



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Annual Meeting
for the 274th year of Saint Paul's Church
January 28, 2024

*Historic Saint Paul's Church is a welcoming Episcopal congregation
committed to living and sharing the Good News of God in Jesus Christ
through liturgy, music, and outreach.*



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RECTOR'S REPORT

As we enter 2024 together, I feel a strong sense of transition. When I arrived at Saint Paul's in September of 2021, we had a number of major projects on our docket. Not all of these were discrete tasks that could simply be checked off—some of these projects were expressions of our faith and values that will continue to hold our attention for some time. But we have had a remarkably productive two years of faith. Thanks to the careful leadership of the vestry, the prayers of many, and the grace of God, we have moved out from the shadow of internal conflict that shaded so much of life at Saint Paul's in 2020 and 2021. Through the generosity of many and the expert leadership of Catherine Boardman and Billy Badger, we have completed an ambitious capital campaign. And the final major projects of the strategic plan, forged just before and during the pandemic, are underway. We are truly in a very different place now than we were three years ago.

Years of good, faithful, sometimes difficult work have positioned us as a rapidly growing, active parish, proclaiming the gospel from our downtown setting. Through your stewardship and vocations, we are figuring out what it means to answer God's call here and now. We know that call is to love God, love our neighbors, and love each other. And we are poised to continue to embody that love in creative ways that draw on our strong tradition at Saint Paul's and the deep roots of the Christian faith.

I want to caution us about a possibility in this exciting moment in our parish's life. We have brought several major projects to fruition. We have come out of a crisis and are in a period when church "feels" good. It may be tempting now to relax a little, to lean back and coast just a bit, to step back from engagement precisely because the church leadership has proven itself trustworthy. I certainly want to encourage trust in the church's leadership and I pray and believe that we will remain trustworthy. But unless you're especially due for a rest, please don't step far back from engagement now.

As well as "things" are going, we really are in a crucial moment. We are growing in new members, which means that we have many people to welcome into our life, and just as many folks who will be bringing their gifts forward into ministry at Saint Paul's. Helping new members find or create their place is the work of the whole parish. We are deepening our relationships with our neighbors and neighborhood. And those relationships can only deepen well if we are showing up as our full selves with hands and hearts extended. We are growing but are still undersized. We are rich in global terms but cannot yet fund all the ministry we want to do. Transitions make for paradox.

Sometimes churches fall into a habit of non-stop saying "do more, give more," until churchgoing comes to feel like a heavy burden. That is not what I intend to say or do. Instead of hearing me say "do and give more," I hope you'll hear me saying "bring even more of yourself to this place and these people." Of course we need more folks serving and of course we need more money—every church always needs those things and the demands of our collective calling are real. But what we need most is you: you in the fullness of your imperfect growing discipleship. Take a breath if you need it after this sprint we've been in for a couple of years. But stay with us, because we didn't come this far to get only this far. These major projects haven't completed our ministry—they have set us up to minister more effectively. Thanks be to God, 2023 was a very good year at the church and it is a delight to go into 2024 with you.

Eric+

The Reverend Eric C. Bidy, Rector

ASSOCIATE RECTOR'S REPORT

Tuesday, August 1, 2023 was my first day as Associate Rector at Saint Paul's. By the end of my second week and less than ten days, it was very clear that God had called me to a place where pastoral care is an essential ministry that has the width and depth to provide comfort and support to parishioners and to serve through Christ's love the greater CSRA. During the same month, I began to make connections with downtown businesses and churches to introduce myself as well as reintroduce Saint Paul's Church in a different and new way. No time has been wasted. Each initial contact made with others beyond our doors has been a time well spent to create and establish firm foundations on which to build communal bridges. Each initial contact made with parishioners within presented wholesome opportunities to become familiar with each other and to establish trust and fidelity.

I believe the good, faithful, sometimes challenging work that had taken place two years prior to my arrival, as well as the financial contributions to make my work possible, opened hearts and minds to receive well the gifts and vision God desires for the growth and development of Saint Paul's. Through tangible pastoral care and eucharistic visitations, cards, phone calls, delivered flowers, and the like, has reassured those persons who are unable to attend in person or virtually that they are not alone, not forgotten, and are still a vital part of the parish.

Bridge building in the CSRA has provided a heightened awareness of Saint Paul's in a fresh and welcoming manner. Not only through Facebook live stream, YouTube and radio of our Sunday service, as a representative of Saint Paul's, I had the opportunity to appear on the longest gospel television show The Parade of Quartets and the CSRA Worship And Word Station WLCZ 98.7fm. Also, the intentional work put in by administration and staff of inviting the community to the ordination service created an ecumenical space in which other faith traditions became an integral part. Through these other venues which target and are open to a variety of ethnicities, cultures, and faith traditions, Saint Paul's is beginning to cross barriers that we may not have even been aware of, and issuing welcome and invitations that are broader than we had previously imagined. All good work with good outcomes.

While our history of the way we worship is deep and rich, let us continue to move forward step by step towards a vision of intentional invitation through the way of love. The more we love together, the stronger we become as the body of Christ. People need people who see them the way God sees them—through the eyes of love. When we are aware of God at work, we are presented with a choice to join or walk away. Let's choose to join God in the work that is already happening with the skills and talents that we already possess as gifts from God. Help me build bridges with others to strengthen the body of Christ.

I'm excited about all of the positive and spiritual growth God has brought and will bring to Saint Paul's. Let us all be encouraged to continue to walk in love even when we do not totally understand what God is doing or cannot see God's hand at work. We must always remember that God is always up to something which is the good for the body of Christ and the Kingdom of God. The last five months of 2023 during my time here has been inspirational and full of hope. In 2024, I am looking forward to deepening relationships through pastoral care and working together with you to build stable bridges that will last a lifetime.

The Reverend Kimberly E. Dunn
Associate Rector

WARDENS' REPORT

“Onward and upward”

2023 carried over all the feelings we were able to finally enjoy in 2022, after years of reacting to the pandemic. Feelings of stability, excitement, growth all permeate the church right now and for that we give thanks to God.

Stability in 2023 in the sense that in our lives in the church we are able to fully focus on the spiritual experiences for ourselves and for our neighbors. Fr. Biddy calls us to be the beating heart of the gospel in downtown Augusta, the soul in the heart of the city, and it was evident (remains evident) we are trying to live that out in all we do.

