



Saint Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
Yarmouth, Maine

2023 Annual Report

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2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

January 29, 2023

Opening Prayer: Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson

Greetings and overview from the Wardens: Laurie Hyndman

Laurie thanked the members attending this meeting both in church and by Zoom.

Reading of the Affirmation by: Laurie Hyndman

The affirmation, updated from last year, for all those attending and intending to vote was read by Laurie Hyndman:

“We hereby signify that we are baptized, at least 15 years old, have been worshippers and contributors to the support of the church during the previous three months, and that we agree to maintain this church in accordance with the canons, doctrine, and worship of The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Maine.”

Warden’s Report Summary: Laurie Hyndman

Laurie cited the incredible work that was done by parishioners prior to Amanda’s arrival in January 2022. St. Bart’s has continued with that strength to grow as a community and the parish has been enriched by Amanda’s presence and sermons. Last year (January of 2022) we started with our new Priest in Charge, Amanda Gerken-Nelson and, after a slight hiatus due to the COVID omicron surge, we have resumed our in-person services. Laurie expressed gratitude for our spiritual leader, music leader and education committee. New and innovative ways to include young families in our church family are being actively pursued—including Sunday school services once a month and an additional youth focused activity another time during the month.

Lay Leadership of all committees met several times last summer and will soon meet again to revisit the goals and tactics envisioned previously and make sure those plans are the right ones for St. Bart’s going forward. It was noted that special events typically are planned to occur during the academic year, i.e., September into June. Laurie encouraged parishioners to share their thoughts and input and to consider joining a committee.

Laurie also acknowledged that Arthur Woolverton, John Colianni and Anne Berg have completed their Vestry terms.

Warden’s Addendum to the Annual Report –published previously in the 1.26.23 E-Bulletin:

As we have the chance, we’d like to make an addition to our published Wardens’ message in the Annual Report with a thank you to the staff who departed during the year. Meredith Mazur saw us through the challenging times of the early pandemic, our year of discernment, and Amanda’s first six months as our Priest in Charge. As our office administrator she got the work done, kept us focused, and always had a smile on her face. Dr. John Schuder joined us as our interim organist and choir director as we emerged from remote services, but still under

masking constraints. He led the choir with skill and dedication and provided us with beautiful music through August. Michelle Betz became our Youth Education Leader while the challenge of remote worship still existed and worked diligently to bring back in person opportunities. Family responsibilities called her away in August. We are grateful to all three who served our community well for varied terms, but with love and dedication!

Priest's Report Summary: Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson

Amanda stated deep gratitude and appreciation for her role as St. Bart's spiritual leader and stated that in her previous role working for a non-profit, she realized how much she missed being the pastor of a community. As St. Bart's priest in charge, she feels like she "has landed on a soft pillow with a warm welcome" and stated she is honored to be invited to help each of us grow in our respective faith journeys.

Amanda stated she is grateful for the ways she and others have for continuing to seek community and connection. She reviewed appreciation for the Mutual Ministry committee providing support for her as St. Bart's first part time priest; this group has been a place to reflect on honesty and vulnerability and she recognized those committee members serving in this capacity. Amanda reviewed the realities of stepping into the role of a 20 hour per week "part time" position and the navigation that continues in her part time role. She explained that, for now, her hours have been extended to 25 hours per week to make sure she is compensated for the time she spends working. She discussed the myriad of roles that St. Bart's members contribute to this church and how we all are "making it work" with a part time pastor. Amanda reviewed that she would continue to work 25 hours per week, and this represents the *actual time* she is devoting to work, and not for adding hours or responsibilities to her very full schedule.

Amanda extended thanks to those members who were and/or are currently part of the Worship Committee from the interim when St. Bart's was between pastors through the present. Those mentioned included Jan, Jay, Sarah, Chrys, Lu, and Linda. Amanda invited others to volunteer for the Worship Committee.

Amanda praised the Pastoral Care Committee for the myriad of ways they are involved with support for parishioners; she also mentioned visits at Ocean View and that the Pastoral Care Committee provides funeral and memorial services support.

She reflected that it is an honor to work with our folks on the Vestry, Executive Committee, Wardens, and with Lay Leadership. Regarding Lay Leadership, she mentioned that we will continue to include examples of St. Bart's goals and vision setting in our weekly bulletins. She encouraged members to stay involved.

Amanda reminded us that St. Bart's has had a full change of staff since she arrived in January of 2022. She recognized with appreciation staff who have left St. Bart's within the past year remembering our office administrator Meredith Mazur, our interim Music Director Dr. John Schuder and our Youth Education leader Michelle Betz. Amanda expressed gratitude for our

current staff-- Music Director Christina Scott Edelen and for our parish administrator Teri Coviello. Both staff members are contributing greatly to our church; Amanda emphasized they are assets to the grace around the learning of new roles.

Also recognized were our Deacon, Corey Walmer and our intern Mary Curlew. They each contribute so much through their skills and experiences to our gatherings and worship. She reminded the congregation that we are Mary's "classroom" even as Mary teaches us during her seminary graduate studies.

Amanda shared her thoughts that in 2023 we all will continue to navigate what "part time ministry" means. She also specified two words will be part of St. Barts' during this next year: "deepen" and "creativity" and that the holy spirit will show us more of their meanings.

Motion/Vote to accept 2022 Annual Meeting minutes:

Laurie requested a motion to accept the minutes from last year's Annual Meeting. She referenced a parishioner's request that on p. 13 of the annual report that the word *national* be omitted in reference to eucharistic visits. We dropped Protestant a year ago with reference to our name. The minutes will be corrected to reflect this as printed in the 2022 Annual Report. So moved by Dennis Fitzgibbons. Seconded by Harriet Davis. Approved by all (majority).

Presentation of 2023 Budget – Ann Donaghy

Ann reflected on the budget and that we've had very strong financial results for the second year in a row as evidenced by a very successful financial statement on the plus side of \$14,700; these surplus funds will be dispersed as needed.

Question/Answer period on budget

Initially, no questions were raised. Ann pointed out that we are ending the year with a large amount of unspent funds, and it is due to our expenses being less than normal in several areas. Of note our diocesan assessment is less for next year, (as a member of the Maine diocese, the diocesan assessments are similar to "membership dues") and the biggest number is based on our operating income from a year ago. A year ago, we were searching for a priest and since we didn't yet have a priest, excess funds were moved to operating accounts. Therefore, our fee to the diocese is somewhat lower now. However, now that we have a priest, that number will shift in the future to a higher fee. We also have not had an education coordinator on the payroll during this academic year. Therefore, the unusual savings have been with the recommendation of the finance committee and approved by the Vestry. This explains the status of our reserves and that we were taking in more revenue than we were/are spending.

Questions asked and discussions included the following:

- The rental income process from Yarmouth Day Care was reviewed and explained in response to a question asked.

- Does St. Bart's event income revenue include the additional funds from our outreach funds? The events that we run that go 100% to outreach are not part of the operating budget. The diocese bases its assessment to us on our operating expenses. If we state that a fundraiser is totally for outreach, then the proceeds are not built into our operating funds report to the diocese.

- There was a question about St. Bart's endowment, and it was explained by Ann that the Endowment Committee is totally separate from the Vestry and thus the church's operating expenses. Ed Simmons is chair of the Endowment Committee. St. Bart's Endowment is still small and there are hopes for it to grow larger; the Endowment Committee will continue to inform the parish about how to assist in the growth of St. Bart's endowment.

- It was asked if the pledge number in our budget is real or is it our goal? Ann answered that it is real, and it has already risen slightly from what was published and may increase more.

- How does St. Bart's treat prepaid pledges? Ann answered that the prepaid pledges given in the previous year (for example 2022) are the considered income for this year (2023).

Motion/Vote to accept the budget as presented by: Bill Macleod. Seconded by Arthur Woolverton. Approved by all.

Laurie acknowledged that Vestry members Arthur Wolverton, John Colianni, and Anne Berg have completed their Vestry terms. She thanked them for their many and respective contributions during their time on the Vestry.

Present slate for Vestry and nominations for delegates to the Maine Diocesan Convention.

Laurie presented the proposed slate of nominees for the Vestry and Delegates to the Diocesan Annual Convention. The nominating slate included:

Vestry officers: Senior Warden: Michele Johns, Junior Warden, Laurie Hyndman, Treasurer, Ann Donaghy, Assistant Treasurer Anne Jacobs (for 3-year term), Clerk, Susie Peixotto.

Returning Vestry members serving at large:

Deborah Wathen-Finn, Kathy Abernathy, Peter Sillin, Lu Tingley (nominated for a 2nd term of 3 years).

New Vestry members to serve 3-year terms:

Pal Covie, Mike Perfetti.

Delegates to Diocesan Annual Convention October 2023

Chrystena Hahn, Harriet Davis, Anne Jacobs, Sarah Covie (Alternate)

It was asked if there were any other nominations from the floor. There were no additional nominations.

Motion/Vote to close nominations for Vestry and delegates to the Diocesan Convention made by Anne Berg. Seconded by Harriet Davis. Approved by All (majority).

