	-	(547,820.34)	-	(32,310.80)	(0.00)
Programs Endowment	292,612.01	-	-	(279,330.81)	-	(13,281.20)	-
Permanently Restricted - Sub-total	1,454,863.48	-	-	(1,353,630.02)	(18,477.91)	(82,755.55)	(0.00)
Owned Investments - Total	2,150,363.31	-	-	(2,012,061.58)	(18,477.91)	(119,823.82)	(0.00)

Investments Held by the Diocese of Maine for the Benefit of The Episcopal Church of Saint Mary							
	Balance 1/1/2023	Contributions	Income Net of Expenses	Transfers	Distributions	Gain or (Loss)	Balance 9/30/2023
John M Brown Fund	19,931.00	-	-	-	-	411.44	20,342.44
Alida Brown A Fund	3,714.49	-	-	-	-	76.44	3,790.93
Alida Brown B Fund	77,592.53	-	-	-	-	1,595.60	79,188.13
Mellie G. Estes Fund		18,477.91	-	-	-	(8,774.51)	9,703.40
John & CL Giffard Fund	22,668.25	-	-	-	-	465.22	23,133.47
Roger & Katherine Woodman Fund	110,362.38	-	-	-	-	2,265.25	112,627.63
Total	234,268.65	-	-	-	-	4,813.95	248,786.00

2023 and 2024 Budget Comments

To the members of Saint Mary's Parish

STARTING WITH UNKNOWNNS

We started 2023 with unknowns; here are three of the bigger ones:

First, as the year began, we still hadn't seen an endowment funds report in 15 months – the last set arrived in Sept of 2021. Would the Diocese resume sending us our endowment reports? Are we still confident in the Diocese as the manager of our endowment? We did receive the distribution checks, but no details. We also lacked an online portal to check on things. This all begged the question: Should we pull our money from the Diocesan funds and put our endowments in better staffed and more capable hands?

Secondly, we started the year knowing we had two part-time positions to fill: Music Minister and Family Minister. We did not know who would fill those roles, the timing of the hires, the salaries, nor did we know how to budget for the changes which would eventually occur.

Third, the campus was (and always is to some extent) in need of repairs and upgrades, but how much could Buildings and Grounds do themselves and how much would be needed from contractors? Would non-pledge donations help us meet the needs seen and unforeseen? These needs turned out to include a new refrigerator in the rectory, new dishwasher, repair to the air handler system in the basement, and a new rectory stove.

LOOKING BACK AT 2023

In looking back now, I can safely say Saint Mary's weathered these unknowns admirably. After an RFP process and a selection, the vestry voted in April to move our \$2 million in endowment investments to a new asset management firm, Harpswell Capital Advisors. The transfer to their custodian, Bank of New York, was successfully completed the week of July fourth.

On the personnel side, we hit a grand slam hiring Meg Hurdman to run our Family Ministry and the renowned James Kennerley, an amazing musical presence, to assume the role of Music Minister. Both individuals are highly appreciated and contribute to the new energy you can feel at Saint Mary's.

Buildings and Grounds came through with flying colors. They have a list of all completed projects addressed on the campus and it is a huge list indeed. We have not quantified the savings achieved through their efforts, but it is substantial and probably in the 5-figure range. Their efforts consistently allow us to do more with less cost and their work certainly helped us achieve our fine end-of-year result.

So with all the unknowns facing us last January, St Mary's did well in the last year and ended with a small budget surplus of \$2k.

REVENUES: General pledges for 2023 finished the year at **\$278,034**, \$12k below our budget of \$290,000. The good news is that pledges beat 2022 actuals by \$34k and landed ahead of 2019 and 2020 as well. Non-pledge payments, loose offerings, and revenue from use of the parish house and worship space were, together, \$23.7k over budget and all well above the year before. The Sparkles Team did it again, generating \$17,186 for the parish, \$5k higher than budget. Distributions from the endowment were also over budget by \$20k due to positive interest rate effects on the Diocese Funds fixed income portfolio.

Total revenue for 2023 landed us at \$505,589 compared to a budget of \$422,500 (and compared to prior year actual revenue of \$441,392). Our parishioners have continued to be incredibly generous during these inflationary times and we have kept costs in check.

EXPENSES: Total expenses for 2023 were \$503,549 – about \$45k over budget. \$14k of that overage came from capital expenditures and major improvements mostly funded by donations and bequests. Another \$13.3k of the overage is explained by engineering and design efforts led by Thornton Tomasetti, costs incurred in preparation for the Foundation 135 project. Personnel expenses ended the year \$8.3k over budget as a result of staffing changes in the second half of the year and increases in pension costs. Outreach expenses account for about \$12k of that overage, but that \$12k is almost entirely funded by the revenue from the special monthly collections. Fuel and electricity costs came in \$11k under budget in 2023 due to favorable gas prices, a mild winter, and pessimistic budgeting the year before. Buildings and Grounds, as mentioned, continued to help us avoid costly contractors.

THE ASSET SIDE:

Just a reminder: our opening endowment balances shown for 2023 still reflect the Sept 30, 2021 numbers (rather than Dec 31, 2022) because of the 15 month lack of reporting from the Diocese. The Diocese reporting finally resumed in Spring of 2023 (after an 18-month gap).

When I arrived in my role in late January, the RFP process to possibly choose a new funds manager had already been initiated by Ben Parks-Stamm, Garry Bowne and others. It was completed in March.

After that, the Vestry voted to move Saint Mary's investments. All funds were transferred and quickly reinvested around July 4th. We are now happy to have full transparency and up-to-date information regarding our investments and we can report our funds status monthly rather than quarterly. As perspective, the endowment funds of Saint Mary's will provide about \$82k of our income in 2024, or 17% of total income.

Also in 2023, because of a significant rise in interest rates and a healthy cash position earning zero interest, we moved some of our stable cash reserves to a short-term investments account to take advantage of those rates. The balance of our cash position plus these short-term investments is currently \$67k higher than at the beginning of 2023. This will give us some breathing room to start 2024. We expect money held in short term investments to generate between \$2.1k and \$3.5k for the church in 2024 (dependent on interest rates and balances of course).

The church does not have any significant long-term financial liabilities (debt or payables). The total balance in the parish's long term investment funds (endowment) was \$2,057,819.84 at the end of 2023.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

REVENUES:

The general pledges for 2024 were budgeted conservatively at \$290,000 in late November, \$12k higher than 2023 actuals and \$2k above what the church received in 2021. As of January 16, 2024, the Stewardship Committee reports that we have already received 2024 pledge commitments of just about \$310,000. Thus, we have already exceeded our pledge budget, in commitments, by \$20k. This is great news, and we cannot emphasize how important pledges are to our financial planning for the year. Pledges represent 62% of our total general support for 2024, thus with our endowment distributions, together these two funding sources represent 79% to 80% of our total revenues.

Outside of pledges, the 2024 budget reflects recent trends from other sources with loose offerings and non-pledge donations expected to bring in \$36,000 while use of Parish house and worship space should add another \$24k. All told, the total revenue budget is \$469,750 for 2024.

EXPENSES:

The total expense budget for 2024 is \$512,022. This is up 11.7% or \$53.6k compared to our 2023 budget, but it is only 7.4% above 2023 actuals (with capital projects removed to make a reasonable comparison). Most of the increase (about \$49k) is attributable to changes in personnel costs. The 2024 personnel budget includes the addition of the new Music Minister and Family Minister plus 3.5% (or a pro-rated 3.5%) cost of living adjustments.

With Personnel expenses removed, the 2024 budget is only 2.1% higher than the '23 budget. This is partially the result of lower fuel rates and better negotiated contracts, like the new snow plowing contract which will save us \$3,000 in 2024. Thank you again, Buildings and Grounds.

