

St. Peter's Episcopal Church



2016

Annual Report

Annual Report 2016

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

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Rector's Annual Report

Submitted by Rev. Sandy Stayner

A parish church is a local community of Christians who regularly come together to worship God and to pray for the needs of the world. This community is a place for fellow lovers of Christ to encourage each other's growth in love for God and for each other, and then take that love into the world. As we look back over the past year let's ask ourselves how we have become more caring, more compassionate, more Christ-like human beings as a result of our participation in this faith community. Let us recall some of the ways we have worked together to celebrate God's love for the world.

1. We have come to the table of our Lord to receive strength and nourishment as we eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of the one who came to reveal the nature of God who is love.
 - This year 146 Services of Holy Eucharist were celebrated
 - We baptized 12 babies and children
 - We celebrated two weddings
 - We performed nine funerals and memorial services and seven people were buried in our cemetery or memorial garden
2. Through our outreach ministries we continued to offer parishioners opportunities to make new neighbors with folks on the margins of society – the poor, the sick and the lonely.
 - Abraham's Tent
 - Chapel on the Green
 - Gifts for prisoner's children
 - School uniforms and school supplies for children in Waterbury
 - Gift certificates given as requested by our social workers in Waterbury for families in need
 - Food for Waterbury food bank
 - 150 cans of onions and mushroom soup for distribution to needy Cheshire citizens at Thanksgiving
 - Building homes with Habitat for Humanity
 - Cooking and serving breakfast once a month for Shelter Now in Meriden and inviting two other congregations (Cheshire Methodist church and Meriden Mosque) to serve breakfast on another Saturday each month
 - Sharing pot-luck dinner and bingo at Hillside for residents in Title 9 housing
 - Engaging the Cheshire local community to buy pumpkins in support of American Indians in New Mexico
 - Caring for parishioners in need as we take meals to people recovering from illness or loss
3. Preserving and restoring our beautiful, historic church building through funds raised by our Capital Campaign. The bricks have been re-mortared and we eagerly await the return of our stained glass windows (currently in pieces as they undergo restoration.) Our new welcoming red front door is a harbinger of how our church will look when all the work is done.

4. Opening our building for use by other non-profits
 - AA and Al-Anon for their weekly meetings
 - The Cheshire Symphony has now made St. Peter's its home – practicing and performing here
 - Distressed Children International holds its fundraiser at St. Peter's
 - Boy Scouts use a room once a month
 - Mother's Playgroup meets bi-weekly in the Godly play room.

5. Raising money to support our mission and ministry through community events
 - Horse show raised \$5,100 to support outreach efforts
 - Golf tournament raised \$14,000 to support the mission of the church

6. Building partnerships with town and community groups
 - Best Buddies working with us to unload and sell pumpkins
 - Welcoming The Cheshire Symphony
 - Mother's Play Group started at St. Peter's
 - Joining with other Cheshire faith communities to make Thanksgiving baskets for needy Cheshire residents
 - Working with Habitat for Humanity to build affordable housing for low-income families through the Sleeping Giant Build chapter. Welcoming the family whose house we helped build share their story at a Faith Forum.
 - Inviting two other faith communities (Cheshire Methodist Church and Ahmadiyya Muslims from the mosque in Meriden) to join us in our work at Shelter Now
 - Welcoming special need youngsters from the high school to come and clean the church each week as part of their education
 - Initiating an Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) support group at the church for the local community
 - Elim Park retirement community donates its theatre for our 2-week summer camp. Our young people enjoy interacting with the residents.

7. Faith formation continues for those who wish to learn more about their faith in small groups
 - Women Rising
 - Living the Questions
 - Lenten study groups
 - Faith forums

8. Strengthening our worshipping community
 - New organ console provides support for congregational singing as enjoyed at the Christmas Pageant this year
 - Choir and choristers lead congregational singing
 - New evening service followed by dinner makes room for contemplative worship once a month
 - Family service once a month provides opportunity for families with young children to worship together
 - Choir and choristers' trip to Carnegie Hall – building community as they raise funds

- Altar Guild incorporates new members and creates new ideas for decorating church at festival services
- Women of the church provide food and service for receptions after funerals to support grieving family members
- Children and youth are mentored and nurtured in their faith through their involvement in church school and youth programs. They accept worship leadership roles through choir and acolyte programs and by becoming lectors and ushers

9. Fellowship opportunities

- Episcopal Church Women (ECW) coffee morning once a week
- ECW outings
- Women Rising pot lucks and fellowship events
- Community breakfasts between the services
- Coffee hours between the services

10. This year we hired two new staff after Kim Clarke, our parish administrator, left to take a full time job at the diocese. This has enabled us to streamline our administration and place more emphasis on external and internal communication.

Clearly, we have had an amazing and productive year, thanks to your generosity and engagement in our parish life. However, there is still much room to grow. One of our first priorities must be to engage new members fully in the life of the parish. To this end a new newcomers' team has been commissioned to come up with new ways of engaging and supporting newcomers as they find their way into our community. At the same time, we need to find ways to inspire new generations of believers to support the mission and ministry of the church by engaging fellow parishioners across generations in the ministries of St. Peter's.

Our next task is to communicate the joy of being part of this loving, caring community of faith to those who haven't yet found their way through our doors and into the church. Let us go out into the community and share the good news of God in Christ as we join our neighbors in caring for those in need.

A special thank you to all who volunteered your time and talent throughout the year. I would like to thank the staff, seminarians and my fellow clergy who work tirelessly and sacrificially to support the life of this vibrant worship community. We would not be the community we are without the ongoing support of our wardens, Liam and Charlie, and our treasurer, John Staab, who work with me throughout the year to manage ongoing challenges and opportunities. Finally, my thanks to David and Matt for their never-failing support of me and of the life and ministry of St. Peter's.

Senior Warden

submitted by Liam Considine

If St. Peter's Were a Car, It Would Be...

While this might be a fun exercise with potential for interesting and illuminating metaphors, my point is to start this report with a very short story I shared at our first vestry meeting in February. We had four new members and I was the new Senior Warden, having just succeeded John Staab after his five years of devoted service and strong leadership. I told them about my father's car, how he was very proud of it, kept it clean and expected me to help keep it clean. I knew the car well, and in a small town like ours, it was easy to spot him coming down the road or parked in the lot of a local business. The car was very much an extension of him. At some point in my mid-teens, it was time for dad to get a new car. Instead of selling the car or trading it in, dad decided to hand the car down to me. My first car! In anticipation of taking-over the car I looked under the hood as if for the first time. I vacuumed the trunk, shined the hubs and washed the windows. I would even take a few steps away from the car to get a sense of how others might see it when I drove it. Yes, it was the same old car that I had been transported around town in for the past four years, and I was the same boy. What had changed? The relationship. I explained to the vestry that, with my new role in the church, I anticipated looking at St. Peter's a little differently and I invited others to embrace their new relationship with our church in a similar way.

Through my desire to delve into a new relationship with the church, I found myself stopping-by much more often after work and on the weekends. If there was a light on in the church or if the parking lot seemed unusually full I found a perfect excuse for a drop-in. I wanted to know what was going on and who was doing it. I wanted to meet the people who devote so much of their time, talent and love but who do not seek credit or thanks. I wanted to see the ministries in action and to greet those who come through our doors seeking comfort or seeking to comfort others. I found a profoundly deeper sense of respect and admiration for Charlie Waggoner, our Junior Warden, whose daily devotion to our church is a wonder to behold and a model to emulate. I look back with great fondness to our "putterings" around the building and the grounds during the heat of last summer. I could feel his satisfaction and pride as one more wall got repointed as well as his enthusiasm for the rescue of our sagging stained glass windows so that future generations could bask in their beautiful light.

It makes sense that in my desire to see the church anew through a new relationship, I would naturally come to see our rector differently. Just as I never really appreciated the time Charlie put into his duties, I had not known the enormity of Sandy's role as our spiritual leader. I learned that only a portion of a rector's job is spent in the church. Much of it is spent going out into the community to support and comfort us in our daily lives. That can mean standing vigil with a family as they are near to losing a loved one, or it can mean playing a hand of poker with an aged parishioner who cannot leave their nursing home. It is not Sandy's way to tell us how hard she works; so much of what she does, by its nature, goes unnoticed, until of course we find ourselves in need of her.