Motion/Vote to accept slate of Vestry members as a single ballot and convention delegates made by Dan Hudkins. Seconded by Tom Hyndman. Approved by All (majority).

Motion to accept reports of the committees as published by Elizabeth Ring, seconded by Harriet Davis. Approved by all. (Of note, voting to accept the reports of the committees in the Annual report is not a requirement at the Annual Meeting.)

Motion/Vote to adjourn was made by Peter Hudkins. Seconded by Paule French. Approved by all (majority).

Meeting adjourned at: 10:57 PM

Closing Prayer: Corey Walmer

Minutes respectfully submitted by Susan W. Peixotto, Vestry Clerk

Attendance notes:

--54 St. Bart's members attended the Annual meeting "in person"; please refer to the St. Bart's Annual Meeting Register for the signatures of those in attendance.

--**Attendance Via Zoom:** Morris Hancock, Lin Peyton, Joan Tilney

Warden's Report

Dear Friends:

With the addition of several new parish activities, about which you'll read in the following reports, this whirlwind year at St. Bartholomew's exceeded the last! The chairs of committees met for a second year to see how best they could work collaboratively on special activities to supplement their regular charges and the result was spectacular. Thank you to all who worked so hard to bring these events and activities to fruition!

During the year we had major changes in several of our committees. The Youth Education Committee has a whole new team that has accepted the passing of the baton from Jean Burr, Pal Covie, Harriet Davis, and Carla Hunt, who worked tirelessly for many years to provide programming for our youth. The Membership & Newcomers Committee was split into two working committees: Membership, with a focus on welcoming and integrating new members into our parish, and Fellowship, with a focus on providing ways for parishioners to connect and be the best supportive family we can be. Margaret Betts and Liza Chandler have decided to

pass along the responsibility for our Memorial Garden after having lovingly and competently tended it for many, many years. A special round of thanks for these two!

Our staff has now completed a full year together and are all extremely competent and committed to our parish. We couldn't be more grateful! Both Deacon Corey Warmer and our intern, Mary Curlew, are inspired preachers who, along with a variety of "supply" clergy, provide us with spiritual support and inspiration on the Sundays when Rev. Amanda is not here shining her own special light on the scripture. Did I say that we are grateful?

And then there is the music...the choir continues to grow in numbers and brings beauty and excitement to our worship and to the special services they provide under the direction of Dr. Christina Edelen. She and her husband Fred also provided us with a most beautiful evening of cello and harpsichord. Bravo!!

Our church administrator, Teri Coviello, somehow supports Rev. Amanda, the needs of staff, our bookkeeper and lay leadership, and still manages to be creative and forward-thinking, offering ways for us to be more efficient and seamless as our lay leadership roles are passed along to others.

In the budget proposed for 2024, the Vestry, at the recommendation of the Mutual Ministry Committee and in consultation with Rev. Amanda, has increased Amanda's hours to 30/week from 25. We all feel this is the "sweet spot" for her to provide us meaningful worship and to minister to us pastorally, as well. We are blessed to have her as our priest. Amanda's warmth, wisdom, and sense of humor are the perfect complement to her skill of consistently writing and delivering thought-provoking sermons. Her two years with us have passed quickly. It's hard to remember when Amanda wasn't with us.

Your Vestry is committed and hard-working. Each member has a special role to play and rolls up their sleeves to get the work done. We continue to be committed to being a full-time church with a part-time priest which requires more than a passive role as a Vestry member. At our "retreat" in the spring we all agreed that St. Bartholomew's is on the road to being a movement, rather than a monument church, and we pledged to do some work as a Vestry around diversity, equity, and inclusiveness to help us walk the walk we talk.

We thank all of you for making St. Bartholomew's hum with activity, love, and warmth.

Respectfully submitted,

*Your wardens,
Laurie and Michele*

Treasurer's Report

2023 Financial Results

Once again, we are happy to report that the financial health of St. Bart's remains strong. We ended 2023 with a positive net change to operating reserves of \$51,939, which was higher than our budgeted amount of \$31,444. The vestry voted to transfer the surplus operating reserve into our Building, Grounds & Equipment Fund, in order to bolster that fund in advance of some major expenses in 2024. During the year, we received an unexpected \$10,000 gift from one of our members, and the vestry immediately voted to transfer it into our Endowment Fund. Given our favorable financial position at year end, the vestry once again voted to pay "gifts of gratitude" to Amanda, Christina and Teri, as well as gift certificates to Corey and Mary, in recognition of the many ways they have each contributed to the well-being of our parish.

You will note on the Cash Accounts and Fund Balances Report, that the cash position for St. Bart's continues to be strong. Our main operating account at Bath Savings ended the year with a balance of \$152,023, thanks in large part to a year end boost of \$57,765 from 16 families who pre-paid their pledge for 2024. The balance in our Vanguard account benefited from a strong stock market and ended the year at \$232,288. The Finance Committee reviews the investment strategy for these funds annually, and currently maintains an asset mix of 70% stocks and 30% bonds.

Activity in our other, non-operating funds can be seen in the bottom half of the Cash Accounts & Fund Balances Report. Included in this Annual Report, you will hear from the Committee Chairs for the Memorial Garden, Building & Grounds, Outreach and Endowment. Their reports describe the activity during 2023 that was financially supported by the respective funds whose balances you see on this report. Additionally, early in the year, the vestry voted to approve transferring \$80,000 out of the Unrestricted Reserve Fund, with \$70,000 going into the Building, Grounds & Equipment Fund and \$10,000 going into the Endowment Fund. This vote came following a recommendation from the Finance Committee that, in support of our goal of financial sustainability, the church establish a guideline for the balance to be maintained in our Unrestricted Reserve Fund, (whose purpose is to cover unexpected losses in our revenue stream): the balance should equal approximately 10% of total annual operating expenses times 4. (With a budget of approximately \$300,000, this would mean a balance of approximately \$120,000.)

2024 Budget

The vestry is happy to present the proposed 2024 budget for your consideration and approval at our Annual Meeting. We thank all of you who have generously pledged your support, which allows us to support our various ministries.

Assumptions used for the preparation of this proposed budget include:

- Pledge income of \$244,000 (\$243,937 in hand currently)
- Plate & Unrestricted Gifts of \$12,000 is lower than 2023 as 2 major contributors have newly pledged for 2024 (2023 also included a one-time unexpected \$10,000 gift from one member)
- Other income is expected to be similar to prior years
- Salary costs assume:
 - Priest at 30 hours/week, plus a 3% increase
 - Market adjustment salary for the Music Director
 - 5% salary increase for Parish Administrator at their anniversary date, July 1
- Continued increased energy costs expected
- Added \$5,000 to routine maintenance and grounds projects in recognition of the need to hire outside help for us to address the needs of caring for our building and grounds
- Allocation to BG&E Reserves of \$14,000
- Building insurance premiums have increased
- Increased costs in Church Program areas reflect continued robust programming (including initiatives from our committee chairs)
- Charitable gifts from operations of \$3,000. (Additional charitable gifts from fundraising events expected to total \$19,000)
- Diocesan Assessment is back up to a level similar to prior years, after a one-time reduction of \$14,000 in 2023 due to lower operating income in 2021, when our expenses were lower with no priest and we were able to transfer much of our income into reserves.

Major Property Maintenance Projects

This year, we also ask for your consideration and approval of a list of major property maintenance projects to be completed in 2024. The total estimated cost of these projects is just under \$100,000, which will be paid from our Building, Grounds & Equipment Fund.

Finance Committee

The Treasurers and vestry continue to benefit from the wisdom and guidance from members of our Finance Committee. The committee meets regularly to review our financial reports, and to discuss best practices for managing the financial affairs of St. Bart's, both for the current year and for its future. Members joining the treasurers on this committee include: Tom Hyndman, Anne Berg, Joe Michaud, and Susan Garrett. Many thanks to all for their service.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Donaghy and Anne Jacobs
Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer

Budget Summary 2024

Operating Results 2023 And Budget Summary 2024

	2023		Proposed 2024
	Budgeted	Actual	Budget
<u>Operating Income:</u>			
Pledge Payments	\$ 247,626	\$ 239,918	\$ 244,000
Plate & Unrestricted Gifts	\$ 12,000	\$ 29,999	\$ 12,000
Restricted Gifts	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,312	\$ 2,000
Hannaford card income	\$ 6,000	\$ 4,978	\$ 5,500
Event Income (Net of expenses)	\$ 13,500	\$ 16,485	\$ 14,000
Rents, Interest & Other Income	\$ 15,884	\$ 17,558	\$ 16,992
Special Gifts- Undesignated	\$ -	\$ (10,000)	
Total Operating Income	\$ 298,010	\$ 301,250	\$ 294,492
<u>Operating Expenses:</u>			
Compensation & Benefits	\$ 133,722	\$ 130,279	\$ 146,863
Contract services-technology help	\$ 8,000	\$ 5,521	\$ 7,000
Rector Support	\$ 2,250	\$ 1,081	\$ 2,225
Building & Grounds	\$ 36,712	\$ 32,510	\$ 42,410
Allocation to building/equipment reserves	\$ 21,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 14,000
Office & Admin	\$ 16,004	\$ 15,508	\$ 17,678
Church Programs	\$ 19,997	\$ 15,988	\$ 19,321
Diocesan Assessment	\$ 24,024	\$ 24,024	\$ 38,151
Charitable Gifts (Outreach)	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,900 *	\$ 3,000 *
Misc Expense	\$ 2,892	\$ 500	\$ 1,000
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 266,601	\$ 249,311	\$ 291,648
Net change to operating reserves	\$ 31,409	\$ 51,939	\$ 2,844
Transferred (to)/from operating reserves	\$ (31,409)	\$ (51,939)	\$ (2,844)
Net balance	-	-	-
Additional Charitable Gifts from dedicated fundraising events (Lobster Bake, Art Show)----->		\$ 20,035	\$ 19,000