2023 was exciting. We welcomed Mother Kimberly Dunn to our family and are so glad to be welcomed into her family. It was pleasing to see our church family make this financially supportable, just confirming again we see a bright future for Saint Paul's and we want to be a part of it.

Our attendance is returning to pre-pandemic levels and this growth is fun to be a part of. Shaking hands with and saying “welcome” to new faces on Sunday makes us feel closer to our church and we should never take that for granted.

With this growth comes challenges. Two of many priorities for 2024 will be to find ways to engage us all as volunteers to support the myriad of activities and ministries and to be able to fund the position for Youth Minister. We have a lot going on and volunteer burn out is a real risk, so please look at your schedule and see how you can be called to support the work of the clergy and other lay leaders.

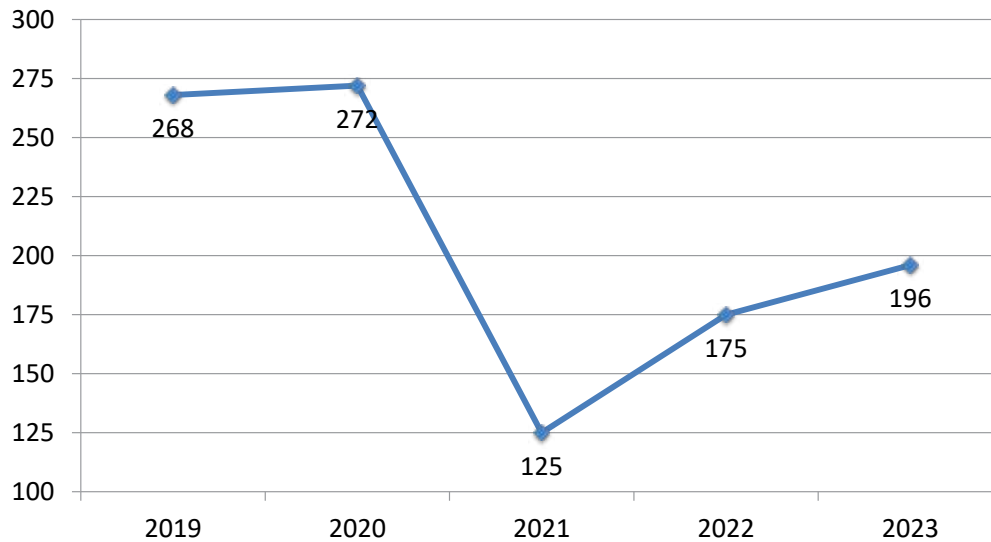
We enter 2024 on a sound, stable footing, in the midst of excitement and growth. We are blessed with our loving clergy and the mutual support of our church family.

Cameron Nixon, Senior Warden
Erick Montgomery, Junior Warden

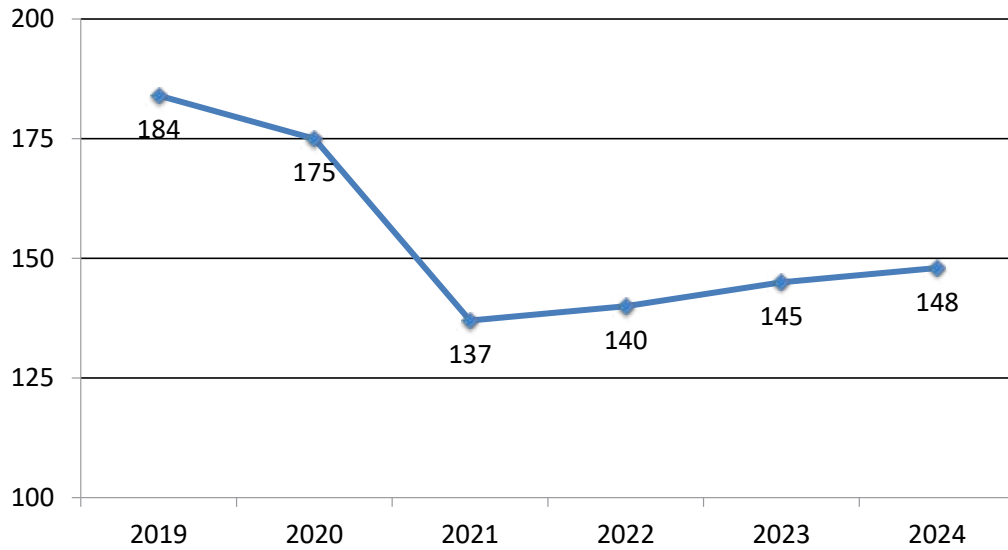
FIVE-YEAR STATISTICAL SUMMARY

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Average Sunday Attendance	268	272	125	175	196	n/a
Pledges	184	175	137	140	145	148 Totaling \$781,158
Pledge Income Received	747,555	\$725,771	\$617,174	\$646,266	\$722,057	n/a

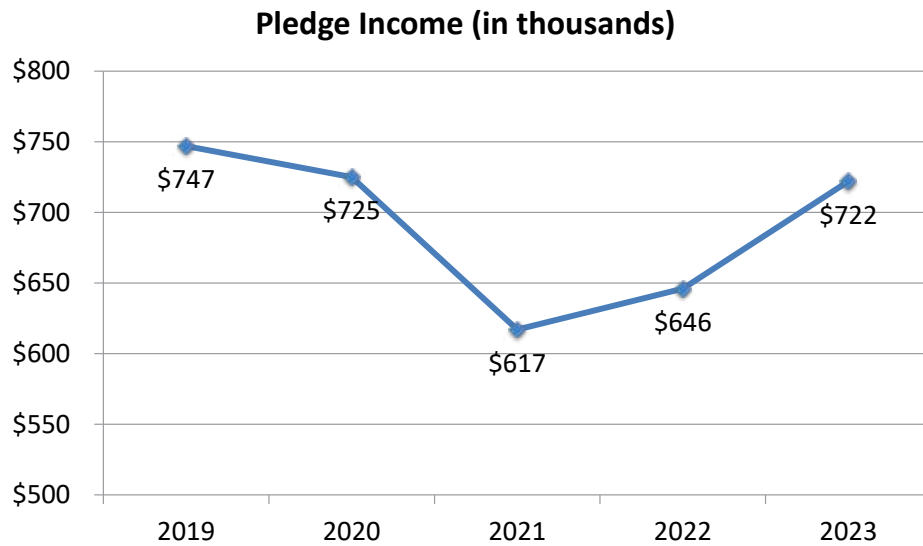
Average Sunday Attendance
2019 - 2023



Number of Pledges* 2019 – 2024



Annual Pledge Income Received 2019 – 2023



2023 MINISTRY REPORTS

ACOLYTE GUILD

The Acolyte Ministry held a lock-in and training at the church in September to kick off the new year, prepare our new acolytes, and increase the skills and understanding of our acolytes as to the purpose and meaning in their roles. We have six new acolytes this year which has allowed us to increase our weekly participation to a normal, pre-COVID number. We have a most wonderful group of acolytes, and hope to welcome more new acolytes in 2023!