The Vestry

Among the many blessings we have enjoyed as a parish this year was having a harmonious and dynamic vestry. Whether we supported or challenged each other, there was a profound awareness that we respected each other and liked each other. When Sandy could not attend a vestry meeting (for the first time in over twenty years, as I understand it) I was charged with facilitating the meeting. I was a little trepidatious since Sandy always starts us off with a spiritual exercise. I decided to start the meeting with the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi. The vestry gave my attempt at the spiritual lesson their sincerest attention and fullest support. We had a rich discussion of the spirit behind the prayer before we moved with equal earnestness into the "business" segment of the agenda. While I see this as an example of their kindness toward me and each other, that evening also showcased how this vestry did not see itself as merely a board of directors, but a group that is entrusted with making sound decisions for the welfare of the church through the lens of being Christians. It is easy to take an effective vestry for granted because when it is going well you simply might not notice it, but I am so grateful for this year's group and the presence of the Spirit within it. I am also very excited about the group to come as we continue our work into 2017.

Highlights from the Work of the Vestry

A typical vestry meeting agenda is tightly-packed with discussion of both new work and continuing work. What follows are some highlights from the year:

Parish Administrator and Communications Coordinator

At the beginning of the year the vestry was tasked with assisting the rector in creating a new structure for the parish office. That work resulted in the creation of the communications coordinator role and a new structure for the parish administrator. After extensive searches and interviews, Sandy was pleased to hire Leigh Powers as the communications coordinator and Kathy Kirby as the new parish administrator.

Open and Affirming to All

Within the next couple of weeks this new Statement of Welcome will be posted prominently on our South Main Street sign as well as on church materials and on our church website.

The decision to adopt a Statement of Welcome and the wording of the statement resulted from the year-long commitment of the Diversity Task Force to educate the parish about LGBTQ perspectives and, subsequently, its strong recommendation that we more clearly show our support, respect and camaraderie for people from the LGBTQ community, whether they are already part of our church family or are searching for a church. The process also included conferring with Integrity, the grassroots advocacy group for LGBTQ Episcopalians, as well as The Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

I would like to thank the members of the Diversity Task Force who put their heart and soul into their mission last year. The many forums they planned and presented were well-attended by the parish; they broadened our minds and opened our hearts, not only to the perspective of the LGBTQ community, but also to other marginalized groups. Cheryl Sharp's forums on racism on behalf of the Task Force were also invaluable. In our spiritual home, where we are all charged to love one another as Jesus loves all of us, seeking to understand and honor diversity in its many forms promises to be a fruitful and limitless journey. I hope that we will be able to carry-on such work on behalf of *all people* with the same passion and devotion as the Task Force.

I encourage you to embrace the new Statement of Welcome, as it aligns perfectly with a longer Statement of Welcome that has been on our website for a number of years:

***You** are welcome in our church. As Jesus invites **all** to come to his table, we eagerly invite you to share our journey as we worship and celebrate the perfect diversity of God's Creation and His love for **all** people.*

Safe Church Policies and Practices

After attending a safe church seminar hosted by St. Peter's, some members of the vestry have been involved in conducting a safe church audit and in crafting updated safe church policies and practices. The task has been very challenging but the purpose of the work is important in a facility that devotes so much of its mission to its youth. The work is in its final stages and the policy will be prominently displayed for all to read.

Upcoming Work

Among the many opportunities that lie before us this year, the vestry will hold a retreat at Camp Washington in March to explore what the mission statement of St. Peter's will be and to gain a better understanding of what impression we want the community to have when they think of St. Peter's (called "Branding"). This promises to be exciting work, because it's about exploring ways to let people know how special our church is!

Final Thoughts

I started this report with a description of the opportunity for spiritual renewal that comes with taking-on a new relationship with St. Peter's. It is my hope and prayer that all of you find a way to experience a renewal of your relationship to our church. I thank all of you for this opportunity to serve our church and I thank you also for sharing your stories with me this year. May we all continue to grow as individuals and as a community through our love of Christ.

Junior Warden and Capital Campaign Report

Submitted by Charlie Waggoner

Much of my activity in 2016 was associated with the Capital Campaign projects, with some regular routine maintenance issues.

Exterior of the Church

During 2016, we received three quotes to repoint all of the brick joints (100% of the joints) and replace deteriorated bricks for most of the oldest portion of our building. We chose New England Masonry & Roofing, located in Naugatuck, to complete this work for us, which was completed in fall 2016. The sections of the building repointed were the east side (facing Main Street), the south side (facing Humiston School) and the west side (chapel, sacristy and transept walls facing Horton Ave.) We felt repointing all of the bricks was essential to prevent a patchwork of repointing at various future dates. Also, for many years to come, St. Peter's has the confidence that all of the bricks were repointed in 2016.

In addition to repointing the bricks, New England Masonry & Roofing repointed the foundation, repaired and enhanced the gutter system on the south and west sides and repaired, scraped and painted the soffits on the east, south and west sides.

We have a proposal to do similar work on the north side (wall over the parish hall roof) and we will decide whether to go forward with this work in 2017.

Our Front Entrance

After getting multiple quotes, we reached an agreement with Northford Launch to replace our front doors with new mahogany doors for \$19,000. Northford Launch replaced the side narthex door several years ago with the door we now have, so we knew that we will be getting a quality job on the front doors. This work was completed in 2016.

During 2017, we will evaluate the conceptual drawing done by John Clarke in 2015 and decide what we should do here.

Stained Glass Windows

We signed an agreement with Willet Hauser Architectural Glass to do the work on our stained glass windows. Willet Hauser is a well-known and respected stained glass company both building new windows and restoring old windows countrywide. The representative from Willet Hauser recommended the following program to restore the windows in the worst condition and "extend the lives" of the windows that are not in such poor condition:

- Full restoration of the three Humiston side aisle windows, the large Humiston side transept window and the main altar window. Most of these windows are on the south side of the church, subject to full sun exposure and in the most need of repair. During summer 2016, these windows were removed from their frames, trucked to Willet Hauser's studio in Winona, MN where they are in the process of being repaired and re-leaded. We anticipate their return and re-installation in late spring or early summer 2017.

- Repair and stabilization of the remaining windows, excluding the windows that are not exposed to the outside (north transept and north aisle windows). This work will be done in 2017.
- Removal of the current plexi-glass protective covering and replacing it with an aluminum framing system with 1/4" acrylic. This work will be done on all exterior windows in 2017.
- Scrape, putty and repaint exterior window frames. This work will be done in 2017.

Organ and Piano

During 2016, the A. Thompson-Allen Company of New Haven restored our organ. This involved the dismantling, restoration and reassembly of the organ. All of the mechanisms were releathered and all parts of the organ were restored, tested and regulated. This work was the first major overhaul of the organ since it was new in the 1960s.

The Vestry approved the acquisition of an additional organ console and its restoration. The cost to us was transportation, restoration and installation of the new console, which The A. Thompson-Allen had obtained from a church that was disbanding. This console was placed in the Humiston side transept in the fall of 2016.

Structural Work in the Basement

During 2016, we had a structural engineer make an assessment of any immediate safety needs in the church basement and to begin the process of identifying areas that we may want to consider for action.

We received the engineer's report in early 2016 and it identified one critically needed repair involving the foundation at the hatchway door. We engaged New England Masonry & Roofing to handle this repair and they installed steel work to alleviate this critical concern in November 2016.

The engineer's report noted that with the foundation repair the foundation is sound. The report also noted that while there is an assortment of old wooden construction members in the basement they are adequate for the job that they were intended to do. The report made some non-critical recommendations which we need to evaluate in relationship to our budget.

Comfortable Temperature Solutions

During 2016 we installed a mini split air conditioning system in the education wing. Mini splits allow for cooling rooms individually with main condensers outside of the building so we can avoid window AC units. Rooms that we now can air condition are the library, youth room, Christian education director's office, Godly play room, communication coordinator's office and Rector's office.

Capital Campaign Finances

The amount pledged by the parish to the Capital Campaign was \$780,271 and through 12-31-2016 we have received \$592,542. The Capital Campaign committee will be evaluating the status of individual members and following up accordingly during 2017.