Cash & Fund Accounts 12/31/23

	Balance <u>12/31/22</u>		Balance <u>12/31/23</u>
<u>Cash Accounts:</u>			
Main Operating Account (BSI)	106,607		152,023
Rector's Discretionary (BSI)	1,557		2,803
Hannaford Card (BSI)	3,228		3,398
Debit Card Account	-		2,084
Vanguard Funds	196,007		232,288
Fidelity Endowment	47,197		76,743

		<u>Additions</u>	<u>Withdrawals</u>	
<u>Fund Balances:</u>				
Front Garden	1,177	0	149	1,028
Memorial Garden	10,856	2,900	0	13,756
Building, Grounds & Equipment	34,669	142,939	14,135	163,472
Unrestricted Reserve Fund	187,149	36,281	80,000	143,429
Outreach Fund	-	20,022	20,035	13
Rector's Discretionary Fund	1,557	1,600	355	2,803
Endowment Fund	47,197	30,796	1,250	76,743

(NOTE: Fund balances are held within the cash accounts.)

Major Property Maintenance Projects (costs in excess of \$1000)

<u>Planned for 2024:</u>	<u>Approximate Cost</u>
Parking lot repair (reseal every 3 years)	82,000
window repair/replacement (anticipate one per year)	1,600
replace 1 of 2 sewer pumps (every 5 years)	6,000
replace refridgerator	2,000
Total from Building, Grounds & Equipment Fund	91,600

Also potential for 2024 but expected to be funded through a grant request:

improve outside lighting for safety & security	50,000
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Future Anticipated Maintenance Projects/replacements:

Frequency/ anticipated year needed

Seal parking lot & drive	8,000	every 3 years
window repair/replacement	1,600	every year
tree management	5,000	every 3 years
sanctuary floor repair or replacement	?	
external painting	25-30,000	needed by 2026, then every 10 to 15 years
replace 1 of 2 sewer pumps	6,000	every 5 years
re-shingle roof	50,000	needed by 2033, then every 30 to 40 years
heating system repairs	2,000	every 3 years
elevator repairs	5,000	every 5 years
elevator 5-yr wieght testing & maintenance	2,000	every 5 years
paint shed	3,000	2035
re-shingle shed	3,000	2050
install heat pumps to replace air conditioners	24,000	2025

Other upgrades/new projects:

(to be further reviewed, voted & funded with separate capital campaign)

finish upstairs bathroom	15,000
upgrade "library" to conference room w/AV equipment	?
install solar panels/invest in solar farm (payback w/in 8yrs from lower electric cost)	26,000
install electric car chargers	?

Priest's Report

“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” - Isaiah 43:19

This passage from Isaiah has been a companion for me in our ministries at St. Bart's this past year. We have been living into a season of experimentation and “yes! why not?” – a mindset that has seen wonderful new programs, events, and ways to engage. In the passage from Isaiah this line is spoken in God's voice – it is God who sparks our imagination and co-creates alongside us in our pursuits. It is God who calls us forward and encourages us in our “yes!” It is God who helps us traverse unknown terrain and makes a path where there seemed to be no path. I am immensely grateful that our community continues to put their trust in God and say “yes! why not?”

A new “yes!” that will take effect in 2024 is the recognition that my call is a three quarter-time call (approximately 30 hours) rather than simply half time (20 hours). When I started in January 2022, having a part-time priest was an experiment that both you and I were willing to embark on. In the ensuing months and now, two years, I have striven to maintain my ministry within the framework of, initially, 20 hours and then, last year, 25 hours. However, in all truth, the call here at St. Bart's has always taken me closer to 30 hours to fulfill. This isn't because we were wrong in 2022, rather we didn't know! I have discussed this at length with my Mutual Ministry Committee (Anne Berg, Dennis Fitzgibbons, Susie Soule, Michele Johns, Laurie Hyndman, Arthur Wolverton, Susie Peixotto): are there ways I can step back that won't affect the ministries at St. Bart's detrimentally? Am I over-working? How can lay leaders support the ministries? etc. And, the result of our conversations is that much of the initial experiment is working, we simply underestimated the time required of the priest to contribute to the vital ministries of St. Bart's. I have shared with the Mutual Ministry committee that I think 30 hours is the “sweet spot” and I'm excited to live fully into this iteration of our experiment together.

One of the joys of my call as a minister of the Church, and in particular as your Priest in Charge, is the creation and curation of worship. Much thanks to the Worship & Music Committee who help me in this crafting: Christina Edelen (our Musician), Corey Walmer (our Deacon), Linda Perkins, and Sarah Covie. Please see the Worship & Music Committee report for more on this subject.

In terms of Pastoral acts in 2023:

Funerals/Memorial Services: Scott Shank (1/24), Erin LaSalle (3/11), Don Massey (3/25), Brook Taliaferro (7/8), and Pat Onion (12/16, performed by Deacon Corey Walmer in my absence due to illness).

Interments: Don Massey (3/25), Scott Shank (5/20), Sally Edwards (6/17)

Weddings: Jay & Basil Souder (6/3), Cameron & Brittney Rockwood (10/7)

Our community welcomed Bishop Thomas Brown on Sunday May 7th for worship and the consecration of our Memorial Garden. The Bishop brought his warmth and joy into our space in his preaching and presiding during worship, and he felt equally warmed and joyed by his engagement with our community in all the aspects of our gathering. The Bishop then met with the Vestry at our June meeting and affirmed the gifts of our leaders and the wonderful ministries he witnessed both in-person and in our reports.

The Bishop and his husband, Tom, were also guests of honor at our Harvest Dinner on November 18th celebrating St. Bart's 50th anniversary. Other honored guests included former St. Bart's clergy, supply clergy, leaders of the church raised up in our midst, and - of course - our beloved community who continue to sustain and give life to our ministries.

One of the other great gifts of my call as your Priest are the ways in which I am called to come alongside you in times of great joy, moments of deep sadness, and all the journeys of life in between. I honor that so many of you have welcomed me into your lives and have allowed me to offer the gifts of spirituality and faith to companion you in some of these moments. Our Pastoral Care Committee continues to be my great companion in this ministry and I am deeply grateful for their thoughtfulness and care.

In the spring, I partnered with the Adult Education Committee to co-lead a class entitled "What's an Episcopalian?" during our season of Lent. This class was a joy to lead and a wonderful learning opportunity for me and my fellow non-Episcopalians who are now worshipping at St. Bart's. I'm grateful to our Bishop, Thomas, and the Diocese's Director of Advocacy, John Hennessey, who graciously agreed to participate as guest speakers, as well as a friend of Elizabeth Ring who also participated virtually. This past summer I led the first Book of Two-Months Club as we read Rachel Held Evans' "Year of Biblical Womanhood." What fun to not only read this book with our community but to also lead the conversations and hear the wonderful insights of our participants. The Wednesday morning Bible Study continues to gather 10-12 people each week. In September we started reading the book of Exodus.

A result of our Vestry Retreat in the spring was the desire to participate in a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training to further our vision that St. Bart's be "an open, inclusive, creative, and welcoming community." After some research into potential facilitators, we decided to hire Amanda Preston-Sicari (she/they). Amanda grew up attending St. Bart's and currently works at Public Consulting Group (mostly working with public school systems on their diversity initiatives and goals) as well as private consulting. The training was held on November 2nd and the goals for this session were to

- Build a working understanding of equity, especially in relation equality.
- Articulate and understand the broad social contexts for DEI.
- Establish a shared language for discussing DEI terms and concepts.
- Identify and discuss individual, interpersonal, institutional, and systemic barriers to equity.

The Vestry engaged these goals by reading resources and watching videos provided ahead of time by Amanda and then had discussions on the topics of equality vs. equity, unearned advantage and unearned disadvantage, the role of socialization in creating community norms and how one might interrupt the socialization process, and microaggressions. One of the many benefits of this training was the community with which we were doing it (the Vestry) and our shared vision of what impact this training and others like it can have on our community.

Our staff meet monthly for a time of check-in and planning which has proven a necessity as we all navigate part-time schedules and the many wonderful ministries and events at the church. In October, our Parish Administrator, Teri, took a long-anticipated three-week vacation to Japan with her husband and the world did not collapse! Teri worked hard ahead of her vacation to solicit volunteers, create instruction manuals and train those volunteers, and prepare the three bulletins that would be printed while she was away. It was another wonderful example of the flexibility, understanding, and willingness of our community to pitch in when help is needed.