—Submitted by Meg Horton

ADULT CHRISTIAN FORMATION COMMITTEE

The entire Adult Christian Formation Committee* graciously agreed to reconvene in the spring of 2023 to develop formation opportunities for the 2023-2024 program year. The committee was eager to capitalize on the work done last year, in particular, the parish-wide survey which shed light on preferences for study topics, formats, and schedules.

We began our work with an examination of the preceding year. We felt we had been successful in offering a variety of experiences to meet the needs and desires of our parish and of people joining in from other places. We had much anecdotal evidence that the formation opportunities were well received. Going forward, we would like to delve more deeply into our formation attendance and engagement.

While the distinction between worship and formation is not always clear, we focused primarily on Bible studies and book groups, continuing the framework established in 2022-2023. The Sunday Forum at 9:30 Sunday mornings, the Tuesday evening book groups on Zoom, and Lectio at Lunch Bible studies form the backbone of our programming on Thursdays. Other activities include Wednesday evening Compline, Confirmation classes, and contemplative experiences such as Sit & Wait.

Profound thanks are due to the dedicated team of people who carry out, support, and participate in Christian formation at Saint Paul's. Their commitment enriches the life of the parish and helps us live more fully into our baptismal covenant. Words alone cannot describe the beauty and joy which spring forth as we seek a closer relationship with God and one another. Please join us morning or evening, in person or online, and feel the love of God's presence "where two or three are gathered..."

*Barb Coleman, Patsy Davis, Kitty Gordon, Suzanne Pursley-Crotteau, Charlie Tutor, Elisabeth Price, Eric Bidy, Kimberly Dunn

—Submitted by Kitty Gordon

ALTAR GUILD AND LINEN GUILD

The Altar Guild has a newly renovated workspace! In 2023, the sacristy in the church sanctuary was updated with beautiful new cabinetry, carpeting, plumbing and even a new broom closet and cabinet to house the safe. Beginning in February, we moved everything out and worked from the chapel sacristy. We somehow made it through Holy Week - which coincided with Masters week - further proving what a diligent team we have.

Reconstruction plans were made with changes to linen care in mind. Minta Nixon is ready to retire after almost 60 years of meticulously caring for our beautiful linens. Minta doesn't just organize, wash, iron, and repair. She also takes aging fair linens and creates smaller things we use, adding embroidered

crosses and hand-stitched hems to each. Her work comes from the heart, and we will forever be grateful.

We added new members Barbara Coleman and Joy Somers late in the year and were blessed to have Laurie Montgomery return to serve. Our new Assoc. Rector, the Rev. Kimberly Dunn shares her “behind-the-scenes” experience with us, and we can’t thank her enough.

—Respectfully submitted, Catherine Stuckey

BROADCAST (AV) COMMITTEE

The Broadcast Committee is responsible for the production and distribution of the 11:00 AM Sunday morning worship services via video streaming on social media (i.e. Facebook and YouTube) and radio broadcasts via WGAC. In addition, the committee is responsible for ensuring “in-house” live audio during the services.

The Broadcast (A/V) committee is managed by part-time parish staff members Wright Montgomery and Mark Albertin, who are responsible for all regularly scheduled operations, with supplementary support by Gabriel Hammond, Marty Duff, Timothy Price, and Donald Horton. Mark, a renowned local film maker, began working with us in July of this year following Tom Kotti’s mid-year departure, and has proved to be an invaluable team member.

While we are delighted to have Mark on board, we would like to briefly reflect on Tom Kotti. Since 2018, Tom played an integral role in moving this committee forward, establishing broadcast standards that we as a parish can experience and enjoy, and he and his wife Nancy are greatly missed.

2023 Accomplishments and Notable Initiatives

- Produced and provided approximately 6,527 minutes of live-streaming video content.
 - 11:00 AM worship services
 - Special events, such as weddings, funerals, concerts, etc.
- Implemented a number of significant system-wide improvements:
 - AV booth extended to better accommodate the new AV equipment upgrades.
 - Set up ‘OBS’ and ‘ReStream’ software for simultaneous YouTube & Facebook streaming.
 - 3 new lavalier microphones
 - 1 new wireless handheld microphone
 - 2 new prayer desk microphones
 - 2 front speakers built into the front prayer desks for improved in-house amplification.
 - Outdoor portable sound system for use during outside events such as funerals, special events and services.
- Researched and implemented efficient and effective methods for getting the most out of the new High Definition (HD) video system, including the addition of video text overlays during communion which display weekly-updated items from the bulletin, such as the prayer list and parish announcements.
- Collaborated with clergy, staff, and the Building and Grounds committee and Technology subcommittee to follow through of the above improvements and upgrades, with continued support especially from Elisabeth Price, Keith Shafer, Hillary Bryant, Greg Maxie, Bill Ford, and our “behind-the-scenes” technical consultant, Bob Williams.

—Submitted by Wright Montgomery, Chair

BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Committee: Dennis Bell, Catherine Boardman, Jim Hilliard, Erick Montgomery, Wright Montgomery, Tom Robertson, John Robertson, Bob Rollins, Brad Sandbach, Keith Shafer, Bobby Wright. Chair: Cameron Nixon. Clergy: Eric Biddy.

2023 was a fairly normal year, especially compared to the extraordinary work this committee undertook and completed in 2022. In early 2023 a renovation of the Sacristy, the last component of the Capital Campaign, was completed. This space was long overdue for a renovation and is now more functional for the sacred work of the Altar Guild.