The new budget does not include significant new capital projects which are difficult to predict and budget. The Foundation 135 capital project will be run separately from our normal church finances.

Overall, the 2024 budget shows an operating deficit of \$42k. As reference, last year, Saint Mary's overcame a similar budget deficit of \$36k. While the budget deficit is greater than we'd like, it reflects our investment in the Family and Music Ministries and the fact that we are generally conservative in our budgeting process, witnessed by the fact that 2024 pledges already exceed the 2024 budget by \$20,000. We have a history of exceeding our revenue target and feel that in doing so again the 2024 budget deficit will not be an issue.

FINAL COMMENTS:

The preparation of the budget begins with the Budget and Finance Committee (BFC). After the BFC develops a preliminary budget, it is given to the Executive Committee (EXCOM) for input and suggestions. The BFC meets again to review the EXCOM suggestions and adjust. The Vestry received the 2024 budget initially at the November meeting for initial study and comments. The BFC reviewed the comments and made appropriate additions or reductions. Final Vestry approval was made at the December meeting.

Members of the BFC are available to meet with any member of the parish who might have questions or comments regarding the finances of the church. We also would welcome anyone interested to join the BFC. Please reach out to me if you have any questions or feedback.

Peter Guyton, Treasurer

2023 Annual Reports

Rector Report

The year 2023 at Saint Mary's was, thankfully, mostly ordinary and calm. The primary exceptions to this were changes in our parish staff due to a retirement and a resignation. In December 2022, Bruce Fithian retired as our long-time Organist and Choirmaster, while Jeff and Courtney Morgan resigned as our Guiding RAY Directors. In the process of finding new staff for these positions, I took the opportunity to make a few changes to the job descriptions and job titles. Since everything we do as a Christian community is shaped by our calling to share the Good News of God in Christ, we decided to re-name these positions to be our Music Minister and Family Minister. Rather than being focused on technical performance, it is important that these staff persons see their work primarily as ministry, and this change in titles hopefully reinforces that conceptual framework.



Skillful performance is also important, of course! In 2023, we were blessed to hire Meg Hurdman to serve as our Family Minister, after she graciously volunteered for the first six months of the year to fill the leadership vacuum left by the Morgan's departure. Under Miss Meg's leadership in the Fall of 2023, Guiding RAY experienced a full rebound to the participation levels seen before the pandemic began.

In the first half of 2023, Kathleen Scott served as our interim Music Minister. Her infectious energy and enthusiasm were instrumental in keeping our choir engaged and our worship uplifting. Then in August 2023, Saint Mary's hired James Kennerley to serve as our Music Minister. James came to us with world-class skill in leading choirs and playing the organ. In addition to this clear and obvious technical expertise, James is also a person with spiritual depth and excellent interpersonal skills. The choir is growing, and the congregation is regularly awed by the way in which James can make our organ reach its full potential.

As we end 2023 and look forward to a new year of mission and ministry together, I am very grateful for the staff that we now have serving alongside us. With Matthew Simpson as our Deacon, Beth Shaw as our Parish Manager, Meg Hurdman as our Family Minister, and James Kennerley as our Music Minister, Saint Mary's has an excellent staff team in place that is ready to assist our parish community in growing in our service to God and to the world around us. Thanks be to God!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nathan W. Ferrell +". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

The Reverend Nathan W. Ferrell, Tenth Rector of Saint Mary's

Deacon Report

I am very thankful to have completed one year of service here at The Church of Saint Mary. In my time as an ordained deacon this is my first placement to one parish. It has been fun to get used to this change and to embrace having one faith community as my spiritual home. This year, I have been faithful in my role in attending Sunday Worship and assisting with the administration of the sacraments. Through worship, fellowship and attending Adult Forums I have enjoyed getting to know this community on Sundays.



This year we were able to re-establish the Eucharistic Visitor Program. We did a training and have had visitors assigned most weeks in the event that persons requested the Eucharist during the week. St. Mary's has a unique "problem" in that we have more persons willing to go out and care for others by giving the Sacrament than we have people requesting it. A question for us is: if we have so many persons willing to give the Eucharist to the world, what may God be calling us to do?

Later in the year I worked in tandem with other clergy with the Youth Service Corps in our area. The Youth Service Corps is a group of middle and high school students who meet once a month to do service in the name of Jesus in the community. It is a vital practice for all Christians to live out our faith in action, and this program helps form that in our younger Christians. With that said there is no church membership required to attend; no fees; all are welcome to participate. The money used to do the service projects largely comes from Trinity Episcopal, Hope Gateway, and Williston-Immanuel Church, but also some other churches have donated money from time to time. So far this year, the Youth Service Corps has donated \$1000 worth of (mostly) nourishing snacks to hungry kids at Ocean Ave. Elementary; packed close to 10,000 fortified meals for Good Shepherd Food Bank to feed the hungry here in Maine; and provided over \$3000 worth of winter clothing items for Maine Needs and helped pack care packages for clients. Also, with the leftover pizza from the meetings, the deacons have given food to local sober houses and the encampments.

This year, too, through our own Outreach Committees' work; volunteers from our parish, and my work as a Public Health Nurse, we have built relationships with Family Promise, which is an organization dedicated to providing shelter and services for asylum families as they make their transition from homelessness to full-working fellow members and partners of our community. I know Deacons Heather, George, and I (all Episcopal Deacons) have all tried to provide assistance in our own ways. Using proper channels, I helped coordinate a primary vaccine clinic for children and adults at the shelter.

In my full-time secular vocation, it has been a tough year. In 2023, Maine saw the highest number of active tuberculosis cases this century; and in Public Health, like in most health sectors, we are understaffed. The work has been overwhelming. But the State did send me for a one-week TB Intensive Workshop at Rutgers Global TB Institute and has invested in me to be a leading TB Nurse for the Southern-half of the State. What I will say is Public Health is WILD...I love it; I am glad I am doing the work. Just like my placement at St. Mary's, I feel like it is where I am supposed to be.

My only goal for the coming year is to try my best to be more faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to see the crazy places that takes me and us.

"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me."
-Jesus of Nazareth

The Rev. Matthew D. Simpson, BSN, RN-BC

Deacon at The Episcopal Church of St. Mary, Falmouth
The Episcopal Diocese of Maine

Senior Warden Report

It has been an honor to serve as Saint Mary's senior warden for four years. Saint Mary's continues to be a thriving, active parish, thanks to all of you! Without you, we could not celebrate, honor, and serve Christ in all people. We are blessed with our highly professional (but small) staff who expertly direct our operations and collaborate with us, an army of volunteers. So often, it seems like there's not enough time or resources to do this work but with heart and dedication we accomplish much!

In my role, I have heard and witnessed countless examples of how Saint Mary's has made a difference. When we are in the midst of committee work, it's often easy to lose sight of the big picture and miss the small signs of grace that happen every day. I have had many moments when I have let the minutia of finance or resource challenges take on too much importance. Even when a solution seemed elusive, something wonderful has happened: one of you has, possibly unknowingly, shared a kind word, suggestion, or positive experience. Often, as a result, my perspective shifted or an individual or group shared ideas to reveal a path to success. In my time in leadership, we have had some big challenges but working together with gladness and singleness of heart, we have emerged stronger. As Senior Warden, I have had the privilege to see the tremendous, good work that happens here, and for that I am eternally grateful.