Expenses by Capital Campaign project as of yearend 2016 are:

- Stained Glass = approximately \$121,000 and this figure includes two installments that will be due in 2017.
- Parish Hall Floor = \$14,294
- Organ/Piano = \$126,428
- Exterior of Church (primarily the bricks) = \$143,875
- Our Front Entrance (primarily the door at this point) = \$20,853
- Structural work in Basement = \$15,449
- Comfortable Temperature Solutions = \$26,619
- Contingencies and Project Fees (consultant) = \$77,505
- We have not spent any money on the following Capital Campaign projects:
 - Sanctuary Revitalization
 - Plumbing from the Church to the Street
 - Our Church School Area
- Total Expenditures = \$546,023

Other Projects

During 2016, the following briefly describes projects that were completed:

- In April we had some major repair done to the air handler that is located in the basement under the narthex.
- In July we had the sidewalk repaired by the side entrance to correct the settling of the old side walk that resulted in an unsafe condition.
- In July we had the grated air intake for the boilers that is outside the side entrance repaired. Over the years the cinderblocks at the top of the intake had deteriorated and needed to be replaced.
- In August we had the carpets in the sanctuary stretched in order to remove unsafe wrinkles that had developed over the years.
- In December we had the parish hall's membrane roof repaired to stop the persistent leaks whenever we have a heavy rain.

Treasurer's Report

Submitted by John Staab

| St. Peter's Church | | | |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Actual and Budget for 2016, Budget for 2017 | | | |
| | Actual 2016 | Budget 2016 | Budget 2017 |
| 2017 Budget approved by vestry: | January 9, 2017 | | |
| Operating Income | | | |
| Pledge Payments - Last Year | 8,275 | 4,500 | 8,000 |
| Pledge Payments - Current Year | 301,115 | 315,260 | 305,000 |
| Unpledged Payments | 21,073 | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| Loose Collection | 5,915 | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| Seasonal Offerings | 6,128 | 7,500 | 7,000 |
| Building Use Donations | 9,025 | 13,000 | 10,000 |
| Endowment Withdrawals | 22,584 | 23,412 | 24,072 |
| Endowment Income Distributions | 575 | 877 | 852 |
| Income from Trusts | 7,689 | 9,048 | 7,690 |
| Transfer from Housing Fund | 7,548 | 8,196 | 8,280 |
| Fees from Fundraising | 3,231 | 3,000 | 3,000 |
| Fundraising Activities | 14,205 | 15,000 | 15,000 |
| Total Operating Income | 407,362 | 425,793 | 414,894 |
| Operating Expenses | | | |
| Administrative Expenses | | | |
| Office Supplies | 4,382 | 4,500 | 4,200 |
| Communications & Marketing | 1,069 | 1,500 | 1,750 |
| Postage | 434 | 1,000 | 500 |
| Telephone | 2,031 | 2,040 | 2,040 |
| Copier | 5,465 | 4,500 | 5,000 |
| Computer Supplies & Support | 2,858 | 2,500 | 3,000 |
| Altar Supplies | 1,526 | 1,500 | 1,650 |
| Unbudgeted Expense | 3,069 | | 2,000 |
| Organ & Piano Maintenance | | 960 | 960 |
| Accounting Services | | 4,000 | 3,500 |
| Professional Fees | 697 | 300 | 400 |
| Total Administrative Expenses | 21,530 | 22,800 | 25,000 |

| St. Peter's Church | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Actual and Budget for 2016, Budget for 2017 | | |
| | Actual | Budget |
| | 2016 | 2016 |
| Facilities Expenses | | |
| Service Contracts | 2,161 | 2,000 |
| Church Building Maintenance | 5,557 | 6,000 |
| Electricity | 8,488 | 8,000 |
| Heating | 12,147 | 15,000 |
| Water & Sewer | 761 | 1,250 |
| Refuse Disposal | 1,676 | 1,740 |
| Cemetery & Grounds | 4,291 | 6,500 |
| Insurance | 12,060 | 12,898 |
| Total Facilities Expenses | 47,139 | 53,388 |
| Staff/Personnel Expenses | | |
| Rector Salary | 50,620 | 50,620 |
| Rector SS Allowance | 8,304 | 8,304 |
| Rector Housing Allowance | 31,522 | 31,522 |
| Rector Car Allow & Prof Expense | 1,213 | 1,200 |
| Rector Pension | 16,280 | 16,280 |
| Rector Life Insurance | 300 | 300 |
| Rector Med & Dental Insurance | 34,392 | 34,387 |
| Rector Continuing Education | 400 | 1,500 |
| Associate Rector Salary | 2,884 | 2,884 |
| Associate Rector Pension | 559 | 559 |
| Supply Clergy | 440 | 440 |
| CFD Director Salary | 15,608 | 15,608 |
| Choir Director Salary | 53,867 | 53,867 |
| Choir Director Pension | 4,844 | 4,848 |
| Supply Organist | 300 | 500 |
| Parish Administrator Pension | 1,201 | 4,545 |
| Parish Administrator Salary | 34,810 | 50,500 |
| Communications Salary | | |
| Housekeeping Salary | 8,124 | 8,096 |
| FICA & Medicare [All Staff] | 8,820 | 10,018 |
| Total Staff/Personnel Expenses | 274,487 | 295,978 |

| St. Peter's Church | | |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| Actual and Budget for 2016, Budget for 2017 | | |
| | Actual 2016 | Budget 2016 |
| Outreach & Diocese Expenses | | |
| Diocese Mission & Ministry | 42,372 | 42,372 |
| Outreach | 1,485 | 1,485 |
| Seminarian Stipend | | |
| Total Outreach & Diocese Expenses | 43,857 | 43,857 |
| Program & Ministry Expenses | | |
| Newcomers | | 500 |
| Hospitality | 666 | 850 |
| Christian Education - Children | 1,488 | 2,000 |
| Parish Faith Enrichment | -116 | 600 |
| Youth Group | 429 | 1,000 |
| Child Care | 1,995 | 1,820 |
| Music/Choir | 1,662 | 3,000 |
| Total Program & Ministry Expenses | 6,124 | 9,770 |
| Total Operating Expenses | 393,137 | 425,793 |
| Net Operating Income (Loss) | 14,225 | 0 |
| Total Operating Income | 407,362 | 425,793 |
| Administrative Expenses | 21,530 | 22,800 |
| Facilities Expenses | 47,139 | 53,388 |
| Staff/Personnel Expenses | 274,487 | 295,978 |
| Outreach & Diocese Expenses | 43,857 | 43,857 |
| Program & Ministry Expenses | 6,124 | 9,770 |
| Total Operating Expenses | 393,137 | 425,793 |
| Submitted by: <u>John Staab, Treasurer</u> January 22, 2017 | | |

St. Peter's Endowment

Submitted by John Staab, Treasurer

- The endowment had an approximate 6.4% return on investment in 2016, while providing \$31K for St. Peter's operating and administrative expense.
- There were two additions to the endowment in 2016:
a \$10,000 donation from the estate of John Moran and an anonymous donation of \$2,000.

Just under \$31K was withdrawn from the endowment to support operating expenses. This amount was budgeted and fully anticipated. \$31K represents spending of about 4.5% of the beginning of year endowment balance; well within our investment policy limit of 5%.

In 2017, we need to withdraw \$33K in order to balance the budget. This is 4.7% of the year-end value of \$702,869.

U.S. Trust – investment manager and administrator since September, 2014

Management Fees - \$3,477 which is slightly over ½ of 1% of our average monthly balance

Performance – U.S. Trust uses their own unique investment strategy and doesn't attempt to track against or mimic any particular benchmark. As such, their 6.4% ROI in 2016 seems understandable against the performance of other indicators, such as:

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--------|----------------------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| DJIA | 13.42% | NASDAQ | 7.5% | S&P 500 | 9.54% |
| Wilshire 5000 | 13.03% | MSCI ex US | 1.67% | MSCI All World | 5.63% |
| | | AGG (Barclay's bond index) | | | 0.05% |

In 2016, U.S. Trust allocated almost 20% of the portfolio to international markets and about 25% to fixed income. The MSCI (a widely used index provided by Morgan Stanley) excluding US companies returned only 1.67% and the Barclay's Bond index showed basically a 0% return. With almost half of U.S. Trust's portfolio in bonds & international markets, it follows that their 6.4% return falls in the middle of the 1% yield of bonds & international and the 10-12% one might expect from a strictly domestic allocation.

If you have any questions about the endowment, please ask; I'll explain whatever I can.