Other projects undertaken in 2023 include:

Established a designed space in the nave for wheelchair access.

Undertook a review of the West parking lot's spaces, the loading lane and the handicap spaces to bring access up to date with the current usage of the Children's Ministry Center and the River Room.

With the Tyler Hall kitchen project complete, the Parish House was re-carpeted. This included the first floor hallway, the stairs, clergy vesting room and vesting area in the sanctuary.

The exterior of the Church was painted. The breezeway is slated to be painted in early 2024.

In addition to routine maintenance to the chiller, boiler and the HVAC units across the church buildings, we had the gutter cleaned and replaced a dead tree in the Churchyard.

We also started a discussion to start planning for River Room renovation and ways to pay for it.

—Submitted by Cameron Nixon, Chair

CREATION CARE COMMITTEE

The Creation Care Committee is made up of a small but passionate group of people committed to preserving and protecting the earth's natural resources and finding ways to reduce our carbon footprint. Our signature event is our Earth Day celebration; we held our inaugural event in 2023 which included engaging presentations, a film screening, garden tours and terrarium building. We're looking forward to another successful event in 2024! Also, we had great success with our tree fundraiser; we sold trees at a low cost to encourage the members of the congregation to plant trees, and will once again offer the trees in 2024. We plan to expand the Earth Day and tree sale events to be community celebrations. We hope to offer additional content in 2024 and beyond, We welcome new members; please reach out to Jennifer McKee to get involved!

— Submitted by Jennifer McKee, Chair

THE ST. RUTH BYLLESBY CHAPTER OF THE ORDER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

The Membership:

Prayed daily for the concerns of the congregation to strengthen the spiritual life and growth of the parish and to support the Mission of the Order of the Daughters of the King to spread Christ's Kingdom throughout the World.

Continued the Confidential Prayer Request (CPR) Ministry through "Prayer Request Cards" placed in the pews and Prayer Requests from persons within and outside of the Saint Paul's Community.

All Daughters chose one to three college students to support in daily prayer. The Daughters contact the students at least twice a year to remind them that they are prayed for and that they are remembered by their home church with notes of encouragement and a small gift just for them from Saint Paul's. Forty-five cards with \$10.00 gift cards were sent out Spring 2023 and forty-six cards with \$10.00 gift cards Fall 2023.

The Chapter:

Hosted three Quiet Mornings at Saint Paul's - One in Epiphany; "God Among Us", One in Pentecost: "God Within Us," and One in the Fall: "God Before Us." These were led by the Rev. Terri Degenhardt from St. Augustine's.

Resumed hosting the Labyrinth Walks Lead by Belinda Peebles. One in the Fall and one during Advent, 2023.

Supported twelve weeks of the discernment of women at Saint Paul's to become Daughters of the Order of the King. Women from Saint Paul's who completed the course and were admitted to the Order of the Daughters of the King were: Carrie Cooksey, Susan Yarborough, and Rev. Deacon Kimberly Dunn on October 8th, 2023 at Saint Paul's eleven o'clock service.

Supported the discernment of and organization of the St. Sophia Chapter of the Order of the Daughters of the King Chapter at St. Augustine's established October 15th, 2023. Women who completed the course and were admitted to the Order of the Daughters of the King were: Gail Mascaro, Donna Tummi, Deacon (Ret.) Faye Forbes, and Rev. Terri Degenhardt.

The Annual Spring Bra Drive resulted in over 200 bras being sent overseas through "Save the Girls" and more than 100 bras along with new packages of underwear sent to local Women's Shelters and to DFACS for Adolescent Girls.

The Final Series of Women of the Bible (from the Torah/Old Testament led by Rabbi Shai for Adult Forum for three Sundays in February 2023.

Daughters of the King is now leading Compline in the Chapel of Peter and Paul following the Men's Monthly Meal on the first Wednesday of each month

—Submitted by Suzanne Pursley-Crotteau

EUCCHARISTIC VISITORS' MINISTRY

Eucharistic Visitors take the Eucharist to those who are temporarily or permanently homebound and are unable to be in church with the gathered community. This ensures that no one is separated from God's sacramental gifts. We have a dedicated group of thirteen Eucharistic Visitors, and we work in companionship with the Altar Guild. This year God called Home seven of our Eucharist recipients. While their loss is sad to us, we are grateful to have been a spiritual support to them.

Please share with others the value of this spiritual ministry, which is also a strong, visible sign to those in attendance in church that "We, who are many, are one body because we all share one bread, one cup." For more information or to request a Eucharistic visit, please contact Elisabeth Price in The Parish Office or Ellen Nesbitt at etmnesbitt@gmail.com.

—Respectfully submitted by Ellen Nesbitt, Chair

MUSIC

I began my 41st year as Director of Music of Saint Paul's in 2023 and want to thank everyone who makes our parish's music program successful. Saint Paul's Church not only supports beautiful liturgical music but is also a major venue for concerts attended by thousands of music-lovers from both Georgia and South Carolina.

We began 2023 with 27 adults in the Saint Paul's Choir, which grew to 30 at year's end. The choir sang two Evensongs, the Independence Day celebration, the Easter Vigil, and an expanded Christmas Eve with three services—Advent IV in the morning, the 4:00 PM Christmas Eve service, followed by the 10:00 PM Christmas Eve service. Our children's choirs resumed their work in August with 12 children in the Canterbury Choir and 10 in the St. Nicholas Choir. Both choirs now rehearse on Sunday mornings.

Tuesday's Music Live resumed its programming with its 35th season of concerts. Attendance increased significantly as concertgoers returned to enjoying musical events after the COVID pandemic. Tuesday's Music Live is a 501-c-3 non-profit arts organization with an independent board of directors. The series receives funding from corporate, foundation, and individual sources.

A highlight of the year was the 18-21 June 2023 Southeast Region Convention of the American Guild of Organists, which attracted almost 200 organists from all around the country for concerts and special programs, many held at Saint Paul's Church. Major grants were received from the Porter Fleming Foundation and the Knox Foundation and numerous additional gifts and grants were also given. The opening event of the convention was held at Saint Paul's Church and featured a stunning display of organistic skill by the world-renowned organist, Chelsea Chen, whose concert was followed by a gala reception in the River Room. Other concerts and events were held at churches throughout the CSRA. I was the Convention Coordinator and was assisted by numerous talented members of our Augusta Chapter.