Janet Bowne, Senior Warden



Junior Warden Report

As we reflect on 2023, I continue to be amazed at the community which is St. Mary's. After all, isn't that why we are here? To be part of something larger than ourselves. The more I serve here, the more I am amazed with the depth of talent we have participating on our vestry, committees, guilds and ministries. From our internal ministries involved in our church services such as altar guild, ushering and Guiding Ray, to our external community outreach programs and bi-monthly Souper Suppers, we are making a difference in SO many lives. Our memorial reception team jumps in at a moment's notice to ease the burden off families who have lost a loved one. That makes a difference. We have an amazing music ministry led by James Kennerley. The combination of the sound from our beautiful organ and magnificent choir has led to Saint Mary's being able to welcome many new members. And everyone is welcome at Saint Mary's. That makes a difference. We have an amazing new Deacon. Thank you, Matthew, for your passion at Saint Mary's and your commitment to helping less fortunate Mainers in our community.



Special thanks to the building and grounds committee, led by Hugh Smith and Fred Webber. It is overwhelming the amount of time and talent this team puts into keeping our campus looking good inside and out. Electrical, carpentry, and lots of landscaping work is completed each and every week, year-round. It is very difficult to put a price on how much this team of volunteers saves St. Mary's, but it is safe to assume it is tens of thousands of dollars each year. You all make a difference.

There are two others to whom I must give extra thanks and praise to. The amount of knowledge, effort and dedication put forth by Beth Shaw and Janet Bowne is astounding. There is nothing that these two do not know about Saint Mary's. They know all the current participants and the history of committees, guilds and ministries. They know how best to fill vacancies for future roles. They keep so many of us on track, they are my role models.

Janet's smooth leadership through the pandemic and Nathan's deployment is something I will appreciate as long as I serve. I am proud to call her my friend and mentor. On behalf of all communicants of St. Mary's, thank you both for making a difference.

2024 is here and we embark on our Foundation 135: Preserving the faith mission. As stewards of Saint Mary's, it is our responsibility to preserve and protect our beautiful buildings. On behalf of the executive committee and vestry, we thank everyone for their service. Saint Mary's is a very special community, and we thank you all for being part of our past and future success.

Steve Conley, Jr Warden



CELEBRATE

HONOR

SERVE

Reports from Saint Mary's Ministries, Guilds and Committees

Our mission here at Saint Mary's remains constant as we continue to build authentic, vibrant, Christ-centered community. To do this, we:

CELEBRATE the goodness of God and the gift of life,

HONOR the presence of Christ in one another, and

SERVE the world in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We do this every day in many various forms, as demonstrated below.

CELEBRATE **the goodness of God and the gift of life**

We are committed to maintaining our traditional Christian liturgy while extending our offerings to meet the spiritual desires and needs of the wider community.

Acolytes

A new group of acolytes was gathered in September 2023 with the hopes of resuming regular acolyte ministry in worship. That has been a challenge due to the busy schedules of all involved. Efforts will continue in 2024 to grow the number of acolytes and to increase their participation in our corporate worship.

Altar Flower Guild

The members of the Altar Flower Guild take great pleasure in creating floral arrangements for the Sunday services at Saint Mary's. It is because of the generosity of parishioners' donations, made prior to the Easter Season, that we are able to have fresh flowers each week.

We also create various displays for the holy seasons of Advent, Easter and Christmas on the altar, and in the chancel, the nave, the chapel and the outdoor Easter garden. Although we vary the displays from year to year, they serve to support the worship services and add beauty and solace to all.

The flowers and needed supplies come from a variety of places, including many of our own backyards and the gardens on the grounds of the church yard. The committee consists of: JessicaLaPlante, Melissa Kane, Onnie Hastings, Helga Ryder, Jan Mordarski, Lynne Shepherd, Carolyn Davis & Jan Andrews.

The Altar Flower Guild would like to extend a warm invitation to anyone who would like to join our group, as extra hands are always needed. This is a wonderful group of talented people who would love to learn from others or share their talents. We routinely buddy up new and old members to take the pressure off of perfection! Please let Melissa (831-0573) or Jessica (650-7977) or Beth in the office know if you'd like to help in any way.

Jessica LaPlante & Melissa Kane, Co-chairs

Altar Guild

The Altar Guild is charged with the maintenance and preparation of the altar for the Eucharist. It is a quiet ministry that allows us to deepen our faith and grow our devotion. Focusing on the tasks and preparation is meditative and contemplative. It's also a way to learn more about our traditions. Guild members often find solidarity in knowing that our work is carried out throughout the Anglican communion. We welcome new members, and our schedule allows for travel and flexibility.

Thank you to our members: Mary Smith, Joan Dow, Portia Hirschman, Katie Porter, Mary Lalumiere, Kathy Galen, Barbara Murray, and Lynne Shepherd.

Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, and Eucharistic Visitors

We have a wonderful team of persons who feel called to serve God by reading scripture, serving at the altar, and taking the Eucharist to those who are unable to attend church. Our lectors have included:

Al Ahlers
Neila Blake
Linda Eaton
R. Stanley Eaton
Erin McGee Ferrell
Jeff Herrold
Chris Martin
Marian McCue
Andrea Myles-Hunkin
Betsy Parks-Stamm
Polly Parks-Stamm

Rebecca Clifford Pride
David Robinson
Virginia Stelk
Betsy Stoddard
James Stoddard
Leonard A. Taylor, Jr.
Leonard A. Taylor, III
Nadine Timberlake
Gregory W. Unfricht
Joyce Verey
Len Verey

Eucharistic Ministers are confirmed adult communicants in good standing authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at the Holy Eucharist, many of whom are also lectors. That team includes:

Al Ahlers
John Bennett
Terry Brown
Steve Constantino
Lee Dernehl
R. Stanley Eaton
Jeff Herrold
Chris Martin
Mary Ann McLean
Andrea Myles-Hunkin
Betsy Parks-Stamm

Rebecca Clifford Pride
William Rana
Lynne Shepherd
James Stoddard
Leonard A. Taylor, Jr.
Leonard A. Taylor, III
Nadine Timberlake
Gregory W. Unfricht
Lee Van Dyke
Joyce Verey

Eucharistic Visitors are confirmed adult communicants in good standing authorized to take the Sacrament to members of the congregation who are unable to be present at the Eucharist, due to illness or infirmity. Our Eucharistic Visitor team includes:

Philip Bean
Harry Duvall
Stanley Eaton
Katie Porter

Betsy Parks-Stamm
Rebecca Pride
Nadine Timberlake
Merle Marie Troeger

Kneeler Guild

The Kneeler Guild has completed some important projects for 2023 and hosted two coffee hours.

Thanks to Ben Russell and Debra Madigan, there are two completed notebooks which tell the story of each kneeler with its picture, number, place in the sanctuary and to whom and by whom it has been memorialized and when it was dedicated. Special thanks to Pat Peard and Alice Brock who proofread both.

Additionally, Ben archived the portfolio of Hannah Russell who was the artist and the painter of all the kneelers. These three notebooks can be found in the Guild Room, He also did a special, short version for the Rector to use. A coffee hour was held on May 7th at which time all the Easter kneelers were displayed. Three additional families gave a gift of \$100 for the ongoing care of three of the kneelers. A second coffee hour was held on October 8th at which time several of the creation kneelers were displayed.

As a Guild we regularly clean the kneelers and put them back in their assigned places. They are all organized into groupings from the Old and the New Testaments. We would like to get the kneelers off the floor but have not found a solution which is workable.

Members; Ben and Nancy Russell, Debra Madigan, Barbara Murray, Jana Burke, Virginia Stelk, Valerie Kyros, Lynne Shepard, Grace Robinson, and Jan Mordarski

*All Saint Mary's
Kneelers were
designed and
canvas painted by
our own Hannah
Russell (1929-
1922) in the early
1970s and stitched
by nearly 100
women and men.*



Music Ministry at Saint Mary's

"O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." (Psalm 99)

The Psalmist beautifully and succinctly summarizes the ultimate goal of music ministry: to adorn the liturgy and elevate the worship of Almighty God. The Episcopal Church is blessed with a long and rich history of liturgical music and traditions that continue to be rejuvenated and celebrated today.