Periodically, I meet with the ministers of the UCC, UU, and Baptist Church in Yarmouth for collegial fellowship and to discuss opportunities for partnership. All four of our congregations have experienced clergy transitions in the last three years and it is helpful for the ministers to meet, to support one another, and to think about what it means to be a faithful witness in Yarmouth.

The words that guided me at the start of 2023 were “depth” and “creativity.” As I’ve prayed about the upcoming year, the words that have come to me for 2024 are “sustenance” and “spirituality.”

May God continue to call us and guide us in all the ways we endeavor to be their disciples. And, as companions in the journey, may we continue to uplift and uphold each other through each of the new year’s joys and challenges. *Soli Deo Gloria!*

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson

Deacon’s Report

Things your deacon has been up to in 2023:

Liturgically

Preached 6 times

Officiated morning prayer/healing services, evensong and Lessons and Carols services

Officiated at a funeral

Composed Prayers of the People

Participated in Worship Committee

Participated in flower arranging

Joined choir for Lessons and Carols

Outreach

Participated in Outreach Committee

Attended Day of Service

Organized Giving Tree

Promoted United Thank Offering

Attended Sacred Ground training

And... continuing to work as a therapist as my other vocation!

I am so very grateful to St. Barts for the opportunity to worship and be in community with you all! I look forward to all that 2024 holds.

Respectfully submitted,

With Gratitude,

Corey

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Pastoral Care Committee

- Support for Parishioners and Eucharist Visits

The seven (7) Pastoral Care Committee members contact parishioners regularly and offer support with the goal of deepening awareness and compassion of those in need. In addition, six members are licensed Eucharist Visitors. Eucharist and pastoral care visits are done in pairs, in accordance with Safe Church practices. Parishioners are encouraged to contact anyone on the committee when they are facing challenges and seek support. Inquiries are confidential. Communication is through e-mail (pastoralcare@stbartsyarmouth.org), phone calls, church services/events, and visits with PCC members. Pastoral Care emergencies should be referred to Amanda or the Committee chairs.



The Pastoral Care Committee adopted a prayer list policy in 2022, which is outlined on the church web page:

https://www.stbartsyarmouth.org/uploads/1/3/6/6/136632817/prayer_list.6.13.22.pdf

Requests to add a name to the prayer list may be submitted directly to a PCC member, the Pastoral Care e-mail, or the Church office. A new policy has started recently in which permission is sought to identify the person on the list and the connection to the St. Bart's

parishioner. If permission is granted, then the announcement will be given at the start of the service.

- Healing Services and Personal Prayers

Healing services are scheduled on a quarterly basis and in 2023 were offered on January 29, April 30, July 30, and October 29. The October 29th service followed the mass shooting in Lewiston. Corey Walmer led the service, which focused on this tragic event and all those who were lost, injured, and affected. Healing prayers were offered in the Chapel by both Mary Curlew and Reverend Amanda Gerkin-Nelson.

Personal prayers are offered on the first Sunday of every month. A special thanks to Imelda Schaefer, John Perkins, Susanna White, and Mary Curlew for providing this gift to the members. The orange candle is lit each week for the victims of gun violence.

- Prayer Shawl Ministry

The St. Bart's Knitters, led by Liza Chandler, provided 25 lap robes, baby blankets, and shawls, of which eleven (11) were distributed, by the PCC, including one baby blanket. The PCC is grateful for the generous gifts received for this vital ministry and requests for a shawl may be submitted to PCC members or through the PCC e-mail.

- Memorial and Funeral Services

In 2023, the PCC provided logistical support to families planning a memorial/funeral service and assistance on the day of the service for five (5) funerals. Two receptions were held at the church following the funerals. The Committee members and members of St. Bart's provided meals, companionship, and support for families during their time of mourning.

- Pastoral Care Presentations

The Vestry supported holding a pastoral care event/presentation focusing on mental health in 2023. St. Bart's hosted Rev Dr. Robert Flanagan on Saturday, May 13th who spoke about the "Courage to Thrive." The well-received event was financially supported by the Endowment Committee. Many thanks to Kathy Abernathy, Steve Hahn, Rev Amanda Gerken-Nelson, Susie Peixotto, and Barbara Barhydt for organizing the event. Special thanks to Harriet Davis, Laurie Hyndman, Joe Michaud, Arthur Wolverton, and the Pastoral Care Committee for creating the communication strategy, providing the technology at the event, hosting our guest, and offering a lovely reception.

For the coming year, plans are underway to offer a presentation focused on the types of dementia and the demands on care partners. Dr. Susan Wehry has agreed to speak in the afternoon of Tuesday, April 9th. She is a board-certified geriatric psychiatrist with almost 40 years of experience. She is the director of AgingME, a Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Project to create a more age-friendly health system and a professor at UNE. More information will be forthcoming.

We thank the other members of the Committee for their dedication, compassion, and service to St. Bart's: Paule French, Pam Hobson, Susie Peixotto, John Perkins and Susannah White.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Barhydt and Imelda Schaefer, Co-Chairs

Coffee Hour

More than 30 people served as coffee hour hosts in 2023, and in that capacity, our hosts offered an important and regular fellowship opportunity to everyone who attended services this year. They gave newcomers and visitors a reason to stay after the service and get to know each other better. Their efforts helped make us a parish that welcomes all. Several new members stepped up to serve as hosts this year.

The following people served as coffee hour hosts in 2023, with many assisted by spouses and children: Kathy Abernathy and Colin Pope, Barbara Barhydt, Alexandra Barr, Anne Berg, Julie and Brett Bliven, Mary Calvin, Sarah Covie, Kathleen Damon, Linda Draper, Susan Garrett, Elizabeth Gillan, Nancy Gunzelmann and Ann Donaghy, Carol Hayes, Pam Hobson, Michele Johns, Jamie and Joe Michaud, Susie Peixotto, Michael Perfetti, Katie Redfield, Catherine Richards, Imelda Schaefer, Nina Scribner, Peter Sillin, Jay and Basil Souder, Susan B. Soule, Susie Soule, and Pam Waite.

I hope that even more folks will consider hosting coffee hour in 2024, whenever it's convenient. Whether you host once a year, or many times, we all appreciate the service you provide.

Respectfully submitted,
Jamie Michaud, Chairperson

Fellowship

In collaboration with the Vestry and lay leaders, a new Fellowship Committee was formed in the summer of 2023. As an off-shoot from the monthly family-focused events arranged by the Youth Education Committee through June, this fellowship-focused committee used that model to execute its charge: The Fellowship Committee will focus on building community throughout our parish family, providing opportunities for fellowship beyond worship.

Second Church/the Amblers became housed under the Fellowship Committee as well. Between the ongoing programming from Second Church and periodic events organized by the Fellowship Committee, it's been a busy year with a lot of positive connections and relationship-building as a result. Many events have strengthened parishioners' ties to the community, have welcomed the public, and have made our parish more visible outside the walls of St. Bart's as well.

The Committee sent out a parish-wide fellowship survey in September to gauge the overall sense of parishioners' connectedness & belonging to St. Bart's. There were 41 responses total. Generally, folks feel connected and don't want there to be TOO many events to spread organizers thin or make people feel obligated to attend or like they can't attend them all.

The Committee also re-instated the "Getting to Know Us" section of the e-bulletin, now in the form of a quarterly newsletter called "Meet Our Members."

2023 Fellowship Events

- Ongoing monthly Spirit Walks
- January 22 (with Youth) - Sledding at Valhalla (18 attendees)
- February 21 (with Youth) - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper (47 attendees)
- March 26 (with Youth) - T-shirt designing for Day of Service (after church, 0 youth)
- May 6 (with Youth) - Day of Service with cookout (50 participants)
- June 24 (with Youth) - Sea Dogs game (25 attendees - some bought tickets but didn't show up due to iffy weather)
- July 30: Cornhole Tournament (16 participants/7 teams)
- August: Weekly St. Bart's Tennis at Wildwood (6 participants throughout the month)
- September: Second Church-Storytellers group began & continues weekly
- September: Second Church-Account-a-buddies group began (did not last—not enough interest)
- September 30: Apple-Picking & Baking (12 participants)
- November 18: Harvest Dinner in Gratitude for 50 Years! (91 attendees)
- December 9: Community Christmas Carol Sing-a-long & Food Drive (55 attendees)
- Upcoming in January: Dinners for 8
- Upcoming on January 20: Bowling
- Upcoming in February: Second Church-Wayfinders group will begin
- Upcoming on February 13: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Respectfully submitted,

The Fellowship Committee: Pal Covie, Marcia Sharp, Penni Groves, Celeste Pascarella, Gary Sylvester, Michael Ambler, and Darreby Ambler

Adult Education

During 2023, the Adult Education Committee expanded its membership (from 3 to 4 members) and the number and kind of educational opportunities available to the parish under its umbrella. To the previous opportunities now called Liturgical Guided Discussions (in Advent, Epiphany, or Lent), Study Groups (e.g., Bible study), and Collaborations (all-parish meetings on a topic in collaboration with other committees), we added a popular Book-of-Two-Months Club,

as well as Deep Dives (which include participation in programs beyond the St. Bart's parish). Each of these offerings received the expected number of participants, although there is always room to grow. Overall, participants by headcount numbered about fifty in the programs under the aegis of Adult Education along with additional numbers accruing due to the Collaboration with the Outreach and Pastoral Care Committees. While the modes and types of offerings expanded in this way, programming remained based in the reading of selected books or shorter texts, rather than (for instance) travel experiences, video (film), musical performances (with lecture), or theater.