It continues to be an honor and privilege to be the Director of Music of this dynamic parish and I look forward to 2024.

—Submitted by Keith Shafer

NEEDLEPOINT GUILD - ALTAR KNEELERS PROJECT

Progress has continued this year on the needlework for new altar rail cushions. This past year, we have had 2 tops of the cushions completed and 4 boxing strips that will go around the sides of the cushions. We have twelve to complete. Several of the tops are almost half way which was a goal we set for November/December 2023. We have had numerous helpers who have contributed to getting this work done both within the parish and from other churches and denominations.

Linda Mote, our consultant, has been so helpful in keeping us on track. We always welcome anyone to the group who would like to learn and help complete this large project. Those who are able, meet once or twice a month to sew together and encourage one another.

Our goal is to be finished with the needlework by 2025, which is the 275 anniversary year of Saint Paul's founding. Those who have contributed so far are, Minta Nixon, Linda McCall, Laura Robertson, Kathleen Chandler, Nancy Carr, Tricia Nixon, Martha Nixon Sprinkle, Coleman Graham, Claiborne Porubsky, Catherine Stuckey, Cindy Shields, Linda Hardy, Martha Long, Suellen Mourfield, Lynn Mays, Becky Wright, Mary Porter Vann, Susan Barrett, Stacy Nuessle, Patsy Davis, Meg Horton, Belinda Peebles, Melissa Beaver and Naila Assad. Anyone who is interested in helping and willing to make this commitment can contact Laurie Montgomery at lauriefm628@gmail.com or you can contact the church office.

It has truly been a blessing to work together with so many talented people who can share their gifts and do this for Saint Paul's.

—Respectfully submitted, Laurie Montgomery

NEWCOMERS/INVITE, WELCOME, CONNECT COMMITTEE

The Saint Paul's Newcomers/Invite, Welcome, Connect committee consistently welcomed and greeted visitors, newcomers and parishioners each Sunday before the 11 AM service throughout 2023. Summer Bell began serving as chair of this committee in September 2022. As chair, Summer recruits and coordinates volunteers to serve the greeter's table every Sunday at 10:30 AM as well as coordinates the annual newcomers welcome party in May. The party was held in Tyler Hall and very successful thanks to the volunteers that helped with setup, invites and cleanup. The team of volunteers for the greeter table did a wonderful job throughout the year welcoming members and visitors to Saint Paul's on Sunday mornings as well as additional special services during the year. The greeter table is set up on the portico or in the narthex, depending on the weather. The greeters provide a warm and friendly welcome to members and visitors as well as Saint Paul's literature including a print out of the *Weekly Postings*, invitation cards, calendar of events and visitor connect cards. They also answer questions about the service times, directions and general information. Individuals may also request and pick up a new Saint Paul's name tag at the table and provide their email for the *Weekly Postings*. For 2025, we have budgeted for funds to purchase welcome gifts for visitors and newcomers and supplies for the newcomers party.

If you are interested in being a part of this team of volunteers, please call or text Summer Bell at (706) 394-1420 or email summerfin@gmail.com. It is a fun and easy way to get involved. No experience required! Volunteers may join the committee at any time during the year.

—Submitted by Summer Bell, Chair

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Outreach is a ministry not of a committee, but of the church. However, the Outreach Committee organizes, recruits volunteers, and raises funds to enable ministries the church might not otherwise provide. Two major fund raisers in 2023 were a Chili Cook off in February to help fund our first Ecuador mission trip, and a Beach Party in July to support the following activities:

- **MANNA PANTRY:** Pantry staples were purchased bi-monthly; parishioners sorted food and distributed boxes via drive-through in the church parking lot and by delivery to the Bon Air Apartments.
- **MASTER'S TABLE SOUP KITCHEN:** Saint Paul's volunteers prepared and served meals at the Soup Kitchen six times during the year. This group grew to include persons from other churches; and even one Muslim joined in this ministry. From the Outreach budget, a donation of \$1800 was made to the Soup Kitchen.
- **DCCM:** Saint Paul's continues to provide a Board member with the Downtown Cooperative Church Ministry, and our Outreach Budget provides \$400 monthly financial support for the CSRA's largest food pantry.
- **COMPASS FOR HOPE:** Volunteers and contributions from Saint Paul's helped feed and provide personal care items for individuals in need. Our Outreach Committee budget provided \$1700 to help this organization that serves persons who are homeless.

- **OUR LITTLE ROSES:** Our church continues long-term sponsorship of designated children at Our Little Roses Orphanage in Honduras, through financial support from the Outreach Committee budget as well as from individual parishioners.
- **ECUADOR MISSION:** A team of eleven adults and teens from Saint Paul's spent a week in Quito, Ecuador, worshipping and working on projects with parishioners of Cristo Liberador Episcopal Church. In addition, they visited in homes, prepared meals, led classes, and conducted activities for children. The group will return in June 2024, and \$1000 has been approved in the 2024 Outreach budget to help fund Education = Hope, a ministry that provides micro-scholarships for children and young adults in difficult situations.
- **SCHOOLS/ANGEL TREE MINISTRY:** Students in our "adopted" school, Hornsby, received coats, books, backpacks, clothing, personal hygiene items--and even a special Trunk or Treat Halloween event from their neighbors at Saint Paul's. Teachers were also supported through Teacher Appreciation events during the year.
- **WEATHER-RELATED DISASTER RELIEF:** A gift from the Outreach Committee budget initiated a congregational donation to Episcopal Relief and Development for victims of the Turkey-Syria earthquake.
- **IRONMAN:** We were again able to provide dinner athletes and their families on Saturday, plus hospitality on Ironman Sunday. Saint Paul's volunteers also assisted with the early-morning gear drop.

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."
 --Matthew 25:40.