I am honored to have been called as Saint Mary's first Music Minister, a title that more accurately describes the breadth of the role than typical terms like "Organist," "Choir Master," or Director of Music." It is a calling that I have followed for over thirty years, and it is a distinct pleasure to begin this chapter of my career serving such a special community. I am grateful to Father Nathan and the Vestry for entrusting me with the responsibility, and I am immensely thankful to Kathleen Scott and Bruce Fithian for their superb leadership. I began my duties on August 15, 2023, (an auspicious day indeed – the Feast Day of our patron, Saint Mary). Bruce retired in January, and Kathleen served in the interim, so 2023 saw no fewer than three music ministers at Saint Mary's!

The choir stands at the center of our music ministry, and its principal purpose is to elevate the liturgy with song. We do this in two ways, firstly by giving a strong, inspiring lead to the congregation to sing, and secondly to create a glimpse—even for the briefest of moments—of the beauty of Heaven here on earth. Our selections are drawn from the great treasury of sacred music from a variety of traditions, including Gregorian Chant, Renaissance polyphony, Anglican anthems, and American Spirituals. We have added more than twenty-five pieces to the repertoire since September.

The majority of our singers are amateurs, and so singing with the choir involves a weekly group voice lesson, discussion of theology and church history, and, of course, lots of singing! We rehearse on Thursdays between 6:30 and 8 PM and on Sundays at 9:15 AM for the 10:15 AM service. We are always interested in welcoming new members, and I would be delighted to meet with anyone who is interested in learning more. There are few more powerful ways to come to know Jesus than by singing his praises as part of the choir (and, as the saying goes, to sing is to pray twice!)

Our pipe organ is the second greatest asset of our music program. Church organs are generally designed with a number of soft sounds that allow for creative and colorful accompaniment of the voices of the choir and congregation. Our instrument is instead modeled on bolder instruments from Northern Europe from around the time of Johann Sebastian Bach, and are most naturally suited to music from that time period. However, ours is a particularly fine instrument and, despite being a rather unconventional choice for an Episcopal Church, it fulfills its many roles felicitously.

Prompted by questions and conversations during my first few weeks, I thought it would be both entertaining and edifying to create a sacred music series for the AVE newsletter. Thanks to the overwhelmingly positive response, I intend to keep that going, since we have so many things to talk about. It's also an important reminder that one of the chief duties of any music minister is to educate and elucidate.

This report deals with the activities of the 2023 calendar year, but everything we have done has a bearing on where we are going. I am excited to engage with Father Nathan and the parish leadership to refine and expand the music program vision. For my part, I would like to see our choir section leaders expanded to cover all four voice parts (we currently have a soprano and tenor and would need to add an alto and bass). With such an active attendance roster, this would greatly enhance the liturgical music and relieve pressure from our members when few are able to be present. I would also like to continue the plans to renovate the Casavant organ, one of the great treasures of this community and one which is approaching 50 years old. Preventative maintenance and cleaning are always preferable (and cheaper!) than remedial work. More importantly, I am always interested to hear from you the ways in which you think our music ministry could be even more powerful and impactful. As always, please don't hesitate to reach out.

It has been said that the richness of a church's common worship life is a microcosm of the community as a whole. In that sense, Saint Mary's is an extraordinary place from which we can bear witness to the Gospel. I could not be more privileged to lead the music ministry here.

Respectfully submitted,

James Kennerley, *Music Minister*

Saint Mary's Choir as of December 31, 2023:

Sopranos: Maria Belva, Erin Chenard (section leader), Laura O'Neill, Toosie Smith

Altos: Anne Caton, Linda Eaton, Laura Pollard, Jamie Szal, Jane Tholen, Nadine Timberlake

Tenors: Bruce Fithian, Ben McVety (section leader)

Basses: Stanley Eaton, Greg Fergin, Rick Hirschman, Justice Pollard, Robert Russell, Tim Szal, Gerald Tipper.

Ushers

Ushers play a key role in helping ensure that our clergy and congregation feel welcome and have the support they need to participate fully in and enjoy our worship services. We are the first people parishioners and new visitors see when they come through the door and maybe the last they see when they leave, so it's an important ministry at Saint Mary's.

We have a great group of people, and we have fun ushering together. Serving as an usher is a good way to serve the parish and make some new friends at the same time. It doesn't require a significant time commitment, and it is a wonderful opportunity to experience our services from a slightly different perspective. Usually, each person only has to usher once a month, and if you can't make your scheduled time, others are always available to cover for you.

It is best to have a balance of “veteran” ushers and new recruits, and we welcome new recruits that would like to join. Even if your schedule makes it difficult for you to commit to a regular rotation, we would welcome the opportunity to include you on a standby list of potential fill-ins whom we might call upon in those instances when the regularly scheduled usher has a last-minute conflict. We would like to express our thanks to all of the individuals who served as ushers throughout 2023 and look forward to having them continue their service in 2024.

We welcome any questions, comments, or suggestions you might have about how the Saint Mary’s ushers might better support your individual needs or those of the congregation at large during our worship services. If you’d like to join our ministry, contact Tom LaPlante at (207)272-5621 or via email at tlaplante@lbean.com.

Our present ushers are:

Al Ahlers
Alice Brock
Baer Connard
Charlie Hurdman
Chris Martin
Chuck Horton
Dawn Yerkes
Noah Yerkes
Ed Ainsworth

Harry Duvall
Jim Kane
Joyce Verey
Larry Roland
Len Taylor
Len Verey
Melissa Kane
Pat Peard
Rayle Ainsworth

Ryan Stinneford
Steve Conley
Steve Constantino
Steve Reeves
Tim Caven
Tom LaPlante
Tricia Wheeler
Dawn Yerkes
Noah Yerkes

HONOR

the presence of Christ in one another

We are committed to the spiritual growth of all God’s children. We are committed to treating all people with dignity and respect and to increasing the care we provide for one another.

CARE Team

This CARE ministry "Community Actively Reaching Everyone" was started in 2016. We are a group of about a dozen parishioners who work with our clergy to care for other parishioners, concentrating on keeping track of people in our parish family who need special attention. A chart was created with names on the left and columns of various possible ministries such as delivery of casseroles or soups, cards, visits, rides to church and phone calls. This group meets each month via zoom with all discussions within this group confidential. Prayer Partners, led by Becky Pride, joins us each month as many of us are in both groups. Father Nathan leads us. We would love to welcome anyone interested in joining us any time by calling Beth at the office or Lee Snow at 207-781-2309, or nlsnow58@gmail.com

Churchyard Committee

As a reminder to all Saint Mary’s parishioners, if you are thinking about where to place your remains upon your passing, Saint Mary’s Churchyard (cemetery) has many spots open in both Saint Mary’s Woods and the Burial Garden. Please contact Beth Shaw for more details.

- The Building and Grounds Committee continued its efforts to maintain the Churchyard ensuring that the grounds were mowed regularly, branches and twigs were picked up, and the leaves gathered up to be vacuumed in the fall.
- The depressions left from the removal of the pear tree allee were topped off and seeded.

The Churchyard Committee met in the fall to discuss several issues. The current language in the Churchyard handbook requires the use of a vault for casket burials. This requirement was not universally known and some burials were done without a vault. The committee decided that since the state of Maine does not require a vault, we should change the handbook language to eliminate the requirement.

The committee also discussed concerns about the size and placement of the Whipple headstone. The stone is larger than allowed in the Old Churchyard and some believe it detracts from the nearby burial site of Father James. The headstone will be replaced by a flat stone with the same wording.