Staff Annual Reports

Children's Ministries

Submitted by Sandra Baker, Director of Children's Ministries

Children's Ministries offers our youngest parishioners through grade 6 the opportunity to learn the lessons of our faith using engaging, age-appropriate curriculums. Our parish family remains active with 60 children of 34 families who attend our Nursery, Godly Play, Workshop Rotation, and Children's Chapel classes. In addition, several families attend our Family Service held once a month. This service is designed for young families and reinforces lessons from the primary grade Workshop Rotation classes. Children's Ministries also supports family events offered throughout the year such as the Pumpkin Festival, family fellowship events and our annual Easter egg hunt. We also support faith learning at home with suggestions throughout the year for at-home activities. Sunday school classes are offered between services beginning at 9:30am. Parents and families are encouraged to attend the Faith Forum in the Parish Hall.

Beyond Sunday school classes, our children are encouraged to participate in other ministries in the church. Several of the older children serve as acolytes, ushers and sing in the Chorister program. Many of our children also attend our summer Drama Camp. Parents and guardians are encouraged to participate as teachers and helpers in the classrooms as well as assist in various events throughout the year. I am very grateful for the volunteers who have given their time to our children. It is an amazing learning experience to share together! We are still in need of teachers for our upcoming units and would be grateful for volunteers. Our program relies on volunteers and together we make it a success!

Our Workshop Rotation curriculum for grades 1 – 6 includes art, cooking, drama, storytelling, science, movies and computer and other games to teach and reinforce the lessons, appealing to different interests and learning styles. We began the year with a Back to School celebration and look forward to a Mardi Gras party in February with food, fun, and games. On Palm Sunday a special lesson will be devoted to preparing for Easter as we enter into Holy Week. The children also experience stewardship activities throughout the year. This past fall, the children prepared coffee cakes and cookies for Abraham's Tent, a program for the homeless. They also made cards for our parishioners who need an extra smile.

In Godly Play, our children who are in Preschool – Kindergarten learn the stories of the Bible with a hands-on story-telling technique. They share a snack together, "the feast", and have either a craft or game style activity based on the lesson. Children's Chapel is offered during the 10:30 service and we pray, sing songs, and have an activity.

Miss Barb, our loving Nursery teacher, is there every Sunday from 9:15am – 11am for children 3 and under. She is often visited by our older children who have fond memories of times in the nursery. Many thanks for the care she provides for our youngest parishioners.

A highlight every year in Children's Ministries is our annual Christmas Eve Pageant which is a dramatic presentation of the liturgy. This year 30 children and youth participated. All children of the parish are invited to join in. We heard the Christmas story told from the perspective of each of the participants – Mary, Joseph, townspeople, shepherds, the kings and even the donkey. All were witness to the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ! In the background was the new addition of a Jesse Tree. Our November Family service began the weekly addition of handmade ornaments which reflect the stories of the covenant with God and the prophecies of the birth of Jesus.

I look forward to 2017 as we continue our lessons about the love of God and the upcoming events we share with our parish family.

I am very thankful for this amazing experience to share in the journey of faith with the children and families of St. Peter's Church.

Music

Submitted by Dr. Stuart Paul Duncan, Director of Music

This year has proved to be a transitional year for several of our choir members. Thom Peters began his ministry, Frank Darius has been unable to sing with us due to injury, and Alice Jackson passed on to sing with our Lord (I would like to remember with thanks her service and dedication to St. Peter's over the past decade). Several young male choristers have found their voices changing, leading to a whole host of vocal challenges and alterations to the chorister line up. Despite these changes, the choirs have continued to excel in their quality of vocal sound, their attention to supporting worship, and their commitment to multiple rehearsals per week. The clearest sign of their successful development is an invitation to sing at Carnegie hall in June 2017. What is most exciting about this venture, beyond being accepted after several successful auditions, is that it is inter-generational, encompassing ages 12 through to 70s. What is most astounding about St. Peter's is that in a time where most churches struggle to get more than a dozen older-generation singers involved, we have a flourishing choir of nearly 40 members representing every generation.

This year we installed a new organ console. This console has opened up a whole new color palette for shaping the sound, and has the increased ability to activate more pipes, further enhancing and supporting congregational singing. I look forward to exploring the new horizons possible with postludes, preludes, and congregational mediations on the organ, organ-led anthems with the choirs, and enlivening our congregational worship.

There are many people who give their time and talents to support our chorister program. Specifically, I would like to thank Caitlin Celella and Fiona D'Souza for their unwavering support in fostering our chorister's choral development and Peg Cornish for her organization of the chorister dinners. I would also like to thank Caitlin, Fiona, Marie Hodgdon, Marion Belson, and Sandy Stayner for their support at Ivoryton this past year where fifteen of our choristers sang, played, and broke bread together.

Parish Administrator

Submitted by Kathy Kirby

I would like to thank everyone for the warm welcome I have received since I started at St. Peter's in the spring. If I haven't met you, I look forward to doing so.

The Parish Office is open from 9am – 1pm on Tuesdays – Fridays. When we are closed, you can leave me a voice mail (203-272-4041 x10) or send me an email (office@stpeterscheshire.org).

The Parish Office manages the administration of St. Peter's. As Parish Administrator, some of my responsibilities include greeting parishioners and visitors who call or visit; providing office support to the rector, officers, vestry members, staff, parishioners and the many ministries that define this parish community; coordinating building usage (for both rental groups and parish ministries/outreach); maintaining the parish calendar (which changes daily); ordering supplies and materials needed for the parish; interacting with the ECCT; preparing Orders of Service for Sunday services and special liturgies; and much more. I often see my job as the Air Traffic Controller for the parish. Although I'm usually in the Parish Office, on any given day you may find me in the cemetery sending a photo of a headstone to someone out-of-state; searching for a large inflatable pumpkin stored under the church; creating and hanging banners on the outdoor sign; measuring the church aisle for a wedding florist; and introducing visitors to this beautiful, welcoming, historic church.

I am also grateful to the parish volunteers who are always willing to help out when needed. You are a joy to work with.

A few items I would like to bring to everyone's attention:

Parish Calendar: Although there is still a paper wall calendar posted in the office, please first check the parish calendar on the website (www.stpeterscheshire.org), which has the most updated information about services, meetings and activities. Remember to call or email me to add an activity or remove one from the calendar. We have many groups using our building and need to know where and when things are happening. Thank you.

Sunday Bulletin: I try to prepare the Sunday bulletin for printing on Thursdays, so it is very helpful for me to receive anything you want included in the Bulletin by Wednesday night.

Communication by Email: We now have the ability to email parishioners quarterly and year-end contribution statements. We also can save postage, processing time and paper by emailing you other parish documents and information.

We need your help with this effort – please notify me of any changes to your mailing address, home and cell phone numbers, and email addresses. If you have an email address that is not in our database, I would love to update our database with that email address.

St. Peter's is a vibrant, faithful and active parish community which I am thrilled to support. Thank you for trusting me with the responsibility for the parish's administration. I will do my best to serve as a faithful servant for St. Peter's.

Communications

Submitted by Leigh Powers

In early spring 2016, the St. Peter's Vestry created a new part-time position of communications coordinator to meet an identified need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of St. Peter's internal and external communications. The role of the Communications Coordinator is to develop and coordinate communications, across a wide variety of channels (website, email, social media, letter print, brochures, posters, flyers, banners, signs, etc.) to support the ministry and mission of St. Peter's.

My initial efforts consisted of reviewing each of the existing communication channels (see above paragraph) for effectiveness and developing specific recommendations for improvement. We conducted a survey to gather data on St. Peter's parish members' age, contact information and communications preferences.

I've explored other church websites to develop a list of best practices to be used in the design of a new St Peter's website and joined two groups of church communication professionals to learn about what other churches are doing to improve their communications and get ideas on the best communication tools available. I have explored our current web provider for unused functionality and identified possible new website hosts and other potential vendors. I continue to identify all the potential audiences (internal and external) for St. Peter's communications and try new ideas to learn the most effective ways to reach each.