—Submitted by Marilyn Grau, Chair

PARISH LIFE AND HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

Parish Life and Hospitality enjoyed another year of participation and growth. Our generous budget of \$7,845 was carefully used to accomplish the following:

- Men's Monthly Meals (MMM) each month
- Weekly breakfasts between the 8 AM service and Christian Formation
- Receptions for Rose Sunday and Evensongs
- Pentecost picnic
- A family night at the ballpark to watch the GreenJackets (86 attendees)
- 4th of July picnic
- A low-country boil to celebrate the beginning of a new program year of Christian Formation
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper
- 1st annual fish fry during Lent
- Foyer groups in fall

All of the above events will continue in 2024. There will be a slight modification to weekly breakfasts but food will be available. A special Mother's Day breakfast prepared by the youth is coming in May. If there is a parish life event that you would like to suggest, please see Eric Friedman. New ideas and volunteers to help are always welcome.

—Submitted by Eric Friedman, Chair

PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY

Our Pastoral Care Ministry reaches out to our parishioners in need.

This is done mainly by notes, cards, phone calls, and visits, but may also include other areas, such as driving someone to an appointment or helping with grocery shopping.

We provide the support of prayer, encouragement, caring, and a connection with others as their needs arise. With The Rev. Kimberly Dunn on board for Pastoral Care, we look forward to expanding these activities. We welcome those who wish to join in providing these needed services to our church family and beyond.

—Respectfully submitted by Ellen Nesbitt, Chair

RIVER ROOM/BERLIN ROOM

2023 was a busy and successful year for the River Room. There were many guests attending events who later contacted me to book their special occasion in the space, as they were very impressed with the venue and staff! I saw a major rise in clients choosing to book their birthday parties with us, and have also started seeing an increase in local churches interested in celebrating in the River Room. In the next coming year, I am hopeful to continue to observe the increase in bookings and am excited to host all the new and repeat clients.

Kiwanis continues to meet weekly on Mondays, and Choral Society has gotten great use practicing in the room every Tuesday August through May. Men's Monthly Meal prepares delicious parish dinners once a month, utilizing our wonderful kitchen space. On top of this, our main attraction continues to be weddings and wedding receptions, of which we hosted 18. Additionally there were 7 birthdays, 10 parishioner events, 2 proms, and 14 miscellaneous business events.

Hillary Bryant continues to serve diligently, leaving every customer happy and maintaining a beautiful space. We look forward to the year ahead. Please be in touch if you or anyone you know would like to hold their celebrations in the River Room!

—Submitted by Hannah Purvis

USHER

Our small, dedicated and overworked team of ushers continue to make our 11:00 services go smoothly every week. We struggle to have a full team available each week and many times have to scramble to get enough help to collect the offerings and support communion.

To ensure that our 11:00 services continue to go smoothly we need your help. Serving as an usher is a fun easy way to support the church and make new congregation friends. There is no age limit, and no real training is needed to serve. Next time you arrive at the service just let one of the ushers know you would like to assist. Having a few more people to help, even if its only occasionally will help us work around absences or changes to the schedule, including funerals.

Regular members of our usher team are Cindy Shields, Charlie Tudor, Bob Pate, Ian McQueen, Melissa Friedman, Steve Ruby, Art Bryan, Rex Teeslink and Billy Badger.

—Submitted by Nick Uros

WORSHIP

Worship is not one of our activities among many. It is the heart of all that we do and all that we are. The Lord's table animates our feeding ministries, the welcome people receive entering the church undergirds our hospitality, the confession, absolution, and offertory make sense of our ministries of mercy and justice, the proclamation of the word is the basis of formation. Worship makes us who we are and a lot of people do a lot of sometimes unseen work to make it possible for us to worship in beauty and good order. I am grateful to Keith Shafer, Victoria Hammond, Nikki Wickware, and the choirs; Catherine Stuckey and the altar and linen guilds; Carolyn Dolen and the lectors, vergers, and Lay Eucharistic Ministers; Meg and Donald Horton and the acolytes; and Rex Teeslink and Nick Uros and the ushers. This year I especially want to acknowledge Pam Uros and the flower guild, as Pam steps back from chairing this ministry after years of faithful, effective leadership.

All these folks worked very hard this year as we went through our familiar cycle of liturgical seasons and continued our traditional special services of Evensongs, the St. Francis pet blessing, baptisms, weddings, funerals, and Senior Sunday. They also worked through an extraordinary series of special worship services this year: candlelight communion at Springfield Baptist, the 200th anniversary celebration Eucharist for the Diocese of Georgia, a Holy Week that fell on Masters Week, the Eucharist for the Diocesan Convention, and the ordination of Kimberly Dunn to the priesthood. It has been a very good year of worship at Saint Paul's. And all of our worship ministries could use more members. Please help us keep worshipping in beauty and order by finding your place in our worship ministries.

—Submitted by The Rev. Eric Bidy

2023 FINANCIAL REPORTS

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

The current Saint Paul's Endowment was created in 1997 with the establishment of the Saint Paul's Endowment Trust. It is qualified as a 501(c)(3) organization.

The purpose of the Endowment is to provide a flexible mechanism for the making of donations and bequests by parishioners of Saint Paul's Church and others, whereby the corpus, or the principal value at the time of the donation, shall be inviolate. Any disbursements from these funds are derived from the income generated by the investment of the funds and therefore represent a permanent legacy on behalf of donors.

Endowment funds are professionally managed under an agreement with the Community Foundation for the Central Savannah River Area and administered by the Saint Paul's Endowment Committee. Donations and bequests can be made to the Saint Paul's Endowment Fund c/o Saint Paul's Church.

A separate endowment fund has been established to support Saint Paul's outreach and service ministries. The Mary Kathleen Blanchard Outreach Endowment Fund was created by the estate of our beloved "MK" Blanchard to further the outreach activities of Saint Paul's Church. This fund is managed and administered as part of the Saint Paul's Endowment, but distributions will be restricted to outreach and service ministries. Gifts and bequests may be made to the Mary Kathleen Blanchard Outreach Endowment Fund c/o Saint Paul's Church.

During 2021, the Jane and Bleakley Chandler Endowment Fund was established within the Saint Paul's Endowment through a bequest from the Chandler family. The purpose of this fund is to further our church's ministries in the Augusta community. Under our Spending Rule, distributions from this new fund will begin in 2025.

During 2023, the estate of Anne Creamer Manning contributed \$655,573 to the Saint Paul's Endowment Fund in honor of her parents, Harry R. Creamer and Mattie P. Creamer. This wonderful gift was added to the Endowment and significantly increased the amount subject to the distribution calculation for 2024 under our spending rule.