Hugh Smith announced that he would be resigning from the committee effective December 31, 2023, to focus on his role as co-chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Please contact a member of the committee if you have questions and would like to help us with our work. The committee consists of Ed Ainsworth, Becky Pride, Virginia Stelk and John Teets. A new chair and additional members will be addressed in 2024.

2023 Churchyard Activity:

Lots Acquired:

During the year, 3 half units in the Burial Garden and 3 Saint Mary’s Woods units were acquired in the Churchyard.

Formation on Sundays

In September 2023, we made a slight change in our Sunday morning schedule to create more space for a “**Formation Hour**” between the early and the later liturgies. Since our Choral Eucharist began at 10:15 since 2018, we moved our Formation Hour to begin at 9:15, thereby giving us at least 45 minutes for discussion, conversations and presentations.

These sessions are generally led by the Rector, although once a month there is often a focus on our Outreach Partner for that month. These informal conversations have been well-received, with attendance ranging from 10 to 50 people.



Sunday Morning *Be Still*

Be Still continued on most Sundays mornings in 2023. We meet in the Father James Chapel between the services. While these meetings were on ZOOM only during the pandemic, we now conduct “hybrid” meetings, gathering both in-person and on zoom. We begin with about 5 minutes of silence and then consider readings based on a theme. This year our themes have been “Oneness,” “Light,” “Creation” and “Hope.” These themes are fleshed out with some readings from the Bible, and many are from poets the facilitators choose. Often, we add artwork and sometimes music. We end with another 5 minutes of contemplative silence. Each month, a selection of readings offered the previous month are shared with the parish in the AVE. We welcome new participants, whether you wish to just “drop in” or choose to attend regularly. Facilitators: John Bennett, Jennifer Gregg, Becky Pride, Merle Marie Troeger.

Monday Evening *Be Still Centering Prayer*

This contemplative offering is held on Monday evenings from 5 to 6 p.m. in the Father James Chapel, in-person and on ZOOM. It begins with 20 minutes of silent centering prayer. Then each person engages with the text using the *lectio divina* style of contemplation; that is, the passage is read four times with a period of silence in between. First, the passage is read slowly, as we notice the words or phrases that resonate. After the second reading, we explore the meaning of the text for each of us in more detail. After the third reading, we linger on those words and phrases and explore their meaning for prayer. After the fourth reading, we simply let the passage dwell in us. We end the evening with another period of silence.

Facilitator: Jennifer Gregg

Merton Group

This group continued to meet on ZOOM only on Thursday afternoons throughout 2023. This is a book group that concentrates on works by writers generally considered “mystics.” There are NO ahead-of-time reading assignments. We simply read aloud while we are together and discuss what engages our attention. This program year we read *Meister Eckhart, from Whom God Hid Nothing*. Johannes Eckhart (1260-1327) was a popular preacher and head of the Dominican order in Germany who wrote that there is an Ultimate belonging to mystery that is at the core of human existence. We also read *Just This*, by Richard Rohr, founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation. The book is a compilation of meditations and practices that invite the reader to cultivate the gift of “waking up to the beauty of reality in all its glorious ordinariness.” On December 7, Marcia Paige, our member from England and an art historian, offered a program about Mary as she appears in art through the centuries. Our next book will be *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown Taylor. If you are interested in reading with the Merton Group, contact Jennifer Gregg who is our zoom-meister.

Advent Quiet Morning

On Saturday, December 16, 2023, Merle Marie Troeger led a retreat centered the “Kingdom of Heaven.” We engaged with a lot of images that suggested ideas about the character, location and meaning of this famous phrase that was so central to Jesus’ mission. We contemplated “Heaven as Haven” and used the Beatitudes as our entry point. They we considered “Heaven as Solace.” Our biblical reference here was a single sentence in which Jesus compares the Kingdom of Heaven to the yeast in dozens of loaves of bread. Lastly, we pondered Jesus’ line, “The Kingdom of Heaven is within you” and thought about “Heaven as Identity.” John Bennett played his cello and Becky Pride composed a poem on the theme. (See below.)

Compass of Compassion

In a response to the many people voicing their anguish during these turbulent times, St. Mary’s began to offer a daily reflection of comfort. “As we watch the news, our hearts break for so many who are caught in a struggle for power and who have no peace. We will be sending you a poem, scripture, or inspiration to lighten your sorrow. This is for all who seek a direction and compass for your prayers. If you do not currently receive Compass of Compassion in your inbox each day and wish to do so, please contact the office to be added to the distribution list.

This is an example of a daily reflection:

Heaven is Here

*Father James is at home in his chapel here –
His spirit of love, joy, faith permeates and
inspires and whispers to us: There is no death.*

*This blessed place filled with pregnant silence
And subtle sunbeams
And a gathering . . . a cellist, an art restorer, a graphic designer,
A doctor, a lawyer, a spiritual guide, a practicing Buddhist,
An island girl with such depth,
Several teachers – though all of us are.*

*However unworthy or inadequate we may feel at times,
We are not.
We are the kingdom.
Heaven is within and all around us.*

Thanks be to God.

Wisdom Seekers

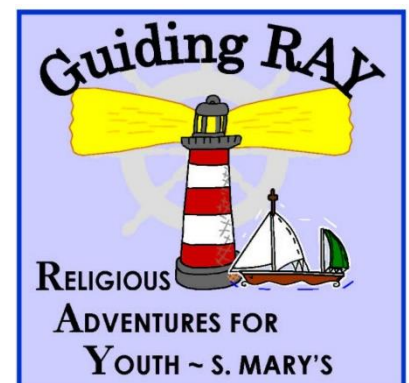
On Tuesday mornings from 10:30 - 11:30, there is a Bible study group called **The Wisdom Seekers**, coordinated by Nadine Timberlake, that meets in hybrid form, either in person or on Zoom. As a rule, we study Scripture appointed for the upcoming Sunday, examining the historical background, how people living at that time understood God’s message, and what is it saying to us today. Once during the year we turn our attention to the IMMERSE study book series where we study individual books of the Bible as a whole rather than segments of scripture. We have about nine people who regularly join in a lively discussion, sharing our thoughts and ideas. It is a great way learn more about the Bible and to prepare oneself for the coming Sunday. All are welcome to join at any time during the year.

Guiding RAY

I am delighted to have returned to the Guiding RAY children’s program. I say “return” because I served in this role from 2005-2011 and enjoyed my time working with both children and parents. In December 2022, I offered to be the interim leader beginning January 2023. Over the summer Father Nathan asked me to continue as the family minister and I agreed.

I have been assisted by Melissa Roland, who has faithfully taken on responsibility including organizing our “Welcome Back” Sunday in September, teaching most weeks, and helping with the Pageant preparations.

Throughout the winter and spring sessions we followed the Lectionary using recycled curriculum. Special events included a pancake supper prior to Lent, followed by Ash Wednesday and Good Friday children’s services. In January we collected non-perishables for the Falmouth Food Pantry. In May Guiding RAY hosted coffee hour on Mother’s Day. The year ended in June with a hedgehog visit. Yes, a hedgehog...thank you Kasey Portenier and Matthew Simpson, followed by a parish-wide ice cream social.



Thank you to Bobbi MacCallum for organizing the Children's Garden. The existing beds were moved into the fenced play area for better sunlight and protection from small animals. In the early spring the children planted seeds under the grow-lights indoors, and by late-spring put plants into the ground. Unfortunately, this summer, there was too much rain and not enough hot, sunny days. Some of our veggies did well, and others did not. We had a good crop of beans, peas, and onions. Our tomatoes were good but small, and we harvested potatoes. All 25 pounds of produce was donated to the Falmouth Food Pantry.