Progress for the year includes:

- Planned, drafted, designed, revised, and scheduled over 40 e-Blast emails communicating events, programming, ministry and outreach opportunities for our community.
- Significant findings of our communications survey include that approximately one half of the respondents are interested in receiving updates via text messaging, either a printed copy of sermons and/or recorded services, and are interested in some form of online giving.
- Investigated and explored current state of the website, both content and infrastructure. Removed outdated content. Identifying the tools needed to improve the website.
- Designed flyers, the Parish Guide and other materials for both print and digital use. Constantly discovering the richness of photos available and starting to create a standard way of storing and using quality photos for various communication channels.
- Improving our Facebook presence with more frequent postings, event invitations and humor. Creating a social media presence with our new Twitter account to capture the richness of our collaboration with community groups such as the Cheshire Clergy Association, Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, inter-faith groups and other joint projects.
- Working closely with other staff members and leaders to create effective communications and planning for events.

Goals for 2017

- Encourage and support vestry to work toward high-level agreement on St. Peter's core identity / image, which team will use to define brand elements. Define key brand elements including overall "look/feel" (traditional, energetic, formal); consistent typefaces, imagery, colors, icon, tagline, etc. to create "brand" consistency across St. Peter's communications.
- Create new website which reflects the spirit of St. Peter's and seeks to invite newcomers and improve internal communication.
- Develop a communications calendar and communication plans for annual events.
- Identify and develop any policies that might be required to ensure effective and appropriate communications, for example: social media, safe church, etc.

What I most deeply enjoyed and appreciated this past year was getting to know this parish and the Cheshire community. Talking with and more importantly listening to leaders, visitors, and parishioners is so important. One of my greatest joys is continually discovering the richness of individuals, stories, moments, and ministry at St. Peter's.

A very special thanks to: Rev. Sandy Stayner and St. Peter's staff, Stuart Duncan, Sandi Baker, and Kathy Kirby for their invaluable support, guidance, and collaboration. The Communications Team for their time, perspective, and insight: Marj Chapman, Elise Palumbo, and Richard Saunders and everyone for your warm welcome, suggestions and helpfulness.

Seminarians

This year we have been blessed to receive two seminarians from Berkeley Divinity School at Yale. In return for their involvement in our parish they receive regular supervision from the rector. We also provide a small stipend for travel expenses

In September **Catherine Amy Kropp** returned to St. Peter's for a second year. During the summer she was accepted as a Postulant in the Diocese of Maine. She hopes to graduate in May with an M.Div. After graduation she will continue her discernment process for ordination. During her time at St. Peter's Catherine Amy discovered a desire to work with the elderly. Whenever possible she visits homebound parishioners to provide pastoral care and support. She helped to develop a new monthly evening service with Emily Garcia at which she has delighted many of us with her sensitive and thoughtful cello playing.

Emily Garcia joined us in September. She is currently a Candidate for Ordination in the Diocese of Massachusetts. She will graduate in May with an M. Div. After graduation she hopes to return to her diocese to work as a parish priest. Emily has a particular love of ministry with children. She has helped to develop the monthly family service with Sandi Baker. She partnered with Catherine Amy to develop the monthly contemplative evening worship services.

Both seminarians have presented lively forums throughout the year.

Persons Seeking Ordination

We are currently sponsoring two parishioners who are seeking ordination in the CT Diocese.

Thom Peters is now in his second year of postulancy, and expects to meet the canonical requirements for ordination within a year and a half, or so. This summer he completed his Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) requirement working as a chaplain at Norwalk Hospital. He is presently working as a Ministry Intern at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Bantam, CT where he preaches once a month, leads the adult forum and participates in various parish activities. He is hoping to take General Ordination Exams (GOE) next winter.

Carrie (Staab) Combs is currently finishing her M.Div. at Sewanee Divinity School, TN. She hopes to graduate in May 2017. She recently took General Ordination Exams (GOE) and completed an internship at a small parish in Tennessee. She is currently a Postulant in the Diocese of CT. Candidacy interviews are scheduled to take place in March. After graduation she is hoping to return to CT with her husband Nik (a transitional deacon from the Diocese of Idaho) where they hope to find openings for parish work.

Our Ministries

Worship / Liturgy

Acolytes

Submitted by Alan Blume

Acolyte ministry is an excellent way for people of all ages to take a more active part in worship and we can always use some additional acolytes for both services. All are welcome to this ministry. If you are interested, please contact Alan Blume at 203-272-4160 or by email at amblume@aya.yale.edu.

As of the end of 2016, there were 17 active Acolytes serving St. Peter's: Julia Bevilacqua, Taylor Fitzgerald, Mary Beth Brubaker, Heather Fitzgerald, Gene Caputo, Kaylen Fitzgerald, John Kosciuk, Daniel Knickerbocker, Conner Michaud, Jeffry Knickerbocker, Catherine Norton, Elijah Mulligan, Grace Azaula, Robert Pritchard, Isabelle Azaula, Liam Sheehan, and Alan Blume.

Altar Guild

Submitted by [Jeanne Kosciuck](#)

Altar Guild currently has 14 devoted members spanning 3 teams. We are fortunate to have such an incredible group of men and women. We still strive to encourage membership and flexibility in the membership to make the fourth team, understanding fully the demands placed upon families. 2016 was a busy year with 2 weddings, 12 baptisms and, unfortunately, 9 funerals.

Altar Guild is in the process of replacing the green frontal with matching vestments and pulpit and lectern hangings. The old ones were too tattered and worn and beyond repair. So far we have been blessed with a generous gift/offer from the ECW and Audrey Notation thereby helping us to move forward with this project. Thank you!

I also want to thank Audrey Notation and Nancy Saunders for their advice and expertise in choosing the new frontal.

Altar Guild would also like to thank Charles Dimmick, John Kosciuk and Richard Saunders for their loyalty in helping us decorate the Church through the holidays.

In addition to new members, the focus of Altar Guild remains on the Altar itself. So many of our items are in need of TLC and we are committed to doing just that.

Lectors, Ministers of the Chalice, Lay Readers and Ushers

Submitted by Charlie Waggoner Jr.

Lectors participate in the services at St. Peter's by reading the First Lesson and the Second Lesson. Lectors also lead the congregation in the Prayers of the People. St. Peter's lectors are assigned to read the lessons or lead the Prayers of the People about one service every two months. Lectors do not have to be licensed by the Bishop so new lectors can easily be placed into the schedule very quickly. For new lectors who desire it, a brief training session can be held prior to the new lector's first reading. Anyone who desires to become a lector can contact me at 272-9710.

The group of lectors during 2016 at St. Peter's included Alan Blume, Avril Cocking, Charles Dimmick, Heather Fitzgerald, Scott Gadwa, Tom Gilmore and Elizabeth Guest. Also Arianna Harris, Sean Humble, John Kosciuk, Julia Michnowicz and Mary Ellen Morgan. Also Margery Nettleton, Thom Peters, Bob Pritchard, Kathy Queen, Sophia Renker, Jasmine Scinto, John Staab, Nancy Staab, Matt Stayner, Hailey Strauss, Bob Thomas, and Sam Waldo.

Ministers of the Chalice assist clergy during the celebration of Holy Eucharist by administering the chalice according to the directive in the Book of Common Prayer. Chalice ministers are required to be licensed by the Bishop. Chalice ministers participate in the Eucharist about every six weeks. Anyone who desires to become a Chalice minister can contact me at 272-9710. The Chalice ministers at St. Peter's are Paul Breau, Alan Blume, Avril Cocking, Tom Gilmore, Elizabeth Guest, Gretchen Hayden, Heather Fitzgerald, Jeanne Kosciuk, Carol Maye, Thom Peters, Bob Pritchard, Matt Stayner and Ruth Sullo.

Lay Readers are licensed by the Bishop to officiate at certain services such as Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer. Lay Reader, Charles Dimmick officiates at weekday Morning Prayer. Lay Readers also officiate at other services when members of the clergy are not available to lead these services. The lay readers at St. Peter's are Charles Dimmick and Charlie Waggoner Jr.

Ushers

We have a good representation of adults and younger members of the parish serving as ushers. Our ushers in 2016 were Charlie Moran, Dan Hersey, Bob Prifty, John Staab, Antonio Dimarco and Charlie Waggoner. Also Judy van Heiningen, Jasmine Scinto, Pascal Preudhomme, Erin Alexander, Zac Cornelius, Drew D'Addio, Chris Baker, James Michnowicz and Elijah Mulligan. I hope that any other adults or younger people who would like to usher will express their interest to me so we can get them going. The ushers at the 8:15 AM service were Dave Austin, Shirley Rouse and Linda Henderson. Although I don't attend this service I do want to extend my thanks to Dave, Linda and Shirley for stepping up and serving as ushers for St. Peter's at 8:15 am.