—Submitted by Monty Osteen, Endowment Chair

ENDOWMENT FUND SUMMARY

Endowment Income accounted for 10.8% of total income in the 2023 budget. In the 2024 budget, Endowment Income is projected to be 10.7% of total income.

Our Endowment Funds totaled \$4.86 million at year end 2023 compared to \$3.74 million at year end 2022, an increase of 30.0%. The \$1.12 million increase in value included \$683,663 in donations, a 14.37% return on investments, and a reduction of \$116,000 from distributions to the church. The large amount in donations during 2023 was primarily the result of the gift from the Anne Creamer Manning Estate as discussed in the Endowment Committee Report.

Based on our Spending Rule, the 2024 budget includes an estimated distribution of \$112,000 from the Endowment.

—Submitted by Monty Osteen, Endowment Chair

2023 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

The stewardship campaign for the 2024 fiscal year was focused on gratitude for the gifts that we are given by God, and how we return them to do the work He has given us to do. Many parishioners volunteered to participate in our every member canvas. Beyond delivering pledge card requests, this was a great opportunity to make and renew relationships within our church community. The Vestry and Stewardship committee are especially grateful for our canvas partners.

We were reminded that most of the operating revenue of the church comes from the regular, pledged financial gifts of parishioners. Your gifts, along with other sources of income from our endowment, restricted or special gifts, and from rental of the River Room for private functions, are what make our mission to spread the Good News of God in Christ bear fruit. With input and requests for the coming year from the leaders of our ministries, the finance committee can construct and submit a proposed budget to the Vestry. Every offering and every pledge, no matter the size, matters because when it comes to planning ministry, we can only budget what is pledged.

To date, we have received 138 pledges, for a total of \$744,930. This represents a 2.5% increase over last year. In all, 20 were new pledges, and 56 were increases over the previous year. The average annual pledge is \$5,400.

We hope to make time this year to dive into the theology of stewardship and contemplate how we receive and use our resources in line with our faith.

Thank you for being a part of the story of Saint Paul's Church!

—Respectfully submitted by Bill Ford and Bryan Hawkins, Stewardship Co-Chairs

2023 THE NEXT 100 YEARS CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

We are pleased to report the completion of this campaign. All pledges are paid and all projects are complete.

Seven years ago, in 2017, our church building had her 100th birthday. At that time, we the people of Saint Paul's decided to prepare her for the next 100 years.

The original roof was showing its age. Replacing the slate, gutters, downspouts, and copper finishes was our first order of business. We needed to raise the money to start the project.

It did not take long to see how much this place means to so many. More than \$1,833,085 was given by 112 people. Many people also gave their time and talents to the projects.

Twenty percent of the funds raised went to the endowment.

While planning the roof project several parishioners offered expertise and historical knowledge. Naming names is dangerous because we know some people will be overlooked. Please forgive us but here goes: Clay Coleman, Dick Manning, Keith Shafer, and Tom Robertson and the Building and Grounds Committee were instrumental in this process. Dennis Bell was our man on-the-job during the many weeks it took to complete the project. He was there to deal with questions that came up so the job could keep pace. The work was completed on time and under budget. We expect the roof to last at least 100 years although none of us will be here to verify that.

The re-leathering of our Casavant organ took place in the summer of 2020.

Accessibility improvements involved many people including our architects Al Cheatham and Richard Fletcher and our contractor Skip Ashley with J.C. Stockton. During construction of the ramps, sidewalk and drainage issues were addressed.

The planning for Tyler Hall changes included help from: the Flower Guild, Eric Friedman, the Hospitality Committee, our sexton Hillary, Elisabeth Price, Cameron Nixon, and the Building and Grounds Committee. Brad Sandbach used his experience with commercial kitchens to help us choose appliances and surfaces.

Once the decision was made to move the men's restroom, the plans came together. The sexton's space was expanded to include the old men's room. The washer and dryer were moved there, adding a much better work area in the kitchen for the flower guild, including a new flower cooler. The Rebecca Rice kitchen is a beauty that functions well. The new restrooms are so nice that visitors comment about them.

The Sacristy update that Soleta Baird and Catherine Stuckey oversaw for the Altar Guild was accomplished with the historical look preserved. The space is now fresh and works well for the dedicated people who use it.

Substantial, but not very visible, parts of the campaign are technological advancements. Bill Ford, Wright Montgomery, and Ellen Nesbitt provided expertise and input. A lot of wire, AV improvements, wireless tech, software, computer hardware, and security enhancements were included. A major gift from the estate of W. Rodger Giles made much of this possible.

On the fundraising side of this campaign, assistance was provided by Ann and Anthony Ewell and Connor and Perry Smith.

It has been a pleasure to witness the generosity of time, money, and spirit of so many. The love shown for Saint Paul's Church through this campaign has resulted in a better place to welcome those who will use it in the next 100 years.

—Submitted by Catherine Boardman and Billy Badger, Co-Chairs

A NOTE REGARDING 2023 FINANCIAL REPORTS:

As reported earlier, in 2023 we engaged Cherry Bekaert Accounting Services to streamline our financial operations and reporting processes. While this has not been a seamless transition, we have made significant progress. This resulted in delayed reporting of our 2023 financial results, which we are glad to have here.

Will Rice
Treasurer

TREASURER'S REPORT: 2023 FINANCIAL RESULTS

The 2023 Budget called for revenues of \$997,211 and expenses of \$980,478. This means it was a surplus budget as budget revenues were expected to exceed expenses by \$16,733.

Total income in 2023 of \$1,026,782.52 was a slight decrease from 2022. Parish offerings increased by 4%, however the decline in income primarily reflects a year over year reduction in endowment distributions to the church.

Total expenses for the year were \$1,009,632.26, a 4% decrease from the prior year.

As of December 31, 2023, total assets stood at \$5.73 million, 17% higher as compared to the end of 2023.

—Submitted by Will Rice, Treasurer

TREASURER'S REPORT: 2024 BUDGET VS. 2023 ACTUAL

The 2024 budget projects a slight increase of 1% of total income this year as compared to 2023, a difference of \$49,299. The main sources of income are pledge receipts, plate offerings, endowment income and rental income.