In September we began teaching children in preschool through 6th grade using the *Workshop Rotation Model*. Our classrooms are in the process of being redesigned into creatively inspired workshops that teach Bible stories. Each month is focused on a single theme. Workshops currently being offered at Saint Mary's include arts & crafts, drama, games, geography, movies, and music. And while much has been accomplished, there is still more to be done as we work to make the most of our existing physical space and available resources.

One strength of the *Workshop Rotation Model* is planning our own curriculum and using existing resources. A six-year scope & sequence developed for Saint Mary's about 15 years ago is the foundation we are using to teach the most important Bible stories and lessons. We are grateful to Merle-Marie Troeger who spent the summer organizing all our existing curriculum and filing all the lessons by story, so each month we just pull the appropriate files and have many options for lesson plans and activities.

The theme for the 2023-24 year is *God's Covenants*. This fall we opened with an introduction to the Bible followed by Creation, Noah & the Ark, and The Christmas Story. The *Rotation Model* is practical for teachers because they volunteer monthly. The workshops are fun for kids because they emphasize the learning environment. One of the most rewarding aspects of this program is increased long-term retention of Bible lessons among the children.

December brought a buzz of activity as the children made Advent wreaths with their families and practiced for the Pageant. Thanks to Emily Rodgers for taking on the role of director and leading the children through costume fittings and a dress rehearsal. The Pageant was performed on the 4th Sunday of Advent, which this year fell on Christmas Eve, December 24th.

Our Nursery continues to operate every Sunday as a welcome spot for our youngest parishioners. Thank you to Grace & Mary Belanger for providing ongoing childcare. And thanks to our substitute sitter, Allie Schmitt.

We ended the year with approximately 20 families and 40 children (including Nursery) enrolled. Most children attend on a semi-regular basis, and attendance ranges from 4 to 20 children on any given Sunday.

This report would not be complete without a sincere thank you to all the teachers and helpers including Abby Belanger, Darren & Katie Clark, Jamie Clark, Michele Duvall, Erin Ferrell, Natalia Fulton, Heather Gale, Kate Herrold, Melissa Kane, Valerie Kyros, Bobbi MacCallum, Andrea Myles-Hunkin, Gwen O'Donnell, Emily & Ben Rodgers, Melissa Roland, Patty Sarchi, Ryan Stinneford, Betsy Stoddard, Merle-Marie Troeger, and Tricia Wheeler.

Finally, thank you to the Buildings and Grounds team for promptly answering all our requests including helping fix up the shared office and to Peter Guyton and Tom LaPlante for assisting with technology.

I look forward to learning and spiritual growth in 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meg Hurdman, Family Minister

Hospitality Ministry

Although we have not yet filled the position of Hospitality Leader, we have been so fortunate to have Robin Webber step forward to head up the Coffee Hour planning. In 2023, we came together to hold fellowship gatherings like the Annual Meeting brunch, the Memorial Day Parade refreshments, the Summer dinner and fundraiser, and the Kickoff event. Some of these events take months to prepare. In September, we hired Cinnamon Girl (owned by Melissa Cott, a former parishioner) to cater the Kickoff Sunday event for the second year in a row with much excitement and anticipation.

We are hoping someone will step up to take over leadership of this vital aspect of our community, and that new members will join this ministry! **If interested in leading or joining the Hospitality Ministry, please contact the parish office or one of the Wardens.**

Coffee Hour Hosting

Sunday Coffee hours in 2023 expanded with new hosts and hosting groups. We continued to offer a streamlined version of hosting, using compostable paper products and various menu items, both bought and homemade. A dedicated team sets up the coffee and tea service used in both coffee hours. Going forward, our new Mr. Coffee makers can provide 42 cups of coffee in 10 minutes, so we can use air pots to serve and save the urn for larger events. Again, this will ease clean up time, and coffee making can be controlled by the host.

We had very successful “special coffee hour events” and we plan to expand these monthly. Guiding RAY hosted Mother’s Day, and the Ice Cream Social. Hot Cross Buns on Palm Sunday, and now Cinnamon Girl for Kickoff Sunday in September, have become a tradition. We plan to create more of these “events” as it draws our church community together with food and conversation.

It is with heartfelt thanks to all the parishioners, committees and ministries, for hosting one coffee hour, or more! It could not have been done without your help and support! This is a volunteer effort in the truest sense of the word. We hope you will consider hosting it again in the 2024 Church year. One change we made in the year 2023 was to offer only one coffee hour during the summer months, between the two services. By doing this, we were able to bring in new hosts who may not have been able to accommodate the 2nd coffee hour.

Another change coming this year is forming a Coffee Hour Fellowship Committee. Please consider being part of this group. It is an opportunity to use your creativity and help plan special coffee hours.

Coffee Hour is a joyful ministry! We welcome any help that can be provided and look forward to working with our Hosts. Thank you!

For more information, or to volunteer, please contact Robin Webber at webberonsebago@msn.com or 207 536 0274.

Memorial Reception Guild

This year the Memorial Receptions group provided receptions in honor of eight people: Nancy Fitts, Marti Galli, Janet Payson, Lee Faulkner, Althea Pedersen, George Stiles, Alice Harding, and Kelly Bellimer. We also hosted a luncheon in honor of clergy in our diocese who are retired. As always, many St. Marians cheerfully contributed their time, hard work, and cooking talents to ensure that families and friends of lost loved ones would be well cared for at these receptions. Providing this support is an obligation that all of us involved in this ministry take very seriously; we understand that it is a privilege to be able to do this work. As co-chairs, we want to thank our many volunteers and to welcome anyone who may feel called to join us in this meaningful endeavor, even if only occasionally. Please reach out to either one of us if you have any interest in participating. - Alice Brock and Joyce Verey

Prayer Partners

Special thanks to all those who have attended our monthly ZOOM meetings and who have called or emailed Lee Snow and/or Becky Pride to keep our prayers of intercession ongoing during these difficult times.

Prayer Partners is a long-standing group of around 30 parishioners who pray daily for many people within and outside the parish. People ask to have their names or those of their friends or loved ones on this list. We gather regularly to go over the list, add names or uplift people, as well as to pray together and reinforce each other. The list is strictly confidential and reserved only for those who pray the list. If you would like prayers for yourself for any reason or for a friend, or if you would like to join this praying community, call Beth at the office or Becky Pride at 781-4391 or email her at rebeccapride1@gmail.com.

Prayer Shawls

The Prayer Shawl Ministry involves knitting shawls using *large needles-size 13* and a *quite simple pattern*. You need not be an accomplished knitter to learn how to create these practical messages of comfort. They are called “Prayer Shawls” because the work is initiated with prayer, and the shawls are blessed prior to being given. One simple pattern involves casting on 57 stitches, then knitting three stitches and purling three stitches—representing the Holy Trinity. Most knitters enjoy repeating “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” with the stitches. There are other more complex patterns available, but all involve a three-stitch pattern invoking the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If you need a packet with all supplies needed, contact the Parish office.



Our supply of completed and blessed shawls is on the low side, so we could use some replenishing. With our Eucharistic Visitor ministry as well as the CARE Team, we hope more parishioners and friends in the hospital, nursing homes, new mothers or someone just needing support will be given one. We look forward to being able to deliver these again. We need your help to know who needs one. Just request a prayer shawl, and it will be given.

Those interested in more details and/or participating in any of these ministries should contact Ginny Stelk at 847-3602 (lstelk@maine.rr.com). We need you.

SERVE

the world in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*We are committed to serving others in our community and in the world,
trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us.*

Altar Flower Delivery

The Altar Flower Delivery team delivers the flowers which have graced the altar to parishioners who are ill, home bound, or observing a celebration in their lives. It is a ministry of extending Sunday worship to perhaps those for whom prayers have been offered that Sunday.