Youth

Rite 13, J2A, YAC

Submitted by [Marj Chapman](#)

Our youth ministry includes three 2-year programs. In Rite 13, for youth approximately 12 to 14 years of age, we focus on building a strong sense of community within the group through interactive classroom activities, discussions, outreach and more. We explore individual and community faith in an age-appropriate way. The Rite 13 leader is Kim Donaldson.

In Journey to Adulthood (J2A), we build on the Rite 13 experience, strengthening community as we offer high-school youth the opportunity to explore their faith more deeply. In the fall of 2016, we initiated the *Confirm not Conform* program to give our youth a safe place to explore the breadth of the Christian tradition, ask questions, express doubts and discover what they truly believe as they prepare for possible confirmation. The program features engaging and thought-provoking sessions, at least 4 field trips, and a community service project, among other activities. This program also involves our entire parish community, including adult mentors for each youth, vestry approval of a community service project, and youth planning and participation in worship services and ministries. We have 8 youth currently participating actively in the CnC program: Grace Azaula, Sophia Renker, Molly Hayden, Julia Michnowicz, Thomas Bonitz, Aiden Bogan, Elijah Mulligan and Christopher Baker. Co-leaders are Marj Chapman and Wes Naylor. Mentors are Heather Fitzgerald, Sue Desjardins, Kim Clarke, Andrea Hoslett, Molly Preudhomme, Nancy Staab, Denise Hersey, Alan Blume, Richard Saunders, Sam Dunlop and Tom Gilmore.

In Young Adults in Church (YAC), we encourage our youth's engagement with the parish community as they mentor the younger youth, plan outreach activities in the community, join parish ministries and participate actively in the worship services. We are currently looking for a volunteer to assume leadership of this effort.

Campus Care Packages

Submitted by [Lisa Schweitzer](#)

Care Packages of homemade treats and encouraging notes are assembled at the end of both fall and spring semesters by a faithful group of St. Peter's women. These packages are sent to St. Peter's college students and other students who are loved by St. Peter's parishioners. Twenty-three packages were sent during the spring of 2016 and a record *thirty-one* packages were mailed at the end of the recent fall semester!

Our goal in sending these packages is to remind our young people that they have a place in the hearts and prayers of the St. Peter's family, even though they are not in our midst on a regular basis. Families of the recipients often report that the notes from these care packages are kept and treasured for many years.

The parish continues to enthusiastically support the costs of our mailing, with their patronage of the used book sale, faithfully organized by Maryann Lewis. Donations made to the 2016 sale totaled over \$150 and allowed us to cover all expenses for the fall mailing, with funds left over to help with the 2017 spring mailing.

Thank you to those who bought a used book, added a name to our mailing list, baked cookies or penned a note. You have all made a difference in a young life.

Drama Camp

Submitted by Marie Hodgdon

Drama Camp is a two-week theater camp with a multigenerational cast. For the third year, we welcomed members of the community to be a part of an enriching experience, not only to learn or improve acting and musical skills, but to grow in friendship in a supportive, caring environment. This camp consists of morning rehearsals followed by an afternoon activity for the children. Some favorites are laser tag, bowling, a backstage tour of Historic Palace Theater and Lake Compounce. The older teens and adults have evening rehearsals to allow for work schedules.

For the third year, we have partnered with Elim Park, who generously provides their professional performance venue, Nelson Hall, at no cost to St. Peter's and all ticket proceeds are given to St. Peter's. This has been an enriching environment for all; residents peek in during rehearsals, smile and tell us how excited they are for the performance to come. Each year we schedule one of the afternoon activities to include time interacting with residents, playing board games and sing-alongs.

This year's production of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* was directed by Amy Myers and music was directed by Irina Zayaruzna. Set and costumes by Sandi Baker, with help from members of both St. Peter's and the community. We are proud to say we had two successful sold out shows. As in past years, we began our day in prayer and lessons learned from the show. This year we discussed *Beauty and the Beast's* message of forgiveness and redemption.

The camp was organized this year by camp co-directors, Marie Hodgdon and Fiona D'Souza. With the growth of St. Peter's Camp, we became a licensed day camp. This brought a few changes to the administrative duties. The State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood oversees all youth camps. As part of the licensing process, Elim Park, had inspections by both the Office of Early Education, youth camp division and the Cheshire Fire Marshall. Dr. Liebler of Pediatric Associates of Cheshire, a local pediatrician's office, was our Camp Doctor on Call. He reviewed and advised on the required Camp First Aid Guidelines and reviewed any first aid that was given to a camper. Fiona received her First Aid/CPR certificate, as required, in case of a medical need. Jen D'Souza, Fiona's sister-in-law, was also certified in First Aid/CPR, as we are required to have a secondary first aid responder. Fiona and Marie coordinated the activities for the camp, including the bus service to and from activities and parent chaperones for each trip.

With a cast of 42 this year (26 full-time campers) and two sold out shows we ended the year with a net profit of \$2,377.20. Part of the total will cover the 2017 production copyrights; the remaining goes to St. Peter's Memorial Fund. The 10% tithe to St. Peter's was \$1,731.80

We are happy to say Elim Park has invited us once again to hold St. Peter's Camp at Nelson Hall and we are excited for the coming 2017 year.

Parish Ministries

St. Peter's Cemetery and Memorial Garden

Submitted by Nancy Staab

St. Peter's Cemetery is the peaceful resting place of many generations of St. Peter's families. In 2017, the cemetery will commemorate its 250th anniversary, having been founded in 1767.

The cemetery encompasses not only the traditional burial ground, but also the beautiful Memorial Garden for the interment of ashes.

Activities associated with the cemetery include helping families secure burial rights; coordinating burials; advising families on stone placement; keeping accurate records of burial lots and available gravesites; answering inquiries and researching genealogical information.

Ecojustice Council

Submitted by Martha Blume

With cooperation, mindfulness, simplicity, temperance, and respect for nature, the ecojustice council shares information and facilitates dynamic discussion to build an ecological ethic that informs our everyday actions as individuals and as a spiritual community.

In late summer of 2015, the Connecticut Diocese awarded us **The Jack Spaeth Creation Care/Environmental Grant** to increase awareness and understanding about the climate costs of single-use plastic bags. The grant money paid for the manufacture of *St. Peter's Cares for Creation*-branded reusable tote bags.

We have not had any major events this year; however we continue to hand out our bags at opportunities such as the Ministries Fair. Recently, the Connecticut Diocese followed our lead and ordered reusable bags which members of St. Peter's Ecojustice Council handed out to worshippers as they left the service at the 2016 Diocesan Convention, and we had an information table at the convention.

We continue to model "reduce/reuse/recycle" changes in our parish by using ceramic mugs washed in the kitchen dishwasher for our coffee hours; minimizing food waste, and improving compost, trash and recycling efforts.

We have been investigating ways to get other religious and civic organizations in Cheshire to adopt the reusable bag initiative. We welcome new members and fresh approaches to the challenges of climate change.

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

Submitted by Nancy Saunders

Ladies, we welcome you and your daughters, ages 13 to 22, to join us in fellowship and in service within our parish and our community. Come when you can for Wednesday coffee social hour, 10 to 11am, hosted by Fran Feldt. We meet at Dunkin Donuts in the Big Y Plaza on South Main Street in Cheshire.

We had two fund raisers each year:

1. December - Soup and Santa Christmas Bazaar
2. May - Spring Rummage Sale

High school students, male and female, can earn community service hours by working at one or both of our fund raisers.

Money raised is disbursed to several church groups and outreach projects throughout our community and the state of Connecticut.

ECW collects St. Peter's United Thank Offerings each spring and takes them to the CT Diocesan UTO Fall Ingathering in November. In May, we attend the CT Diocesan ECW's annual luncheon and meeting at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington.

Girls just want to have fun and we did, thanks to Cindy Garvin. Last fall, we had a 'Happy Hatter's Tea Party' at Gouveia Vineyards, in Wallingford. In the spring we toured the Glebe House and enjoyed lunch at the Curtis House in Woodbury.