The committee looks forward to further input from clergy and members of the parish community while continuing with the currently scheduled offerings for Spring 2024 (Book-of-Two Months programs, Bible study, and Liturgical Guided Discussions). All programs continue to be based in topics and themes of faith, imagination, and commitment. Suggestions for additional opportunities are most welcome.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Hahn, Chair

Youth Education

The year 2023 continued to offer Sunday School once a month on the first Sunday of the month. It is our hope that this approach makes it easier for busy families to have one Sunday to "save" for Sunday School. In addition, we strived to offer other fellowship activities to families during the months to come.

Highlights:

- January: sledding party at Valhalla
- February: Shrove Tuesday pancake supper
- March: Gather at church to design our Day of Service t-shirt logo
- April: Easter egg hunt after church
- May: Day of service at selected local non-profits (detail in the Outreach Reports)
- June: Sea Dogs baseball game

—Over the summer we engaged Susan Vigne (mother of Sarah Covie) to develop new curriculum for the 2023-2024 Sunday school program. The curriculum has a lot of material and offers great flexibility for teachers to adapt as needed. Thank you Susan and thank you Sarah and Pal for connecting us to her.

In August, the Youth Education Committee transitioned to new membership. After years of dedicated service to our youth, Jean Burr, Pal Covie, Mary Curlew, Harriet Davis and Carla Hunt stepped down--we are deeply grateful for their determination to offer a Sunday school program in the midst of our parish transition and the pandemic. The new committee is comprised of Julie Bliven, Mary Curlew, Elizabeth Gillian, Maria Guarino and Dennis Fitzgibbons. The new

committee continues to explore ways to support the spiritual journey of our youth and their families.

In September, the once per month Sunday school program continued with an exciting 9 children in attendance. This committee is connecting with the Worship Committee to involve youth in Sunday services and connecting youth to opportunities to serve others in need in the greater Portland area through Service Corps based at Trinity Church in Portland.

We would like to recognize our volunteer Sunday school teachers who serve our youth with love and joy: Mary Curlew, Pal Covie, Carla Hunt, Laurie Hyndman, Kate Ciarimboli, Michele Johns, John Rush, Sandra Rush, Carol Hayes, Nina Scribner, Mike Perfetti, Pam Hobson.

We also want to acknowledge Amanda and her invitation to kids to come forward at the beginning of services. You engage with them with openness and love, offering your full attention as we imagine Jesus would do; it is wonderful.

Respectfully submitted,
The Youth Education Committee

Music

It is a pleasure to be a part of the rich musical heritage of St. Bart's Church. We have a devoted choir of around 20 people, a beautiful tracker organ and a grand piano, and a congregation that is supportive and appreciative of the musical life of the church.

This past year we continued with the plan for quarterly special services, with Choral Evensong services in March, June and October, as well as a Lessons and Carols service in December. In addition, we had a Hymn Sing in May and a Carol Sing Along (sponsored by the Outreach Committee) in December. Both the piano and the organ were tuned and maintained as needed.

The choir is a vibrant group of dedicated people and has grown this past year with the addition of at least 4 singers. We rehearse every Wednesday and sing every Sunday, with a summer break in July and (part of) August. The choir and music at St Bart's bring a richness and depth to our worship and our community.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christina Edelen, Music Director

Membership/Newcomers Committee

As part of our service on Sunday January 8, 2023, we officially welcomed a number of Newcomers as Members of St. Bart's. The new members welcomed at the January 8 service

were: Christina & Fred Edelen; Susan Garrett; Elizabeth, Kevin, Owen, Ava, and Michael Gillan; Jeff & Penni Groves; Rachel Groves; John & Sandra Rush; Marcia & Larry Sharp; Basil Souder; Celeste Pascarella; Corey Walmer; and Dan Hudkins & Susan Bass. Wanting to continue this official welcoming of our new Members, we did this again at our service on Sunday September 10, 2023. The new members welcomed at the September 10 service were: Hannah Ashley; Alexandra Barr & Matthew Kennedy; Julie, Brett, and Isaac Bliven; Sukie Curtis & David Heald; Maria Guarino & Will, Bennett, Zoe, and Miles Zimmerman; Paul Maumbu; Alfredo Vitika; and Pam Waite. As interest indicates, we plan to continue this at services in 2024. Any Newcomer who would like to be part of our “Welcoming” services this year, please contact Susie Soule or Anne Berg (susiesoule@gmail.com or bergav73@gmail.com). We would love to hear from you!

Also in 2023 we established a Mentoring Program where we pair a Newcomer with a current member of the parish so the Newcomer has a “point person” to be in contact with for questions and general guidance. If you are interested, please let us know.

On June 11th we held a “Are You New to St. Bart’s” Welcoming Tea. This is a way for the committee members to get to know our Newcomers as well as for all to meet our Priest-In-Charge, Amanda. We will be hosting our next Welcoming tea on Sunday February 11th immediately after the service.

Our “Lobsters-To-Go” event in August was another great success. We sold over 100 Lobster dinners. All the proceeds from this event went to Yarmouth Compassionate Housing Initiative/New Mainers. Our huge thanks to Jeff Diggins who donates all the lobsters for this event!

Our team continues to check our sign in book in the entryway for new folks who have visited us, and we reach out to all with a Welcome note and contact name. If anyone would like a nametag, please let us know. You do not need to be an official member to have one. In this New Year, we will be upgrading our brochure that lists all of our committees at St Bart’s along with contact information. We welcome you all and hope to see you in 2024!

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Berg & Susie Soule, Co-Chairs

Communications

The Communications team consists of Teri Coviello, Laurie Hyndman, and Harriet Davis, with Jamie Michaud as our Facebook manager (and, on occasion, technical support from Joe Michaud). Our goal is to provide and keep current a variety of channels for our parishioners to access for news about church activities. We also continually update the St. Bart’s website so that folks who are exploring church options in their area can find meaningful information about St. Bart’s that also embodies our beliefs and persona.

This year our communications vehicles were audited by the Communications Director at the Diocese of Maine. We are pleased to report that she gave our communications high marks and let us know she was using some of our website pages as examples for other churches to mirror in the Diocese.

We are blessed to have Laurie and Teri as part of the team—they are the ones who create the beautiful posters for all our events, among other great skills they both possess. For those events that we want to promote to the wider public, Harriet sends out press releases to a variety of media, with help from Laurie and Jamie posting events and other news on the local town Facebook pages. Jamie is amazing at keeping our St. Bart's Facebook page updated with a lot of postings. Teri also contributes postings to Facebook. Thank you, Jamie and Teri!

Please let any member of the committee know if you have any thoughts or suggestions for our communications efforts.

Respectfully submitted,
Harriet Davis, Chair

Stewardship Committee

In mid-October the Stewardship Committee announced the start of our 2024 annual budget pledge campaign during our fall Season of Gratitude. The Committee members felt that the gratitude theme and Dag Hammarskjöld's beloved prayer below beautifully exemplify the spirit that is alive and moving at St. Bartholomew's, so we incorporated both in our communications to the parish. The prayer is:

For all that has been, Thank you. For all that is to come, Yes!

Reverend Amanda began a month of Sunday service speakers with a sermon on gratitude for our decades of St. Bart's creativity, ingenuity and experimentation which have led to the joy-filled loving worship, music, education, outreach and fellowship that we have today. During the following Sundays, Howsie Stewart, John Rush, Sarah Covie and John Duncan shared testimonials about their gratitude for the warmth of our welcoming community. Their heartfelt personal stories inspired us.

The Stewardship Committee of 2023 was comprised of Paule French, Michele Johns, Jay and Basil Souder, Jamie Michaud, and John Duncan. In October we sent two letters, a financial report, a draft 2024 budget, and a pledge card to all our households. Soon thereafter, with the help of the Vestry and other volunteers – Pam Hobson, Lucia Hunt, Tom Hyndman, Phil Chin, Pamela Higgins, and Joe Michaud – we reached out to everyone to answer questions and encourage the submission of pledges so that our Treasurer and the Finance Committee could prepare a 2024 budget for approval, first by the Vestry, and then, by the parish at our annual

meeting. We were pleased that so many people submitted their pledges on-line, and thereby simplified the process for all involved.

The robust results of the pledge campaign are a total of \$243,937 in pledges from 80 households. This compares well with 79 households in 2023 whose pledge payments so far add up to \$239,918. Further 2024 details are: 31 pledge increases, twelve new and renewed pledgers, and eleven 2023-pledging households who did not pledge for 2024 (we hope that some will pledge soon).