In 2023, we have been unable to find someone to lead this ministry. Kindly consider offering your time to this ministry. Perhaps this could be a one-time teaching moment for your family. It takes little time or effort, and no special skill in floral arranging is necessary, but the rewards are many. Contact the Parish Office if you might be able to consider offering a half hour every few weeks to this ministry of care, or if you are open to leading this wonderful ministry.

Red Cross Blood Drives

Saint Mary's is proud to be an important part of this effort by the American Red Cross to save lives and keep our community healthy. Here are the total collection amounts from drives at Saint Mary's during 2023, according to an email from our primary contact at the Red Cross in Portland:

*"We ran a total of **7 blood drives** at the Episcopal Church of Saint Mary, which is just incredible. During 2023 Saint Mary's and the American Red Cross were able to collect a total of **176 units of blood** which equates to **528 lives** potentially saved. What an amazing achievement!"*



If you have not done so before, please consider donating your blood. People in need are depending on it.

Buildings & Grounds Committee

Buildings & Grounds had a very productive year in 2023. The tasks completed filled two full pages of very small, close-spaced type. Many of the tasks are on the mundane side like replacing light bulbs (we have many!) and blowing leaves but we get many requests to fix things, address safety issues and reduce energy costs. Here are some of the more significant items:

- Assisted in developing the scope and cost estimates for the recently announced capital campaign.
- Completed a thorough refurbishment of the front lawn including liming, fertilizing, aerating, and reseeded (With a lot of help from mother nature's rain.)
- Assisted Guiding Ray relocate raised gardens.
- Installed a handrail and relocated a light switch to improve the safety of the stairs to the pantry.
- Repaired and painted the frames of several church windows.
- Added more convenient electrical outlets by the auditorium buffet for coffee hour appliances.
- Poured a concrete pad and installed a bench and bike rack.
- Installed an under-the-counter water heater in the sacristy.
- Researched, purchased, and prepared for the installation of a new stove in the Rectory and a new dish sanitizer in the Parish House.
- Identified heating and ventilation issues in the Parish House and had them addressed.

We are fortunate to have this great group of dedicated men and women that are fun to work with and help keep the campus attractive and in working order.

Hugh Smith and Fred Webber, Co-chairs



Meal Train / Casserole Ministry

The Meal Train consists of dozens of Saint Mary's cooks who prepare and deliver meals to folks in our community who are in need and unable to cook following surgery or who are recovering from an illness or other life-changing events, such as the arrival of a new baby or other needs.

Without formal meetings and relying on internet and telephone contact, we provide meals to numerous families in our church community. In some cases, it has been for one or two days while for others we have provided weeks of meals seasoned with kindness and care.

If you are interested in helping this ministry, please contact the parish office admin@smary.org or Christie Rana christie.rana@gmail.com

Office Angels

We have a number of regular helpers in our Parish Office to assist with small projects and answering the phones on Monday afternoons, as well as assistance with the weekly offering. Thanks to Jan Mordarski for coordinating these wonderful angels: Kathy Galen, Rayle Ainsworth, Mary Ann McLean, Joan Dow, Alice Brock, Johanna Frissell, Melissa Murray, Becky Pride, Onnie Hastings, Robin Webber, Nadine Timberlake, Debra Madigan and Jennifer Gregg.

Thanks also to those Angels that proof-read the AVE publication on a monthly basis in their own homes: Becky Pride, Jennifer Gregg, Alice Brock, Pat Peard, Marian McCue and Linda Eaton.

Thank you all for being Office Angels.

Outreach Committee

Engaging the Church Community in Outreach

In 2023, Outreach shifted to a new monthly mission focus model. Each month, members of the church community volunteered to organize activities to highlight a local mission and raise money for that organization. From an extraordinary coat drive for St. Elizabeth's to a fun group of all ages volunteering together at Maine Needs to collecting sneakers all summer for the Preble Street Teen Shelter, St. Marians came together to donate their time and money for our community. On the last Sunday of each month, we held a special offering for each of these non-profits and raised over \$11,000 in addition to the money St. Marians sent directly.

Last Sunday Offering Our monthly **MISSION** focus



At the end of the year, the Outreach Committee met to distribute an additional \$4,050 to these non-profits, to add to the generous donations given each month during the special offering. The following grants were approved by the committee:

\$900 Falmouth Food Pantry

\$250 Cumberland Food Pantry

\$400 Preble Street Teen Center

\$800 Maine Council of Churches

\$200 St. Elizabeth's Essentials Pantry & Jubilee Center

\$500 Maine Homeless Youth Service

\$500 Restoration Laos

\$500 Four Directions Development Corporation

We are always looking for volunteers to organize a month for the Monthly Mission Focus! We have a rough plan for 2024, but if there are members of Saint Mary's who have a non-profit they'd like to share with the church, we would love to hear from you! Please contact 2024 Outreach Chair Bonny Rodden (brodden1.br@gmail.com) with ideas! Outreach activities are open to all church members-- make sure you read the AVE each month to see the monthly mission focus and opportunities to serve!

2023 Outreach Committee chairs: Ben & Betsy Parks-Stamm

Souper Supper – free and open to all

Souper Supper celebrated its 14th year in 2023, opening its doors and heart to the community on the second and fourth Fridays of each month from 5-7pm. Each time, we offer home-made soup, salads, breads, beverages, and desserts, served at table, at no charge and no donation. At its inception, our guests came, ate quickly, and left. Soon they came to dine, chat, and table-hop. There is no question but that our guests, who in 2023 numbered an average 25-30 each Friday and included both parishioners and residents of the Greater Portland community, seek both nutritional and social sustenance. It is a community at its best.

Souper Supper is also one of the most popular Outreach projects among its volunteers, who in 2023 numbered 41, not counting children who volunteer with their parents.

“Being part of the Souper Supper experience is fun, fulfilling, heartwarming and Delicious! We laugh and chat and engage with fellow parishioners and new friends. It is a timeless few hours with real joy to be shared. Giving and receiving takes place spontaneously and constantly”

~Becky and Doug Pride



We welcome volunteers of any age, and this ministry offers many ways to participate once a month, periodically or on a one-off basis:

- Shopping for ingredients: (1 hour, 2nd or 4th Thursday of the month)
- Make or purchase desserts (30 pieces): (2nd or 4th Thursday of the month)
- Soup Prep: (Morning, (2 hours; 2nd or 4th Friday of the month)
- Set-up—set up tables and “dress” them, plate desserts, make coffee 3-4pm, on the 2nd or 4th Friday of the month)
- Dish-up soups/salads/rolls from the kitchen: 4:45-7pm, 2nd or 4th Friday of the month
- Serve at Table: 4:45-7pm, 2nd or 4th Friday of the month.
- Clean-up—wash and put away dishes: 5-7:30, 2nd or 4th Friday of the month.
- Laundry – launder (no ironing) tablecloths and dishtowels, 2nd or 4th weekend of the month.

Souper Supper is funded both through the Outreach Committee AND through sales to parishioners of Coffee by Design coffee, available in the Parish House.

Coordinator: Jennifer Gregg, 781-2665 or jenniferanngregg@gmail.com

Helping Hands at Home

This ministry launched in 2019 to help parishioners on a periodic but year-round basis to stay in their homes by helping with simple tasks and indoor and outdoor odd jobs. Volunteers have agreed to be “on call” to participate as they are available in this ministry. It is a wonderful way for those with both outdoor skills (raking, shoveling, simple gardening, simple plumbing/construction projects) and indoor skills (deep cleaning, organizing, clerical) to come together in response to the needs of parishioners.