2016 ECW Treasurer's Annual Report

Submitted by Hilda Schmidt, ECW Treasurer

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$6,384.89 |
| Income: | |
| Spring Rummage Sale | \$2,116.40 |
| Consignment Originals | \$173.93 |
| Christmas Bazaar | \$2,790.95 |
| Donation | \$5.00 |
| Total Income | \$5,086.28 |
| Expenses: Church Recycling | \$360.00 |
| St. Peter's Children Camp Scholarship | \$1,200.00 |
| Rector's Discretionary Fund | \$500.00 |
| St, Peter's Operating Fund | \$400.00 |
| Outreach – Prison Ministry | \$50.00 |
| Shelter NOW | \$400.00 |
| Farewell Gift for Kim Clarke | \$75.00 |
| Glebe House Tour Donation/Lunch | \$133.10 |
| Library Solar Shades at HFM Interiors | \$1,480.00 |
| Total Expenses | \$4,690.10 |
| Balance as of 12-31-2016 | \$6,781.07 |

Altar Flower Ministry

Submitted by [Susanne Deering](#)

Once the Sunday services are over the altar flowers are delivered to shut-ins or parishioners who are sick (as the Rector directs). The delivery team consists of four members working in rotation (Wendy Ciaburri, Marie Hirschfeld, Anita Linsley and Suzanne Deering). We are always looking for new members to help with deliveries. If you would like to become involved in this important ministry to our sick and elderly, please contact [Susanne Deering](#).

Hospitality

Submitted by [Wendy Ciaburri](#)

The Hospitality Committee has continued with the St. Peter's tradition of providing receptions after funeral or memorial services. Receptions have also been held after musical events, special meetings as well as cakes for baptisms.

The Hospitality budget is used for coffee and paper goods for the weekly coffee hours. Being on the Hospitality Committee is a good way to meet other parishioners. All are welcome to join this rewarding ministry.

Welcoming Team

A revitalized Welcoming Team was recently put in place to identify and oversee creative ways to engage and support newcomers to St. Peter's. Current members are Molly Preudhomme, Cathy Mattheis, Hilda Schmidt, Liam Considine, Charlie Waggoner and Sandy Stayner. If you are interested in joining this effort or have suggestions, please contact [Molly Preudhomme](#).

Prayer Team

St. Peter's continues to be blessed to have an active team of parishioners whose mission is to pray for those in need – whoever and wherever they may be. Simply call, email or leave a note in the parish office about your need for prayer. This team will lift you and your loved ones up in prayer. To protect privacy, we use only people's initials or first names as we pass along the needs to others on the prayer team. Please contact [Suki Gadwa](#) for additional information or to join the prayer team.

Quilting Group

Submitted by Audrey Notation

The Quilters at St. Peter's have been together since 2000. We make tied quilts for people in need of our prayers and support, for foster children at our social workers' requests, and for each individual at baptism, children and adults.

We welcome new members to join us in this ministry. Join us for one week or come often. We need some new stories. We could also use more hands to pin and sew. We meet on Thursdays mornings in the parish hall from 10am until 12:30pm. Some quilters attend the 10am service and join later. Please stop by and, if you would like more information, contact Audrey Notation at (203) 271-0791

Donations of fabric, as well as monetary donations and gift cards from a fabric store, are greatly appreciated. The printed fabric is cotton or poly/cotton, 72 inches long and 42-45 inches wide (for children we make a quilt 40-45 inches long and the same width). The back is fleece of a coordinating color, usually 54 inches wide. We usually use fabric from JoAnn Fabrics.

We wish to thank those who made money donations this year and also those who donated fabric and fleece. In 2016, 12 baptismal quilts were presented to the candidates and 16 quilts to those of the parish in need of our prayers.

Stewardship

Submitted by Marj Chapman

This year we introduced a new approach to stewardship at St. Peter's called *Stewardship365*.

Stewardship365 is based on four fundamental assumptions:

1. Everything belongs to God because God created everything (Colossians 1:16)
2. God gives abundantly – there is enough for all to share and enjoy.
3. We are not to keep God's resources; we are to make sure they circulate
4. God's blessings are then recycled to create more blessings. "*Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.*" (John 6:12)

This approach expands our understanding of stewardship beyond money to include other important resources, or currencies, that exist in our faith community – the currencies of wellness, relationship, truth, gracious leadership, and time and place. *Stewardship365* is more inclusive, more comprehensive and more empowering.

It is inclusive because it asks each community member to understand, develop and use all of his or her currencies to support the work of St. Peter's. Importantly, it recognizes that we all have different skills, gifts, resources – and are at different stages of life's journey. Although we cannot give equally – each of us can contribute to the health and well-being of our community.

At the same time, we need to meet the parish's annual operating expenses. This fall, as we asked everyone to consider and commit to an annual pledge, our message was simple: There is enough, with some left over to share.

To introduce the concept of the flow of blessings, one Sunday in October we distributed \$1 to everyone who attended services. We asked that they find a way to transform their dollar to a blessing for someone and then tell us about it. Those "\$ to Blessing" actions are still posted on the [St. Peter's web site](#). We followed-up with several Faith Forums where attendees engaged in activities to experience abundance and the flow of blessings.

Beyond the annual pledge, *Stewardship365* creates an attitude of year-round stewardship that will – in time – enable us to shift from maintenance to mission, from scarcity to abundance and from fear to grace. In 2017, our team will work to help everyone engage with this new approach.

Faith Formation

Faith Forums

Submitted by [Kelly Schmidt](#)

Faith Forums are offered between our two worship services on most Sundays. Community members gather to explore the teachings, challenges, connections and opportunities our faith offers. Together, we create opportunities for thoughtfulness, play, celebration, thanks and meaningful engagement with one another. Topics are determined by parishioners' expressed interests, current topics of faith and relevant social concerns. We draw on the talent, experience and knowledge of our parish members and clergy, as well as of invited speakers from the broader community.

In 2016, St. Peter's worship schedule changed slightly with the introduction of a monthly Family Worship service, which has resulted in fewer forums, but the topics have remained strong and generated enthusiastic participation. Presenters included the Diversity Task Force and the Ecojustice Council; our seminarians, including Robbie Pennoyer, Catherine Amy Kropp and Emily Garcia; parishioners who have told their personal stories; as well as Rector Sandy Stayner and Assistant Rector David Stayner. For the fall of 2016, our theme has been *Exploring Wellness* – spiritual, physical, economic, environmental, and social – in ourselves, our families, our church, our neighborhood, our city, state, nation and world. *Exploring Wellness* topics have included: inclusion strengthening community, experiencing abundance and flow, understanding God's economy, and seeking social justice.

Living the Questions

Submitted by [Andrea Hoslett](#)

This group meets Mondays at 1:00 p.m. to discuss issues of contemporary Christianity and life, as well as interfaith topics. Led by Andrea Hoslett, the group uses videos and books as discussion-starters. Interested people are welcome to join at any time. Call Andrea at (203) 695-2313 for information about our current topic.

Mothers and Others

Submitted by [Elise Palumbo](#)

Led by different members in turn, this group is focused on sharing, praying, studying and supporting one another in the spirit of Christian fellowship. The group is open to all women. Our attendees have ranged from mothers with newborns to grandmas and some who have not been mothers but teachers, aunts and friends. We meet every Monday during the school year at 7pm in the church library (or in the adjacent youth room when Vestry is using the library—the second Monday of each month). Members are welcome to bring small children and we can cooperatively provide babysitting. We have occasional get-togethers outside of group meetings, such as pool parties, winery trips and a holiday party. For more information, please contact Elise Palumbo ecpalumbo@att.net.

Women Rising

Submitted by [Wendy Ciaburri](#)

The Women Rising group started off 2016 by having a lesson on cooking Pakistani food, given by Neelam Sadiq. We have enjoyed several pot luck suppers this year as well. The group used the "Growing a Rule for Life" workbook from SSJE as a Lenten study. Our second book this year was "Don't Forgive Too Soon" by Dennis Linn. This group is made up of women of all ages. We have learned a lot about each other and grown to be good friends during our sessions. All women are welcome to join this group.

Outreach

Funding Team

Submitted by Barbara Sireno

The Outreach Team focuses on the poor and the oppressed and seeks to bring hope and help to those who come to its attention locally, nationally and internationally. This is done partly by means of funds provided by the annual Horse Show held in September, proceeds from the sale of pumpkins in October, and by donations from parishioners year-round. It also includes a budgeted amount set aside to go toward the UN's Millennial Goals, helping mainly women and children worldwide.