Clearly our St. Bart's 2023 Season of Gratitude extends to our collective commitment to share our treasures as well. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted,
John Duncan for the Stewardship Committee

Altar Guild

In 2023 the Altar Guild supported Sunday, mid-week, memorial and wedding services. We cared for our linens, chalices, and patens, and we purchased consumable supplies that we use for worship. We purchased a new green frontal and matching veil for the season of Pentecost, and we received a gift of a new purple frontal and veil to use during Advent and Lent. We welcomed a new member and bread baker, John Perkins, and we accepted the retirement of our long-term member, Mary Ann Hodsdon.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Perkins, Chair

Altar Flowers

Another full year of services and activities at St. Bart's meant that the altar flower arrangers were busy throughout the year. We provide arrangements for every Sunday service and special arrangements for Easter, Advent, Christmas, and All Saints Day. If there is a parishioner's funeral at St. Bart's, we offer to do the arrangement for the family. Our committee members work on holiday arrangements for the Christmas Fair and always welcome anyone who wants to join in.

Arrangements can be as simple as bringing in meadow flowers or a bit fancier as provided by a florist. Members provide the arrangements at their own expense but there is reimbursement for special arrangements.

We are ten members in the committee but welcome new members at any time.

Respectfully submitted,
Imelda Schaefer, Chair

Worship and Music Committee

I must begin this report with gratitude to the members of this committee who are journeying with me in the curation of worship for our community: Christina Edelen (our Musician), Corey Walmer (our Deacon), Linda Perkins (representing Altar Guild), and Sarah Covie. Each member of this committee brings with them a rich respect and love for the process of creating meaningful worship for our community and I am grateful for their flexibility and creativity.

Our committee held a half-day retreat in May 2023 to not only talk through our worship calendar but also to discuss our core values that influence the decisions we make around liturgy creation, resources from which we draw, and the ways we express our centuries old tradition in old and new ways. The values we chose are: inclusive, grounded, challenging, and creative.

Inclusive

Our mission statement declares St. Bart's to be an "open, inclusive, creative, and welcoming community," a congregation that is responsive to the world around us and accessible to many. We strive to make our liturgies inclusive of words, songs, and imagery that reflect the diversity of identities and expressions of faithfulness that make up our congregation. To do this, we turn to a broad spectrum of resources and traditions which then are given life in our liturgies.

Grounded

At its core, our worship is grounded in the Episcopalian liturgical tradition. Our liturgy changes for each season in the Church calendar, grounding us in a seasonal rhythm. Our musically rich worship also grounds us in our senses: at times contemplative and at times joyful and lighthearted. And the lessons read each Sunday morning follow the Revised Common Lectionary.

Challenging

As a community, we value thoughtful sermons that provoke us to faithfully engage the world around us and provide us new insights and ways of perceiving our place and purpose in the world. We believe that worship is the "work of the people" (the Greek origin of the word "liturgy") and should therefore actively engage mind, body, and spirit – worship is not a passive activity. Our Worship & Music Committee strives to curate worship experiences that are inspiring, loving, nurturing, and that push us toward action.

Creative

The St. Bart's Worship & Music Committee uses a wide range of resources to find pieces of the liturgy we want to include in our worship services, and we constantly seek to expand the resources from which we draw. Our Deacon often writes a new set of prayers to be used in each new liturgical season and other members of the Worship & Music Committee contribute

to the crafting of portions of the liturgy bringing a personal flavor of St. Bart's and our context to the service. In general, our community isn't afraid to try new things and values new ideas.

For the past two years, we have experimented by holding special services on certain feast days/holidays when those feast days/holidays do not fall on a Sunday. For example, in 2022 we held a midday service on All Saints' Day and in 2023 we shifted the service to the evening. There are a few holidays in our church year that we have wondered whether doing such special services might be meaningful and there could be more (i.e. Epiphany on January 6th). The evening All Saints' service was better attended than the midday service, but we would appreciate feedback as to whether it is meaningful to single out these feast days/holidays or not.

We have continued to offer midweek, evening Eucharist services during the penitential seasons of Lent and Advent. In Lent, we once again looked to the Celtic spiritual tradition to inspire our worship by including significant times of silence, sitting in a circle, and utilizing prayers and text from Celtic sources (like the Iona Community). In Advent, we used a service outline that comes from Holden Village, an intentional Lutheran community in Washington. This service of Prayer Around the Cross had many similarities to the Celtic service (i.e. sitting in a circle and extended periods of silence) but the time at the middle of the service during which we invited people to light candles and place them in our cross we also invited people to sit or kneel in contemplation of the cross. These midweek services continue to be well attended and provide a prayerful addition to these meaningful seasons.

The Worship & Music Committee extends our gratitude to Senior Warden, Michele Johns, for her role in coordinating our Guest Preachers on the 4th Sundays when Amanda isn't here. As Michele transitions out of her role as Senior Warden, this role will transfer to the Worship & Music Committee.

We are also immensely grateful to partner with the Pastoral Care Committee in putting together our 5th Sunday Healing Services. And we celebrate Mary, our intern, in her preaching each month!

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson

Tech A/V Committee

St. Bart's audio/visual team began during the months of pandemic shutdown, creating video programs that enabled our community to worship, participate and "gather" virtually.

As we have come back into in-person worship, the team ensures that the congregation at St. Bart's can hear the service, and that those at home can see and hear the full service. The

service can be seen live on our website as well as on Facebook, and then is available as a recording in both places. We also stream and record funerals and other events as needed.

The A/V team occasionally does special projects, such as the recorded message and music for Christmas Day, and the Zoom online service for annual meeting.

The A/V team consists of Pal Covie, Dan Hudkins, Laurie Hyndman, Joe Michaud, Peter Sillin, and Arthur Wolverton, with an assist by Liza Chandler in the choir loft switching camera angles. If you are interested in joining, contact Joe Michaud.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Michaud, Chair

Memorial Garden

The highlight of the 33rd year history of the Memorial Garden at St. Bart's was the official Consecration of the Garden by Bishop Thomas Brown on May 7, 2023. The official certificate reads in part, "with Thanksgiving to God, the giver of all good gifts, we have this day BLESSED and CONSECRATED The Memorial Garden at The Episcopal Church of Saint Bartholomew, Yarmouth, Maine." The framed certificate is hanging in the Chapel Library.

The special service occurred after the regular 9:30 AM service. On a beautiful May Sunday, members of St. Bart's filed out to the Garden and surrounded the Bishop and our Priest-in-Charge, Amanda. After the formalities, Bishop Thomas surprised the gathering by announcing his personal gift to the Garden of 200 King Alfred daffodil bulbs to be planted in the fall – and his offer to help plant them.

We thank those dedicated Lay Weeder volunteers who came to help maintain the Garden this year, and their helpers, the Pine Needle Gathering crew, who bagged fallen pine needles with which the beds are mulched.

Beginning in January 2024, management and oversight of the Garden will be the responsibility of the Vestry, as we turn those tasks over to them. Record keeping, correspondence, and scheduling will now be ably handled by our Parish Administrator, Teri Coviello.

Respectfully submitted,
Liza Chandler and Margaret Betts, Co-Chairs

Grounds & Buildings

St. Bart's building and grounds are a critical part of how we come together as a community, and we are all grateful for the many volunteer hours and members' pledge support that keep our spaces functional and beautiful.

In 2023, we improved lighting in the parking lot and walkway, replaced loose cork tiles in the sanctuary, added a grate in the deck to reduce ice buildup, and hired a local arborist to remove a few at-risk trees and clear brush around the parking lot.

We developed St. Bart's first long-term capital maintenance plan, led by Treasurer Ann Donaghy, to foresee and budget for important items in St. Bart's physical space such as roof replacement, painting, paving, heating systems and more.

Many of us gathered for two workdays, in April and November, to tidy the grounds as the seasons changed, and enjoy time together. Please join us when those days come around in 2024.

A loyal rotation of volunteers handles mowing each week in summer and sidewalk-clearing in winter. They are John Duncan, David Heald, Tom Hyndman, Kevin Gillan, Joe Michaud, and Peter Sillin. (See Joe Michaud if you'd like to join)

Special thanks to Nancy Gunzelmann and Ann Donaghy, who donated a nearly new John Deere lawn tractor when it became clear last summer that our long-serving lawn tractor needed to be replaced.

For 2024, we likely will repave the parking lot for both safety and longevity reasons and will be working with the Safety and Security Committee on any needed improvements.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Michaud and Liza Chandler, co-chairs

HR Committee

The HR Committee was formed early in 2023. Members include Dennis Fitzgibbons, Catherine Thompson, and Ann Donaghy as our liaison to the Finance Committee. As we began our work, Bob Peixotto also offered valuable consulting support. We adopted as our charge: "The Human Resources Committee will be made up of no fewer than 3 and no more than 5 parishioners, at least one of whom will be a member of the Vestry. The committee will provide advice and knowledge to the vestry, parishioners, and staff members on personnel matters." The most significant accomplishments for the year were recommending a sick time policy and a process for performance dialogue and supporting the hiring of our nursery attendant.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Garrett, Chair

Endowment Committee

As of 12/31/23 the endowment stands at \$76,743. Allocation is 66% stocks, 14% bonds, 20% money market. The stocks are held through Vanguard Growth and Income Fund. The custodian

is Fidelity Investments. There are no account fees or commissions levied on the account. The investment performance of the account for 2023 was 19.22%.