If you are interested in joining this core band of volunteers (Holly Bernstein, Janet Bowne, Kathy Galen, The Grace-Cleale family, Tom and Jessica LaPlante, Dana Madison, Jan Mordarski, Hugh Smith, Mary Smith, Jim Stoddard, Betsy Stoddard, Joyce Verey, Len Verey) please contact Jennifer Gregg, jenniferanngregg@gmail.com or Beth Shaw, admin@smary.org for more information.



Stewardship: *our annual Campaign: Rooted In Abundance*

2024 stewardship’s campaign kicked off in October of 2023. Our goal was 300,000 in pledge intentions. We were blessed with 132 households pledging under our goal, but we also know that some people are new to our church and not accustomed to pledging. We always welcome non pledge gifts. We are grateful for all the ways people share their work, wisdom and wealth with Saint Mary’s enabling us to carry out all of our mission and ministry work. Thank you to everyone who supports our efforts!

Janet Bowne, Chair

Planned Giving: *Alida Greely Brown Heritage Society*

The Planned Giving program aims to inform and recognize those among us who wish to remember Saint Mary's with deferred gifts to help ensure Saint Mary's long-term fiscal health.

Saint Mary's Alida Greely Brown Heritage Society “AGB” (named for our founder) enables individuals to make such gifts to Saint Mary's easily and recognizes those who have expressed their intention to provide such gifts as part of their estate planning. Membership may be public or private, as you so choose. If you have already provided for Saint Mary's in your will, we hope you will inform either Father Nathan or Beth Shaw so that we can properly thank you and invite you to join this society. In 2023, we were not able to host our AGB annual lunch nor any Diocesan First Light Society gatherings with the Bishop.

Thank you to those parishioners who have already included Saint Mary's in their estate planning, thereby ensuring Saint Mary's viability for generations to come.

In 2023, Saint Mary’s received a generous gift of \$10,000 from an anonymous family to fund the Music and Organ Endowment Fund. While the cornerstone of our music ministry the Casavant organ, costs associated with repair as well as other music needs had not been endowed. We are grateful to have this fund seeded and know that it will grow to serve Saint Mary’s music ministry in the future.

For more information on Saint Mary's planned giving program, please feel free to contact Janet Bowne (781-3844, jmitchellbowne@gmail.com) or Beth Shaw (781-3366, admin@smary.org).



*Alida Carroll Brown,
mother of Alida Greely Brown*

Fellowship & Fundraising Events



Annual Outreach Book Sale

The Book Sale was held in March of 2023 and raised over \$2,000 for In Her Presence, and will be held again this year on March 16, 2024, to benefit all Saint Mary's Outreach and mission projects.

We are "Calling All Books" at this time and have begun advertising the sale as well as hosting a coffee hour on February 25, 2024 with sign-up sheets at that time.

Funds raised at the Book Sale are used for mission and charity assistance coordinated by the Saint Mary's Outreach Committee. To help with the sale or with any questions,

contact Vanessa Record recordvanessa@gmail.com, Jan Mordarski (janmordarski@gmail.com) or Becky Pride rebeccapride1@gmail.com

Saint Mary's Sparkles

What an exciting event this year! More than 100 patrons were lined up before the opening bell. The Parish House was full of enticing donations from our generous parishioners and friends and our volunteers were ready to go. Thanks to everyone's hard work and great shoppers, we raised \$17,000.

As a new parishioner at St. Mary's, I needed lots of help from veteran Sparkles leaders to pull the Fair together. I would like to thank them all for their generous time, advice, and support. I could not have done this for the first time without their help. I relied heavily on their collective wisdom and all of those experienced people who came through 100% to help and advise. And special thanks to Beth Shaw, our Parish Manager, who shared her many talents in ensuring our brand remained strong in the signage, tags and marketing materials.



Sparkles began with the Sparkles Spirit event in October – a social event with opportunities to purchase appetizers for the upcoming holidays. We received wonderful donations to sell from parishioners and friends who love the Fair! The Guild Room was sparkling with china and silver galore. The Chapel was overflowing with unique handmade Christmas decorations. The Cookie Walk and Bake Shop offered classic St. Mary's cookies,

almonds cakes, cinnamon coffee cakes, and more. And The Café was back with cinnamon rolls, soups, hotdogs and more to feed our hungry shoppers and volunteers. It was very gratifying for me to hear from many of our patrons that they appreciate the quality and variety of our goods, the beautiful Christmas atmosphere, and our terrific volunteers.

Mary Sullivan, Chair

Summer Soiree

This summer we returned to holding a summer fundraiser. The Summer Soiree was held on Sunday, August 13. It turned out to be stormy, so the event was held in the auditorium instead of on the lawns. The event included live and silent auctions featuring one-of-a-kind experiences, sports memorabilia, jewelry, gift baskets and accessory items. Our patrons enjoyed summery nibbles including oysters and mini lobster rolls among other delicious savory options. The bidding was feverish and fun!

This event, like everything at Saint Mary's, could not have been possible without the help of numerous volunteers. Robin Webber, Valerie Kyros, Melissa Roland, Melissa Kane and Meg Hurdman helped pull the event together! Thanks to Jack and Susan Thomas for providing the delicious oysters for the soiree! Our wonderful Parish Manager, Beth Shaw, was enormously helpful in making the Soiree a big success. The event netted \$7,636. for Saint Mary's.



2023 Diocesan Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of Maine: "Together: With God, In Call, For Mission"

The 2023 Diocesan Convention was a hybrid experience. The business portion was held over ZOOM on Saturday 11 November. Prior to this, the entire diocese was invited to a Convocation at the Cathedral of Saint Luke on Saturday 21 October. This was a Eucharistic celebration with Bishop Brown at which his annual address to the Diocese was offered. In September and October, there were regular Town Hall meetings held on ZOOM which allowed all the delegates to learn about the budget, the resolutions and other important business items. These meetings were extremely helpful in making the actual convention function well. Thank you to our delegates for their participation!

2024 Clergy, Staff & Vestry

Rector	Nathan Ferrell	nathanferrell@smary.org
Deacon	Matthew Simpson	deaconmatthew@smary.org
Music Minister	James Kennerley	james@smary.org
Family Minister	Meg Hurdman	Guiding RAY@smary.org
Parish Manager	Beth Shaw	admin@smary.org
Sr Warden*	Steve Conley	steve.conley@point32health.org
Jr Warden*	Tom LaPlante	tlaplante@llbean.com
Treasurer	Peter Guyton	peter.guyton@3dogyard.com
2022	Darren Clark	ddclark@maine.rr.com
2022	Chris Martin	foodservicechris@yahoo.com
2022	Steve Reeves	stevekreeves@gmail.com
2023	Kathy Galen	kathleendaisy@aol.com
2023	Pat Murray	patrickmurray1948@gmail.com
2023	Ben Russell	BLR@maine.rr.com
2024*	Melissa Kane	melissa1959@earthlink.net
2024*	Valerie Kyros	valkyros1@gmail.com
2024*	Pat Peard	peardpatricia@gmail.com

**Pending election at Annual Meeting*

Saint Mary's Parish Registry - 2023

Baptisms:

Hope HanWei Clark
Lily HanJing Clark
Lucas Fox Coburn
Christina Ann-Poe Davis
George Arnold Fitton

Agatha Matilda Catherine Kennerley
Elsa May Rodgers
Kelley Young
Laney Young

Deaths:

Lois S. Coleman
Lee Faulkner
Nancy O. Fitts
Martha 'Marti' Galli
Alice Leonard Harding
Ann E. Johnson
Anne Jorgensen

Judith Baker McAvity MacDonald
Janet Payson
Althea Pedersen
Lloyd Reynolds
George M. Stiles, Jr.
Michael Hunter Payson, Sr.

Marriages:

Sé Hart Ferrell and Thomas Stephen Martin



Some Guiding RAY Sunday School students in September 2023