Outreach ministries are many and varied at St. Peter's – not all of which require funds from the Outreach budget, in fact most of them depend on donations, and efforts from people in the parish who feel drawn to give of their gifts of time, talent and money. Some of these are listed below and many are described in greater detail throughout this annual report:

We have provided funds for a young boy for several years to stay at an Episcopal orphanage/school in Honduras called El Hogar; funded and provided parish workers for Habitat for Humanity (Sleeping Giant Build); donated food and money monthly to Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries food bank and soup kitchen; provided a potluck meal and bingo for the residents of Hillside Village (in their community room), which included many of the youths of the parish helping; helped with Abraham's Tent in partnership with our neighbors from Temple Beth David to house, feed and socialize with a special group of homeless men during the Christmas holiday season; provided school uniforms and supplies to 14 DCF children; provided DCF with 70 emergency bags for children being removed from their homes suddenly; bought, wrapped, and delivered Christmas gifts for 33 children whose names were on the Giving Tree -- 19 who have a parent in prison, 14 names given by DCF.

Outreach Budget:

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Income | |
| The Horse Show | \$5,100.00 |
| Food for the Poor Donation | \$150.00 |
| Distressed Children's International (Budgeted outreach in General Fund) | \$789.00 |
| Campus Care Packages | \$61.00 |
| Total Income | \$6,100.00 |
| Expenses: | |
| Distressed Children's International (for required UN's Millennium Development Goal – to help poor people, especially women and children internationally) | \$788.50 |
| Habitat for Humanity | \$3,000.00 |
| El Hogar Ministries | \$1,500.00 |
| Abraham's Tent | \$300.00 |
| Food for the Poor | \$150.00 |
| 2 gift cards for needy children | \$80.00 |
| Total Expenses | \$5,818.50 |
| Balance | \$282.50 |

Chapel on the Green

Submitted by Denise Hersey

Chapel on the Green is both a liturgical service and a charitable event which offers simple lunches to anyone in need every Sunday afternoon on the green behind Trinity Church in New Haven. This past year, in August, St. Peter's prepared almost 200 bagged lunches for those in need. Members of the parish also volunteered to participate in the service and deliver and distribute the food on the green.

Habitat for Humanity

Submitted by Caitlin Celella and Lauren Coles

The Habitat for Humanity work group at St. Peter's provides able and willing hands and hearts for construction work on houses being built in New Haven and Hamden, CT. As part of the commitment, St. Peter's Outreach Committee donates \$3,000 annually to the Sleeping Giant Chapter of Habitat for Humanity. The group participates in Saturday work days (8:30 AM-3:30 PM), with about six parishioners volunteering each time.

In 2016, we had successful work days in April and November, with many different parishioners giving their time and (wo)man hours to the projects. We put in front decks and stoops, mixed concrete, roofed, screwed cement board to subflooring, painted railings, and joyfully did anything that was asked of us. We gained construction skills, worked and ate lunch together, and had a really good time. Three parishioners also answered the call for volunteers to assist with the Head of the Housatonic Regatta (October), which raised money for the second Habitat for Humanity veteran's build.

In November 2016, St. Peter's was visited by Arnie Cary, Co-chair of Sleeping Giant Build, as well as a lovely family that has benefitted from one of the Habitat homes we helped build. Arnie detailed the process for choosing who receives the houses; then a mother and father of three children who are currently living in a Habitat for Humanity house shared their moving story of living in unhealthy conditions (mold), getting laid off, going to church, and being guided to apply for the house. Their joy and appreciation was palpable.

We hope to have at least three Saturday work days this year! Please let Caitlin (c.seamonster@gmail.com) or Lauren (lauren.coles16@gmail.com) know if you would like to be added to the volunteer list.

Refugee Resettlement Coalition

Submitted by Marj Chapman

In late 2016, St. Peter's joined in partnership with the Unitarian Society of New Haven under the Community Co-Sponsorship Program of Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS) in New Haven. Our commitment is to collaborate to create a network of resettlement support in all areas – housing, employment, health, education (for both children and adults), and language skills to name a few. This effort requires many helping hands and dedicated hearts as we aim to successfully resettle a refugee family in Connecticut in the spring of 2017. Co-leaders are Marj Chapman and Michaela Hauser-Wagner who welcome all interested parishioners to join this important and ambitious effort.

Shelter NOW Breakfasts

Submitted by Nancy Staab

On the fourth Saturday of every month, St. Peter's cooks and serves breakfast for approximately 60 residents of Shelter NOW in Meriden. The food is supplied by the generous donations of parishioners and is supplemented when needed by the financial support of the ECW. Volunteers sign up every month to be part of the crew, a small group ranging from 4 to 7 people.

Many thanks to Kim Donaldson, the prior coordinator, for all her hard work during the initial stages of this ministry.

Events

Golf Tournament

Submitted by Rev. Ray Andersen

The 4th annual Fore St. Pete's Sake golf tournament was held last July at Tunxis Plantation CC in Farmington, CT. The tournament was dedicated to the memory of George Jensen and it was our largest yet.

There were 94 players and 60 hole sponsors ranging from \$100 to \$1,200.00. The hole sponsors, raffle, silent auction, and several on-course competitions resulted in a profit of slightly over \$14,000. The entire profit went into the annual parish budget to support the various ministries described in other parts of this report.

Much of the tournament's success is due to the wide support it has among our parishioners who solicit an ever growing amount of community support.

Given that we are a small parish, we may have reached the limit of expansion, but then you never know. One thing is for certain: this financial infusion into the parish budget brings a rush of renewed hope.

I especially want to thank the volunteers who made this event work well: Dave Austin, Karen Bunting, Marj Chapman, Jeff Clark, Kim Clarke, Denise Hersey, Kathy Kirby, Beryl and Jack Lyons, Mary Ellen Morgan, Marjorie Nettleton, Jayne and Jim O'Brien, Leigh Powers, Bob Pritchard, Steven Simmon, John Staab and Sam Waldo.

This coming year the tournament will be held on July 10, 2017. Please circle the date and spread the word among your golfing friends. If you wish to volunteer, please make yourself known to Ray. There is a pleasant job waiting for you.

St. Peter's Church Annual Horse Show

Submitted by Cynthia Jensen, Horse Show Manager

More than 50 years ago the Cheshire Saddle & Bridle Club organized a horse show under the guidance of two families from St. Peter's Church, Dr. Harmon and Joey Leonard and Newell and Marion McDonald. The annual show was co-sponsored by St. Peter's Church and the Cheshire Kiwanis Club.

In time the Kiwanis Club moved on to other activities and St. Peter's Church became the official sponsor of the horse show. In the mid-1980s the vestry voted to have all of the profits of each show go to the Outreach Committee for disbursement to many needed projects in Cheshire and surrounding communities as well as those supported by the Diocese. Since that time more than \$240,000 has been raised for distribution to our many Outreach Projects which have included Habit for Humanity, Food and Fuel Banks, Emergency Shelters, CT Community for Addiction Recovery, Doctors without Borders, Abraham's Tent and Chapel on the Green.

Even though the sagging economy has taken its toll on many recreational activities, our horse show continues to be a success due to the kind contributions that our parishioners have made enabling us to underwrite the costs of the show. The 2016 horse show was able to turn over \$5,100 to the Outreach Committee.

Many thanks are due also to the faithful workers who share the responsibility of making this event a success, especially Assistant Manager Matt Belcourt, Kris Bures Secretary Extraordinaire and Marj Chapman who stepped in to meet the challenge of sponsorship and the program book with great ease.

Pumpkin Patch

Submitted by Wendy Ciaburri

This was the 11th year for the St. Peter's Community Pumpkin Patch. Again we worked with the Cheshire High School Best Buddies group and split the profits with them. This year we had a *Guess the Weight of the Pumpkin* contest, make your own s'mores and a one day Kids Fest with pumpkin painting, games, costume parade and bake sale. We sold all 980 pumpkins, taking in a total of \$8,597 from pumpkin sales and \$336 from the additional activities. The Pumpkins US organization received 70% of the pumpkins sales and St. Peter's and Best Buddies received 30%. Best Buddies and the St. Peter's Outreach Committee split the \$2,579 profit. More important than the profit is the opportunity to build relationships within our broader community and to ensure that everyone has fun. We can't wait for next year!