The endowment received two gifts during the year: 1) \$10,000 as a gift from a parish member; 2) \$10,000 from the Unrestricted Reserve Fund. The endowment made one gift of \$1,250 to fund the mental health speaker last Spring. We hope to offer a seminar in 2024 focused on the history of the St. Bart's endowment and ways to give to the endowment including wills, trusts, IRA's and other retirement plans, insurance etc.

Members of the committee include: Ed Simmons, Chair; Bill Macleod; Peter Chandler; Vince Damasco; and Abby Diggins.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ed Simmons, Chair

Nominating Committee Nominations for Vestry and Convention Delegates

Returning Vestry

Kathy Abernathy (1 year remaining)
Pal Covie (2 years remaining)
Harriet Davis (2 years remaining)
Laurie Hyndman (2 years remaining)
Anne Jacobs (2 years remaining)
Mike Perfetti (2 years remaining)
Peter Sillin (1 year remaining)

ELECTIONS

Vestry Elections

- Susan Garrett – 3-year term
- Joe Michaud – 1-year term
- Susie Peixotto – 1-year term
- Gary Sylvester – 3-year term

Officers – To be elected for 1 year

- Laurie Hyndman: Senior Warden
- Joe Michaud: Junior Warden
- Anne Jacobs: Treasurer
- Susan Garrett: Clerk

Delegates to Diocesan Annual Convention October 2024:

- Chrystena Hahn
- Harriet Davis
- Elizabeth Ring
- Pal Covie (Alternate)

Below are the bios of the new vestry members:

Susan Garrett: After retiring from a career in Human Resources in financial services firms that moved her from NJ to Pennsylvania and Connecticut, Susan and her husband, Randy, moved to Yarmouth, Maine. They both love the outdoors and the natural beauty of the coast and the mountains. They have two daughters, one in Woolwich, Maine and one still exploring, but currently in New York City. Susan also has two stepdaughters and five grandchildren in California and Hawaii. The pandemic made it challenging to find the right church, but Susan feels blessed to have discovered St. Bart's and grateful to call herself a member of the community.

Joe Michaud: I grew up in Brownville Junction, then moved to South Portland at the age of 6, attended Cheverus High School, and graduated from the University of Maine, with a double-major of print journalism and TV/film production. I spent 28 years at the Portland Press Herald, first as an editor and then starting and running MaineToday.com, followed by 10 years as a consultant until I retired in 2018. Jamie and I started attending St. Bart's in December 1991. At St. Bart's, I'm currently involved in recording the weekly services and various other tech topics; building and grounds needs; and the annual art show. In the past I've been a Vestry member several terms, senior warden (twice), and chair of the 2010 building project. In addition to my work at St. Bart's, I also am a volunteer business mentor at SCORE and I conduct tours of the Portland Observatory.

Gary Sylvester was born in Weymouth, Massachusetts but moved to north-central Maine when he was 8 years old. Much of his childhood was spent in the Church of the Nazarene where he developed a love of God and a sincere respect for Scripture. In college, he started to worship at St. John's Episcopal Church and also met his future wife, Heather Gray. Gary attended graduate school for physical therapy at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. He found St. Mark's Church and was enthralled by the music and the passion. St Mark's is what Gary would call his Episcopal coming of age story. Gary has worked at New England Rehab Hospital in one capacity or another since moving back to Maine. He found a true church home at St. Bart's about 12 years ago and is thrilled to participate in the community life of this wonderful parish.

OUTREACH REPORTS

Outreach Committee

Similar to last year, the theme of partnerships with local efforts and organizations continued. We focused more on sharing those opportunities where parishioners might actively serve rather than being the organizer of them. This was a desired outcome from the December 2022 community grant making evening where attendees hoped to do more than write a check. Below are examples of those opportunities:

- Through Greater Portland Family Promise (GFPF), there were many opportunities to help serve those immigrant families temporarily housed at Portland area churches for 2 week stays and eventually at a static shelter providing 3 months of housing at Woodfords Congregational Church. Some parishioners were able to volunteer in these locations during the late winter and spring.
- The New Mainers Assistance Program (NMAP), a newer Yarmouth not-for-profit, was looking for help with their YRides program. Specifically, they needed dispatch support in matching ride requests with drivers as well as a general need for additional drivers.
- Our first annual Day of Service in early May was a huge success with broad turnout. It involved 4 different local not-for-profits: Growing to Give, Partners for World Health, Maine Needs and Furniture Friends. The day was about fellowship, friendship, a shared experience and a collective effort. It was a true example of faith in action.
- In July, we created a brief survey to revisit the perceived needs of the wider community and the organizations our parishioners have supported in various ways. The survey's goal was to help inform parish decisions about grant making and day of service opportunities. The largest areas of perceived need were affordable housing, asylum/immigrant efforts, food insecurity and homelessness.
- With the survey results in hand, we embarked on a September grantmaking evening to determine this year's recipients of the Art Fair proceeds. Using last year's proceeds amount of \$15,000 as a benchmark, we made the following choices for Outreach support:
 - St. Elizabeth's Essentials Pantry, the Yarmouth Food Pantry and Friendship House are all organizations with large parishioner involvement. Thus, it was decided to allocate \$1,500 to each organization and leave the remainder monies available for other grantees.
 - In Her Presence (IHP), established in 2015, is organized and led by immigrant women to further build their cultural capital, economic success and integration in Maine. They received c. \$3,250.

- Greater Portland Family Promise (GFPF), established in 2017, helps families experiencing homelessness and low-income families achieve sustainable independence. They received c. \$3,250.
- The food pantries in Cumberland, Falmouth and Freeport received the remaining monies of c. \$1,000 to each organization.

All in all, there were many opportunities to both serve and support in 2023. The hope will be for that to continue in the new year. A closing and continuing thought might be “We are Faith in Action. We are workers, not master builders. We are Enough. We are Love.”

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Richards, Chair

St Elizabeth’s Jubilee Center & Essentials Pantry

A Mission of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine

What a difference a year makes. St. Elizabeth’s has the special mission of providing non-food essentials to anyone who arrives in need on Tuesday mornings. Last January, St. Elizabeth’s saw a weekly number of visitors in the high 200’s. In 2023, the numbers increased to nearly 400 in December. Fortunately, more volunteers have been willing to participate each week in the distribution and preparation of supplies. Finally, St. Peter’s in Portland has joined the original group of supporting churches making a total of eight churches in the Portland area sponsoring the work that goes on for St. Elizabeth’s in the lower level of St. Luke’s Cathedral in Portland.

During 2023, St. Elizabeth's distributed 68,000 diapers, 29,100 rolls of toilet paper, 14,550 bars of body soap, 3,050 tubes of toothpaste, over 70,000 feminine pads, and enough detergent for 58,200 loads of laundry. Since September, 650 winter coats and 300 pairs of winter boots have been collected, sorted, and distributed.

St. Elizabeth’s is very thankful for the strong financial support St. Bart’s has provided in 2023 from both Yarmouth Art Festival proceeds and outreach contributions. The St. Bart’s community also held very successful diaper, bars of soap, and sock drives this past year, helping to meet the increasing demand for these items. Generous donations appear weekly in the bins outside St. Bart’s. Coats, boots, hats, socks, bedding, towels, housewares, etc. have been collected and distributed. Finally, St. Elizabeth’s and certain Angolan and Congolese children were fortunate beneficiaries of the St. Bart’s Giving Tree.

A special thanks to the members of St. Bart’s who volunteer on a regular basis: Nancy Gunzelmann, Susan Garrett, Anne Berg, Pam Hobson, Pamela Trudo, Jan Burson, Anne Jacobs and Maria Guarino. Jan Burson, Catherine Thompson and Ed Manuel have helpfully bundled items at home, as well. Finally, much gratitude to Anne Jacobs for her leadership as Chairman of the Board.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Draper, Volunteer Coordinator and St. Elizabeth’s Board Member

Friendship House

Friendship House is an organization committed to helping men seeking to overcome their addictions, mainly by providing guidance, encouragement, and a family atmosphere. This is accomplished by staffing the house with loving, compassionate, individuals who understand addiction and live with the guests. Herb Blake is the Executive Director. Friendship House is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, committed to providing the best home possible. It is located at 390 Lincoln St. in South Portland.

St. Bartholomew's has for more than 25 years supported this mission by preparing and delivering a meal (entrée, salad, bread and dessert) on the third Thursday of each month for 17 men.

Holly Mitchell, The Caruso Family, Susan Soule, Carla Hunt/Andrew Tonks, the Hazard Family, Jamie Michaud, Catherine Richards, David Platt and Janice Drinan, Mary Calvin, Michele Johns and Nick Desiderio, and Susan and Randy Garrett have generously cooked and delivered meals in 2023 .