To build reserves for River Room maintenance, 20% of rental income will be set aside, which is an increase of 10% from prior years. Furthermore, we are supplementing clergy salaries with reserve funds raised for this purpose.

We will continue to monitor the church's finances carefully in 2024.

—Submitted by Will Rice, Treasurer

INCOME AND EXPENSE SUMMARY 2023 BUDGET VS. ACTUAL

Income	BUDGET	ACTUAL
Offerings		
Parish Offerings	\$725,000.00	\$722,057.78
Other Offerings	\$65,000.00	\$98,144.21
Total Offerings	\$790,000.00	\$820,201.99
 Other Income		
Endowment	\$108,000.00	\$116,000.00
Misc Income	\$27,211.00	9,792.53
River Room Income	\$80,000.00	117,540.00
RR Maintenance Reserve	(\$8,000.00)	(36,754.00)
Total Other Income	\$207,211.00	\$206,578.53
 Total Income	 \$997,211.00	 \$1,026,780.52
 Expenses		
Clergy Expenses	\$185,197.00	\$173,106.91
Staff Expenses	\$314,532.00	\$301,241.18
Administrative Expenses	\$87,047.00	\$111,179.18
Diocese	\$91,152.00	\$91,152.00
Property Expenses	\$184,493.00	\$230,732.56
Commissions and Ministries	\$118,057.00	\$102,220.43
 Total Expenses	 \$980,478.00	 \$1,009,632.26
 Net Income	 \$16,733.00	 \$17,148.26

BUDGETARY COMPARISONS: 2023 ACTUAL VS. 2024 BUDGET

Income	2023	2024
Offerings		
Parish Offerings	\$722,057.58	\$745,000.00
Other Offerings	\$98,144.21	\$72,000.00
Total Offerings	\$820,201.79	\$817,000.00
Other Income		
Endowment	\$116,000.00	\$112,000.00
Property Rental	80,786.00	\$88,000.00
Misc Income	9,792.53	\$29,510.00
Total Other Income	\$206,578.53	\$229,510.00
Total Income	\$1,026,780.32	\$1,046,510.00
Expenses		
Clergy Expenses	\$173,106.91	\$140,121.00
Staff Expenses	\$301,241.18	\$379,530.00
Administrative Expenses	\$111,179.18	\$102,155.00
Diocese	\$91,152.00	\$96,324.00
Property Expenses	\$230,732.56	\$214,064.00
Commissions and Ministries	\$102,220.43	\$109,040.00
Loan Payments		
Total Expenses	\$1,009,632.26	\$1,041,234.00
Net Income	\$17,148.06	\$5,276.00

INCOME AND EXPENSE SUMMARY END OF YEAR 2022 VS. 2023

Income	2022	2023
Offerings		
Parish Offerings	\$646,266.25	\$722,057.58
Other Offerings	\$141,906.17	\$98,144.21
Total Offerings	\$788,172.42	\$820,201.79
Other Income		
Endowment	\$144,000.00	\$116,000.00
Property Rental	\$87,492.80	80,786.00
Misc Income	\$36,246.27	9,792.53
Total Other Income	\$267,739.07	\$206,578.53
Total Income	\$1,055,911.49	\$1,026,780.32
Expenses		
Clergy Expenses	\$184,606.71	\$173,106.91
Staff Expenses	\$352,851.28	\$301,241.18
Administrative Expenses	\$97,679.64	\$111,179.18
Diocese	\$82,440.00	\$91,152.00
Property Expenses	\$234,849.64	\$230,732.56
Commissions and Ministries	\$97,298.84	\$102,220.43
Loan Payments	\$5,331.11	
Total Expenses	\$1,055,057.22	\$1,009,632.26
Net Income	\$854.27	\$17,148.06

VESTRY

Cameron Nixon, Sr. Warden
Bryan Hawkins, Chancellor

Erick Montgomery, Jr. Warden
Lee Robertson, Clerk of the Vestry

Will Rice, Treasurer

Vestry Term Expires 2024

Bill Ford
Coleman Graham
Claiborne Porubsky

Vestry Term Expires 2025

Bryan Hawkins
Ian McQueen
Rex Teeslink

Vestry Term Expires 2026

Kitty Gordon
Charlie Tudor
Mary Porter Vann

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Altar Guild – Catherine Stuckey
Buildings and Grounds – Cameron Nixon
Daughters of the King – Suzanne Pursley-Crotteau
Eucharistic Visitors – Ellen Nesbitt
Facebook – Stacy Nuessle
Flower Delivery – Barbara Register & Margaret Scott Penix
Hospitality and Parish Life – Eric Friedman
Linen Guild – Minta Nixon
Newcomers and Greeters – Summer Bell
Outreach – Marilyn Grau
Stewardship – Bill Ford

Acolytes – Meg & Donald Horton
Creation Care – Jennifer McKee
Endowment & Finance – Monty Osteen
Evangelism & Marketing – Barbara Coleman
Flower Guild – Pamela Dorminey-Uros
History – in transition
Interior Design – Julie Badger
Lectors & Eucharistic Ministers – Carolyn Dolen
Nursery Guild – Laura Robertson
Pastoral Care Ministry – Ellen Nesbitt
Ushers – Nick Uros & Rex Teeslink

CLERGY AND STAFF

The Rev. Dr. Eric Bidy, Rector	ext. 205	ebiddy@saintpauls.org
The Rev. Kimberly E. Dunn, Asso. Rector	ext. 204	kdunn@saintpauls.org
The Rev. Dr. Bill Dolen, Assisting Priest		
The Rev. Erwin Veale, Assisting Priest		
Keith Shafer, Director of Music	ext. 215	kshafer@saintpauls.org
Elisabeth Price, Parish Administrator	ext. 225	mailbox@saintpauls.org
Hannah Purvis, River Room Coordinator	ext. 203	hpurvis@saintpauls.org
Norm Nieminen, Parish Accountant	ext. 206	nnieminen@saintpauls.org
Victoria Hammond and Nikki Wickware, St. Nicholas Choir		songbird95@hotmail.com
Sarah Pritchard, Music Associate Emerita		
Hillary Bryant, Greg Maxie, James Wheeler, Sextons		
Mark Albertin, Wright Montgomery, Audio Visual		



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