Friendship House also has a Wish List of needed items that St. Bart's parishioners have provided. Other ways to engage with Friendship House are being considered.

Anyone interested in being part of this continuing outreach program, would be most welcome. With thanks.

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Hobson, Coordinator

YCHI (Yarmouth Compassionate Housing Initiative)

Although the Yarmouth Compassion Housing Initiative moved out from under the financial auspices of St. Bart's in 2022, the parish has continued to be a significant source of support for the work of YCHI in the community. The proceeds from the August Lobster Bake were dedicated to the mission of YCHI; two St. Bart's members (Carla Hunt and Peter Sillin) sit on the Board of YCHI and its partner organization, the New Mainers Assistance Program (NMAP) which is headquartered in Yarmouth; and many members of the congregation take part in supporting the community of New Mainers who have settled in Yarmouth and the surrounding towns. In the past year, YCHI has worked with NMAP and other organizations to provide short- and medium-term rental assistance, legal assistance, transportation passes, assistance in moving furniture and setting up apartments. In one case, YCHI funds helped a single mom with a special needs daughter move on short notice when her landlord suddenly sold her building.

Many thanks to all at St. Bart's who have supported the work of YCHI this year. Please feel free

to reach out to Peter Sillin: sillin@gmail.com or Carla Hunt: carladhunt@proton.me to learn more.

To donate to YCHI through NMAP: Checks can be mailed to: NMAP, 23 Ledgewood Dr. Yarmouth, ME 04096 (Place YCHI in the memo line.)

Respectfully submitted,
Peter Sillin

Yarmouth Food Pantry

The Yarmouth Community Food Pantry had a busy 2023 serving between 60-100 families a month during open hours which are Tuesday and Friday 10-12 noon. The pantry delivers weekly to 14 families. Holiday food baskets were distributed to 91 families in December. The First Parish Church continues to generously share their multi-purpose room as a staging area for the pantry to prepare the grab and go bags for the patrons. The pantry has an increased demand for culturally specific foods such as cassava, fufu and goat meat. The pantry began working with Rosemont Market this Fall who donates food every Tuesday and Friday.



The pantry is grateful to all the St. Bart's members that volunteer at the pantry doing so many important jobs including distribution of food during regular open pantry hours, delivering food weekly to families, picking up donated and rescued food from Good Shepherd Food Bank, Hannaford and more, helping with food drives and contributing food to the Thanksgiving and Holiday food baskets. On December 9th St. Bart's collected all the potatoes and carrots needed for the Holiday food baskets during their Sing Along. See the photo of Joe Michaud making the delivery to the pantry!

The Yarmouth Community Food Pantry remains an all-volunteer operation and we are always in need of more volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering or making a donation don't hesitate to reach out to Anne Ball, anneball@maine.rr.com. The pantry is grateful for all the ways St. Bart's members contribute and support the pantry. We couldn't do it without you.

Fondly,
Anne Ball, Yarmouth Community Food Pantry Steering Committee

Day of Service

Our first of what may become an annual event, the Day of Service held on a Saturday in May was in response to the goals set forth from Vestry and Lay leaders' Planning meetings in 2022. The event organizers identified four non-profits fulfilling a variety of needs in our communities. In addition to expanding St. Bart's outreach to local community services, our goal was to get

parishioners of all ages involved and was one of the monthly events supported by the Youth Education Committee.

We had 50 volunteers participate across the four non-profits: Growing to Give, Maine Needs, Furniture Friends, and Partners for World Health. The volunteers were then welcomed back at St. Bart's for a luncheon, organized by Michele Johns. Of course, the lunch was delicious, and all felt that we had accomplished something meaningful and uplifting. Quite a successful event for the first time being offered!

Respectfully submitted,
Harriet Davis

Blood Drive

We had initially scheduled a Red Cross Blood Drive in the spring, but the Red Cross asked us to postpone it until November due to staffing issues. We hosted the Drive on November 24th. While we were uncertain if we could turn Black Friday into Red Friday, the Red Cross was pleased with the turnout. 23 donors participated. Particular thanks go to Joe Michaud, Rob Neal, Susannah White, Ed Simmons, Grace Hyndman and Michele Johns.

We are beginning to discuss another drive in May 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Hyndman

FUNDRAISING REPORTS

We had another very successful year with our fundraising events achieving or surpassing funds raised from each. Net funds from the Art Show and the Lobster Bake were donated solely in support of our Outreach programs. Many hands go into making these events successful and we are grateful for all the volunteers—new and returning—that helped make these events such a success.

Christmas Fair

This year's Christmas Fair was extremely successful, netting \$16,485, largely due to the experience of Table Chairs who have donated enormous amounts of time and energy to this project for many years now. To that end, the following parishioners are to be commended: Harriet Davis (Crafts/Publicity), Silent Auction (Laurie Hyndman), Pam Waite (Coffee/Greeter), Marcia Sharp (Attic Treasures), Barbara Barhydt (Gourmet Frozen Foods), Linda Draper (Books), Anne Berg (Wreaths), Pam Hobson (Baked Goods and Jams), Holly Mitchell (Fudge), Anne

Jacobs (Bags and Scarves), Kate Ciarimboli (Jewelry, with special thanks to Jay Souder and Anne Jacobs), and Mary Calvin/Imelda Schaefer (Table Greens).

Adding to the holiday cheer were the a capella group MaineBlend, who donated their time to serenade customers and workers alike with secular Christmas carols for more than an hour when they had agreed to just 45 minutes! And, as usual, Joe Michaud had recorded music ready for when they were done.

Set-up and clean-up were no-nonsense with lots of help, thus accomplished in record time. Finally, posters and signage were improved through Teri Coviello's magic. Shout-outs to Nina Scribner and Jennifer Willard for hanging more posters than ever!

The major change for next year will be the addition of two Co-coordinators: Marcia Sharp and Susan Garrett. The Fair Chairs have already met and have a list of ideas for further improvements to an already successful event.

Respectfully submitted,
Chrys Hahn, 2023 Chair

Art Show

The 15th annual Yarmouth Art Festival in October raised \$15,615 for 8 local nonprofits: St. Elizabeth's Essentials Pantry; Friendship House; Greater Portland Family Promise (GFPF); In Her Presence (IHP); and Yarmouth, Falmouth, Cumberland and Freeport Food Pantries. The event sold a record number of pieces, 86 of the 165 on display, and drew hundreds of visitors to St. Bart's over 4 days, Oct. 18-21, followed by two weeks of online sales.

St. Bart's started the Yarmouth Art Festival in 2009 to explore using our space in different ways, and to showcase artists from all over Maine. The event has become popular with both artists and art lovers, and in 2023 drew nearly 700 entries for jurors to consider.

About 40 volunteers helped with the show, including many from outside St. Bart's. Leaders for 2023 were Ann Donaghy, Susan Garrett, Nancy Gunzelmann, Laurie Hyndman, Tom Hyndman, Anne Jacobs, Joe Michaud, and Judy Shank.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Michaud, Chair

Lobster Bake

Our "Lobsters-To-Go" event in August was another great success. This event is organized by the Membership/Newcomers committee. We sold over 100 Lobster dinners. The total net proceeds of \$4,420 went to Yarmouth Compassionate Housing Initiative/New Mainers. Our huge thanks to Jeff Diggins who donates all the lobsters for this event!

Hannaford Gift Card Program

2023 was another successful year for our Hannaford Gift Cards program as we earned \$4,978. We give a hearty thanks to the 30 members of the parish who participated! Earning money to support St. Bart's every time you shop at Hannaford or Bow Street Market is worth the minor effort added to your grocery shopping process. Hannaford donates 5% of all you spend to St. Bart's. It's easy money!

Please consider joining this effortless fundraising effort. For more information or to sign up, please contact Tom Hyndman at 712-6343 or tomhyndman@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Hyndman

2023 Parish Registry

Funerals

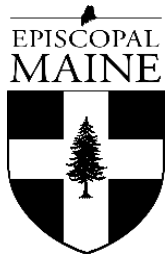
Scott Shank (1/24)
Erin LaSalle (3/11)
Don Massey (3/25)
Brook Taliaferro (7/8)
Pat Onion (12/16)

Interments

Don Massey (3/25)
Scott Shank (5/20)
Sally Edwards (6/17)

Weddings

Jay & Basil Souder (6/3)



St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Yarmouth, ME
A Congregation of The Episcopal Diocese of Maine

Priest-in-Charge:	The Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson
Priest-in-Charge Email:	amanda@stbartsyarmouth.org
Music Director:	Dr. Christina Edelen
Deacon:	The Rev. Deacon Corey Walmer
Intern:	Mary Curlew
Sr. Warden:	Michele Johns
Jr. Warden:	Laurie Hyndman
Pastoral Care:	Imelda Schaefer, Barbara Barhydt
Pastoral Care Email:	pastoralcare@stbartsyarmouth.org
Parish Administrator:	Teri Coviello
Office Email:	admin@stbartsyarmouth.org
Office Hours:	Tue-Thur, 9-3
Telephone:	207.846.9244
Website:	www.stbartsyarmouth.org